

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 1

Chapter 1

“Dustin, here is the divorce agreement prepared by Ms. Nicholson. All you need to do is sign them.”

In the president’s office of the Quine Group, the secretary, Lyra Blaine, placed a piece of A4 paper on the table. A man sat opposite her, dressed in plain clothing.

“Divorce? What do you mean?”

Dustin Rhys was taken aback.

“Do you not understand what I’m saying? Your marriage with Ms. Nicholson is over. You’re not even on the same level anymore. Your existence is nothing but a smear on the president’s reputation!”

Lyra pulled no punches as she spoke.

“A smear on her reputation?” Dustin frowned. “Is that how she thinks of me?”

Back when they first got married, the Nicholson family was in ruinous debt. He was the one who helped them when they were at their lowest point. Now that they were rich, Dahlia Nicholson was ready to just kick him out.

“Something like that.” Lyra jerked her chin toward the magazine on the table. A photo of a beautiful woman was printed on the front page. “Look at the headline on this magazine, Dustin. Ms. Nicholson’s net worth has hit one billion in the course of just three years, a feat no short of a miracle. She’s now the most desired woman in Swinton! With all this, she’s destined for greatness. But you, you’re just a regular joe. You don’t deserve her at all. I hope that you’ll see some sense and do the right thing.”

When Dustin remained silent, Lyra frowned.

“I know you’re not happy with this, but this is reality,” she continued. “You might have helped Ms. Nicholson when she was in trouble, but she has repaid you for everything you’ve done for her over the last three years. In fact, you’re the one who owes her now!”

“Is our marriage just a business deal to her, then?” Dustin took a deep breath to suppress the emotions within. “If she wants to divorce me, let her speak to me herself.”

“Ms. Nicholson is very busy. She doesn’t need to trouble herself with such trifling matters.”

“Trifling matters?” Dustin was stunned. Then he laughed bitterly. “Is that so? Is divorce a trifling matter to her? She can’t even find the time to speak to me. Truly, she’s that unattainable now!”

“Dustin, don’t delay this any longer.” Lyra pushed the divorce agreement toward him again. “Just sign here and you’ll get a car and a house as compensation. On top of that, you’ll also get eight million dollars. This is more than what you’ll be able to earn in your lifetime!”

“Eight million dollars is a lot, but...I don’t need it. I will sign the divorce papers if she comes personally. Otherwise, I won’t sign anything,” Dustin said coldly.

“Don’t go too far, Dustin!” Lyra slammed her hand on the table. “Don’t say I didn’t warn you. With all her power and resources, Ms. Nicholson can divorce you easily. It’s only because she appreciates her past relationship with you that she’s allowing you to keep your dignity intact. Don’t provoke her!”

“My dignity?” Dustin was a little amused by that. She didn’t even want to speak to him directly to divorce him. What kind of dignity was that? Moreover, if she really did appreciate their relationship, then why was she threatening him now?

“I don’t think we have anything else to talk about, then.”

Unwilling to argue, Dustin stood up and made to leave.

“Dustin Rhys! You—”

Just as Lyra was about to lose her cool, a curvy woman in a long black dress walked in. Her skin was as white as snow, and her features were delicate. Her lofty aura and curvaceous figure made her look like a goddess right out of a painting.

“You’re finally here.”

Dustin felt complicated emotions when he saw the beautiful woman. They had been married for three years, during which they treated each other with care and respect. But this was how it ended. He still didn't know what he had done wrong.

"I'm sorry for being late, I was caught up with something else."

Dahlia Nicholson sat down. Her expression was as impassive as ever.

"You certainly are busy, if you need your secretary to help you deal with your divorce," Dustin said.

Hearing this, Dahlia frowned slightly. However, she did not explain herself. Instead, she said, "Since you're here, let's get straight to the point. Let's end this on a pleasant note. I'm sorry I have to do this to you, so you can have the car and the house, plus eight million dollars as alimony. How does that sound?"

At that, she placed a card on the table.

"Do you really think our relationship can be measured by money?" Dustin asked.

"Too little? That's alright. Let me know what you want. I'll give you anything within my power," Dahlia said placidly.

"I don't think you understood me. Let me rephrase my question. Are money and power that important to you?" Dustin was truly bewildered.

Dahlia went over to the windows and looked out over the city. There was determination in her eyes when she said, "To me, yes, they're very important."

"You've earned enough to feed yourself for the rest of your life. Why do this?"

"Dustin, that's where you and I diverge in philosophy. You'll never understand what I really want." Dahlia shook her head in disappointment.

They weren't just incompatible in status and power; they were also incompatible in their principles. Most importantly, she did not see any hope for the future in him.

“You’re right. How would I know what you’re thinking?” Dustin laughed bitterly. “All I know is to cook for you when you’re hungry, prepare your coat when it’s cold out, and carry you to the hospital when you’re sick.”

“There’s no point in going into this now.” Dahlia’s expression held complicated emotions, but it was soon covered up by determination.

“You’re right.” Dustin nodded without any emotion. “I heard that you’ve been close with the heir of the Nolan family. Is it because of him?”

Dahlia was about to deny it when she gave it a second thought. In the end, she nodded.

“You can say that.”

“Okay. I hope you’re happy with him.” Dustin smiled and signed the divorce agreement without any more hesitation. All he felt now was disappointment. Ironically, today was also their wedding anniversary. There was cruel humor in divorcing him on the day they had gotten married.

“I don’t want the money, I just want that crystal necklace back. My mother left it to me before she died so that I can give it to my wife.”

“Okay.”

Dahlia nodded and gave him the crystal necklace.

“From today onward, we will have nothing to do with each other!”

Dustin put on the necklace and left. He had no more gentleness in his expression; all that was left was distant aloofness.

“Did I do the right thing, Lyra?” Dahlia asked hesitantly.

Even though she was the one who asked for the divorce, she didn’t feel happy at all when it was finalized.

“Of course you did!” Lyra nodded. “You have the right to pursue happiness. Dustin does not deserve you at all. He’ll only bring you down with him. You’re destined to be the most powerful woman in Swinton!”

Dahlia did not answer her. As she watched Dustin leave, she felt as if she was losing something precious.

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Chapter 2

In the elevator, Dustin stared at the crystal necklace dejectedly. Even though he had expected it, he was still sad that his marriage had ended just like that. He had once thought that happiness was simple: meals on the table, cheerful days, and simple pleasures. Now, he found out that normalcy was a sin. It was time to awaken from this prolonged daydream.

Suddenly, his phone rang, breaking him out of his trance. When he picked up the phone, a familiar voice came from the other end.

“Mr. Rhys, I’m Hunter Anderson from the Swinton Group. I heard that today your wedding anniversary with Ms. Nicholson, so I’ve prepared a gift for you. I’m just wondering if you have any time today?”

“Thank you for your kindness, but I’m afraid we won’t be needing the gift,” Dustin said.

“Why?”

Hunter was taken aback. He could sense something wrong.

“Is there anything else you’d like to talk about, Mr. Anderson?”

“Actually, yes, there is.” Hunter cleared his throat awkwardly. “I’ve got a friend who contracted a strange illness. He’s seen a lot of doctors, but none of them could do anything about it. I was hoping that you could help.”

“Mr. Anderson, you know my rules.”

“Of course I do! I’m sincere in my request. My friend owns some canscora, which I remember you were looking for. I’m sure he’ll be willing to part with it if you help him,” Hunter said.

“Is this true?” Dustin asked seriously.

“Yes, it is!”

“Alright, if that’s so, then I’ll be willing to take a look.” Dustin immediately agreed to the request.

He wasn't interested in money or jewels, but rather some rare herbs and plants, as he needed them to save lives.

"Thank you, Mr. Rhys! I'll send someone to pick you up immediately!" Hunter smiled in relief.

As the president of the Swinton Group and one of the Mighty Three of Swinton, Hunter acted exceptionally timid in front of Dustin.

"Great, one more down, five to go. I should have enough time," Dustin muttered to himself. His mood was lifted a little by this news.

With a ding, the elevator doors opened. As soon as he stepped out of the building, he saw two familiar figures walking toward him. It was Dahlia's mother, Florence Franklin, and her brother, James Nicholson.

"Mom, James, why are you here?" Dustin greeted.

"Did you and Dahlia get divorced?" Florence did not waste any breath.

"Yes, we did." Dustin gave her a forced smile. "It's not Dahlia's fault, it's mine. Don't blame her."

He intended to end his marriage on a pleasant note. However, hearing this, Florence snorted coldly.

"Of course it's your problem. I know my daughter well. If you hadn't done anything wrong, why would she divorce you?"

Dustin was stunned. What was this? Victim blaming?

"Mom, you know how I've treated her over the past three years. I'm pretty sure I'm never done anything to betray Dahlia's trust in me," Dustin said.

"Who knows what you've done behind our backs?" Florence snorted again. "My daughter was right to divorce you! Look at yourself. She's clearly out of your league!"

"Mom, don't you think you're going too far?" Dustin frowned.

If he hadn't helped the Nicholson family three years ago, they wouldn't be where they were today.

“Too far? So what if I am? Am I not speaking the truth?” Florence crossed her arms.

“That’s enough, Mom, stop wasting time with him.” Suddenly, James stepped forward. “Listen here, Rhys. I don’t care whether you divorce my sister or not, but you’re giving me all the money you got from her.”

“Money? What money?” Dustin was flabbergasted.

“Stop feigning ignorance! I know that my sister gave you eight million dollars as alimony!” James said coldly.

“That’s right! That’s my daughter’s money. You have no right to take it! Give it back!” Florence stretched out her hand in demand.

“I didn’t take any money from her,” Dustin denied.

“Bullshit! Who would pass on eight million dollars? Do you take us as idiots?” James did not believe him.

“Rhys, you’d better be tactful and give us the money. Don’t make me angry!” Florence warned.

“You can call Dahlia and ask her if you don’t believe me.” Dustin did not wish to explain himself any further.

“What now? Are you threatening us? Listen here. No matter how much you beg, I’m not letting you leave with a single cent of ours!” Florence snarled.

“Mom, he’s too dense for this. Let’s just search his pockets!” James said impatiently. He dove straight into Dustin’s pockets.

Florence followed suit.

“Mom, do you have to do this?” Dustin frowned.

He hadn’t expected to be accosted by the Nicholson family so soon after the divorce. They were really merciless.

Florence spat on the ground in disgust.

“Who are you calling Mom? Watch your mouth. Who do you think you are?” As she spoke, she continued searching through Dustin’s pockets.

After some time, they didn't find what they wanted from his pockets.

"F*cking hell, did he really not take any of the money?" James said, displeased.

Suddenly, he spied the crystal necklace around Dustin's necklace and pulled it off roughly.

"Isn't this my sister's necklace? Why is it with you? Did you steal it?" James demanded.

"This is the Rhys family heirloom. Give it back!" Dustin said, his expression darkening.

He wouldn't take any money, but he would not leave his mother's keepsake.

"A family heirloom? Does this mean that this is valuable?" James' eyes lit up.

"In that case, Rhys, this can be your repayment for these three years that you've been living with us. Let's go!" Florence gave her son a look and prepared to leave.

"Stop there!" Dustin grabbed James' wrist. "Give me back the necklace!"

"Ouch! That hurts! Let me go!" James felt great pain in his wrist.

"Give it back," Dustin repeated dangerously.

"F*ck, I'd rather throw it away than give it back to you!"

Seeing that he had no chance of freeing himself from Dustin, James threw the necklace onto the ground. With a crisp clink, the crystal necklace broke into several pieces. Dustin blanched. This was the only thing he had to remember his mother by.

"How dare you lay your hands on me! I'd rather break it than give it back to you!" James said as he rubbed his sore wrist.

Dustin clenched his fists so tightly that his knuckles popped. His eyes were red with anger.

"You son of a b*tch!" Unable to hold in his anger anymore, Dustin slapped James in the face.

James was slapped so hard that he spun back uncontrollably before falling to the ground. He was so dizzy that he couldn't stand up.

"Since your mother can't be bothered to teach you manners, then let me do the honors!" Dustin grabbed him by the hair and lifted him. Then, he slapped him several times.

James' face soon turned bloody from the slaps.

"How dare you hit my son!" Florence screamed as she tried to help her son.

"F*ck off!" Dustin turned and glared at her. The glare was so intense that Florence froze in her tracks.

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Those two words were enough to scare Florence motionless. She had never thought that Dustin could be so scary when he was angry. He had always been so mild-tempered around them. He now looked like he could eat her alive.

When she finally got her wits back, Florence began screaming, "Help! Help! He's murdering my son!"

Soon, the Quine Group's security guards gathered around them.

"What happened, Mrs. Nicholson?" The head of the security guards recognized Florence and stood at her side immediately.

"Tom! Lock this guy up at once! I want him punished for beating up my son!" Florence yelled.

"Holy cow! How dare you cause trouble in front of the Quine Group? Have you lost your mind?" Tom waved his hand. All the security guards surrounded Dustin.

This was their chance to kiss up to the president's mother. If they did well now, then they might get a promotion and a raise.

"What are you waiting for? Beat him up!"

Just as they were about to act, a voice sounded.

"What do you think you're doing?"

A curvaceous woman in a silver dress barged into the crowd with her bodyguards. With her lips painted a fiery red, she was stunningly beautiful. Every move she made was alluring.

"She's gorgeous!"

The security guards stared at her lustily. She was one of the most attractive women they had ever seen.

"Mr. Rhys, are you okay?"

The woman ignored the looks she was getting and headed straight toward Dustin.

“Who are you?”

Dustin narrowed his eyes at her, his anger dissipating.

“Nice to meet you, my name is Natasha Harmon. Mr. Anderson sent me here,” the woman said with a smile. At this, the security guards began whispering amongst themselves.

“Natasha Harmon? Is she the heiress of the Harmon family?”

“Oh, my God! Why is she here?”

They were all shocked. Natasha Harmon was a household name around the city. She was pretty, influential, and smart. At 22 years old, she had already gained control of the Harmon Group and built her own business empire within five years.

“Ah, it’s you.”

Dustin nodded.

He had heard of Natasha before, but he hadn’t expected her to be involved with Hunter.

“Mr. Rhys, please wait in the car. I’ll deal with this.”

Natasha snapped her fingers. Behind her, her four bodyguards whipped out their batons and advanced toward the crowd. Even though there were just four of them, their threatening auras was enough to make the security guards back off. After all, they knew that the Harmon family only hired trained bodyguards.

“After you, Mr. Rhys.”

Seeing that no one else dared to move, Natasha smiled and held out a hand to lead Dustin to the car. Without a word, Dustin picked up the pieces of his necklace and left with Natasha. No one dared to stop him.

“What the heck? What do we pay you for? Why did you just let them go?” Florence yelled when she realized what was happening.

“Mrs. Nicholson, she’s Natasha Harmon. We don’t dare to offend her!” The head of security lamented. None of them dared to lay a finger on Natasha.

“Useless trash! You don’t dare to offend her, but you’re fine offending my daughter?” Florence demanded.

The security guards looked at each other, not daring to speak.

“What happened?”

Dahlia and Lyra came out to see what the commotion was.

“Dahlia! You’re here! Look at how badly your brother’s been beaten up!”

As soon as Florence saw her, she began to cry, as if she was the one who had been beaten up.

“What happened? Who did this?”

Seeing her brother’s wounds, Dahlia’s expression became chilly.

“Who else? It’s that bastard Dustin!” Florence cried. “We met him just now. James picked up a crystal necklace that he dropped and tried to give it back to him, but he tried to turn it around and said that your brother stole it from him. After some argument, he beat up James! My poor James, he just did what he thought was right. What has he done to deserve this?”

She began crying harder.

“Dustin?” Dahlia frowned. “He’s always been mild-tempered. Why would he beat up James for no reason? What did you do?”

“What do you mean by this?” Florence looked angered. “Do you not believe your mother?”

“I just want to know the truth,” Dahlia said.

After three years of marriage, she knew Dustin’s personality well. He was normally calm and collected and rarely lost his temper. He wouldn’t just beat someone up for no reason.

“Look at your brother! Is the truth not clear enough? If you don’t believe me, ask the security guards. They saw everything!” Saying this, Florence gave the security guards a look.

“Ms. Nicholson, your mother is right. That guy there was the one who assaulted your brother. If it weren’t for us, she would’ve fallen victim to him too.”

The head of security understood his assignment perfectly.

“You hear that? I’m not wronging that bastard!” Florence continued. “I’ve told you before, that Rhys guy is not a good person. He’s a hypocrite. Look at what he’s done right after you divorced him. He even has a new whore now!”

Hearing this, Dahlia frowned. She was unsure of what to think. Could Dustin really do such a thing? Maybe he was furious about the divorce and wanted to exact revenge on her through her brother. If so, then she had to admit that she had misjudged him!

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After a moment's silence, Dahlia finally made her decision.

"Dahlia, you must defend your brother! Don't let that bastard off so easily!" Florence said hatefully.

"Don't worry, I know what I should do."

Dahlia nodded, gesturing for two guards to send Florence and James to the hospital.

"What do you think, Lyra?"

Dahlia rubbed her temples. She felt a headache coming on.

"It's obvious, isn't it? It was Dustin who assaulted them first. The security guards were witnesses, so that can't be a lie," Lyra said.

"But my mother's not exactly an honest person..." Dahlia began. She knew her mother and brother well. They were a hot-tempered and ruthless duo.

"Either way, it's still wrong for him to throw the first punch!" Lyra said righteously. "Even if there was a misunderstanding, why couldn't he talk it out? Moreover, it was James that he beat up. Your brother! He didn't think of how you would feel when he attacked your family. This alone is proof that he's not a good person!"

Dahlia's frown deepened along with her doubts. Lyra was right. Even if her mother and brother were rude and unreasonable, there was no reason for Dustin to assault them physically, nor was there any reason for him to hurt James so badly. It would seem like her decision to divorce him was right.

"You can't just let this go, Ms. Nicholson. You have to teach him a lesson!" Lyra said.

Hearing this, Dahlia became angry. She took out her phone and called Dustin. At the same time, Dustin was sitting in a silver Bentley and frowned when he saw the call coming in. Despite his reluctance, he still picked up the call.

"Dustin, I need an explanation!" Dahlia demanded.

“What explanation?”

“Did you hit my brother just now?”

“I did. But...”

Before he could finish, Dahlia interrupted him.

“So it was you! I hadn’t expected you to be such a person! Are you taking revenge on my family just because I divorced you?”

Hearing this, Dustin was taken aback. He hadn’t expected Dahlia to be so aggressive. She hadn’t even stopped to listen to what he had to say. After three years of marriage, she was treating him as if he was a mere stranger, or worse.

“Dahlia Nicholson, is that what you think of me? You knew that I hit your brother, but have you stopped to think why I hit him?” Dustin asked.

“No matter what he did, you still shouldn’t have hit him!” Dahlia insisted.

Hearing this, Dustin laughed bitterly. He was disappointed in her. At this point, it didn’t matter who was in the wrong. She clearly favored her brother over him.

“Dustin, I’ll give you another chance. Go to the hospital right now and apologize to James, and I’ll pretend that nothing happened. Otherwise...”

“Otherwise what?” Dustin retorted. “Are you going to call the police on me, or hire hitmen to take me out?”

“Dustin! Are you really going to throw away my goodwill like this?” Dahlia snapped.

“Goodwill? Are you sure it’s goodwill that you’re extending me? Anyway, I did beat up your brother, so do with that what you will.”

“You...” Dahlia’s retort was cut off as Dustin hung up.

She almost threw out her phone in anger. Dahlia had always been good at hiding her true emotions. It was one of the reasons why she had managed to get to where she was today. But right now, she was having a little trouble in that regard.

“How rude of him. Ms. Nicholson, do you need me to arrange for someone to teach him a lesson?” Lyra asked.

“No need. We’re done now.” Dahlia took a deep breath to quell her anger.

“But...”

Lyra was about to say more when Dahlia stopped her.

“That’s enough of this. I need to work on more important matters, like the charity ball with the Harmon family.”

“The charity ball? Has that got anything to do with our partners?”

“That’s right. I just received news that the Harmon family has shortlisted the Quine Group. If we do well at this ball, we could be the Harmon family’s next partners!”

“That’s great! I’ll go make the arrangements right now!”

...

After hanging up the call, Dustin arrived at Swinton Primary Hospital. Natasha brought him into a VIP ward, where an old man was laying on the bed. He looked pale, and his lips were dry and cracked. His breathing was weak as if he was close to death. Several doctors surrounded him, but none of them looked optimistic.

“Natasha! You’re finally here. These doctors are useless!”

Suddenly, a young woman with a ponytail ran up to them. She was the second daughter of the Harmon family, Ruth Harmon, and the old man on the bed was Andrew Harmon, her grandfather.

“Ms. Harmon, we’ve already done everything we could. There’s nothing else we can do for him,” a doctor said helplessly.

“If there’s nothing you can do, then let someone else take over the reins,” Natasha said coldly.

“Mr. Rhys will take over.”

“Mr. Rhys?”

The surrounding doctors had strange expressions on their faces. Dustin looked too young to be a good doctor.

“Are you kidding me, Natasha? This is Mr. Rhys?” Ruth looked shocked. “He looks about the same age as I am. Is he really a doctor?”

“Don’t judge a book by its cover. Mr. Anderson was the one who introduced him to me. I trust him,” Natasha said.

To be frank, she wasn’t quite sure about Dustin either, but if Hunter recommended him, then he had to have his merits.

“Could Mr. Anderson have been conned too?” Ruth still looked doubtful. “Hey, you, are you really a doctor?”

“I know a little about medicine,” Dustin replied.

“Just a little?” Ruth pouted. “You should know that we only let in the best doctors into this room. Everyone here is a known expert in their field, and none of them could do anything about this illness. How are you so confident that you can?”

“Ruth! Watch your manners!” Natasha scolded.

“He doesn’t look reliable, Natasha! I’m just worried that he might make Grandfather worse!” Ruth said.

“Watch your words.” Natasha frowned.

“I don’t care, I won’t believe in him unless he can prove himself to me,” Ruth said with her head held high.

“How should I prove myself?” Dustin asked nonchalantly.

“Tell me what ails me. If you’re correct, then I’ll believe in you!”

“Really?”

“What’s wrong? You’re scared? If you can’t do it, then please leave. Stop wasting our time!” Ruth snorted.

“Show me your tongue,” Dustin said.

Ruth did as he said.

After a quick look, Dustin said without any hesitation, “Your hormones are imbalanced, so you should be experiencing irregular periods and migraines. You’re also showing some signs of food poisoning, which has affected your digestive system. You’ve been having diarrhea, haven’t you? Oh, another thing, you have hemorrhoids...”

The more he spoke, the tenser Ruth became.

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Ruth's eyes almost bulged out of her head. She was more shocked than embarrassed that Dustin could tell so much about her health just by looking at her tongue. Everything from the migraines to diarrhea was spot on. Was he really that good, or did he just make a lucky guess?

"There's a lot you can tell about a person just by looking at them," Dustin said nonchalantly.

"Do you believe him now, Ruth?" Natasha smiled. At the same time, she also heaved a silent sigh of relief. Thank goodness Dustin knew what he was doing.

"He just got lucky!" Ruth refused to admit defeat.

"I'm sorry, Mr. Rhys, she's just too stubborn for her own good. Please ignore her," Natasha told Dustin apologetically.

"It's fine. Shall we begin?"

Dustin didn't take Ruth's attitude to heart. He walked over to Andrew and gave him a thorough check-up. It didn't take long for him to find out what was going on. It was obvious to him that the old man had been poisoned. The poison was pretty potent too. Thankfully, it was discovered early on, so he could still be saved. Another day or two, and he would have been lying in the morgue!

"Ms. Harmon, can you get me some silver acupuncture needles?" Dustin asked.

"No problem."

Natasha waved a hand. Immediately, one of her bodyguards went out. Five minutes later, he returned with a set of acupuncture needles.

"Thank you."

Dustin nodded his thanks, then began to take off the old man's shirt. First, he tapped his knuckles against the old man's stomach to make sure he was hitting the correct positions, then began to place the needles in the correct pressure points. His actions were light but firm as his hands flew deftly. With

his skill, his patient would not feel any pain from the needles. Seeing this, Natasha was surprised.

“He’s good!”

She didn’t know much about acupuncture as a medical practice, but she knew some experts in the field. From what she could see, those old experts had nothing on Dustin. His actions were one of an experienced and talented healer who had spent years in practice. She was curious about this man. Once all 16 needles were in place, Dustin breathed a sigh of relief. It had been some time since he last performed acupuncture, but thankfully he was still familiar.

“Is that all? Nothing changed!” Ruth looked confused.

“Your grandfather has been poisoned. It’ll take about two hours to drain the toxin from his body; you shouldn’t remove the needles before the two hours are up, or there might be serious side effects!”

Ruth pouted.

“Why should I believe you?”

“Ruth!”

Natasha glared at her sister.

“I need to go to the bathroom. Please watch over him while I’m gone,” Dustin told the occupants of the room before leaving.

Not long after he left, a group of doctors barged in. These were some of the most skilled doctors in the hospital. A balding man led the troupe.

“Hey! Who are you guys?” Ruth crossed her arms.

“My name is Jansen. I’m the executive director of the hospital, and also the dean of the medical school. I’m here on orders to treat Old Mr. Harmon,” the balding man introduced.

“Ah, you’re that famous Dr. Jansen! The best doctor in Swinton!” Ruth was ecstatic.

“More like one of the best,” Dr. Jansen said proudly, “but yes, I am.”

“It’s great to meet you, Dr. Jansen. Please help my grandfather.”

Ruth immediately moved out of his way. Clearly, she trusted Dr. Jansen more than she trusted a youngster like Dustin.

“I will.” Dr. Jansen nodded. When he got nearer to the bed, he frowned. “What’s with the needles? What nonsense is this?”

As he spoke, he made to remove the needles.

“Wait!” Seeing this, Natasha stopped him.

“What’s wrong?” Dr. Jansen asked, annoyed.

“Dr. Jansen, I’ve already hired another healer. He said that my grandfather has been poisoned. We cannot remove these needles as there might be serious side effects.”

“What a bunch of bullshit!” Dr. Jansen snorted derisively. “If these needles can cure ailments, then what are doctors for?”

“That’s right!” Ruth agreed. “Natasha, that Dustin barely looks a day over 20. How could he be a skilled healer? Please don’t tell me you believe the shit he spewed.”

“Then how would you explain the way he could tell that you’re having diarrhea just by looking at you?” Natasha asked.

“He... he made a lucky guess!” Ruth said.

“Ms. Harmon, all of the best doctors in Swinton are here. I don’t know who you hired just now, but I believe he’s just conning you. Do you really think our professionally trained doctors are not as good as a random guy on the street?” Dr. Jansen asked. “I know you’re worried about Old Mr. Harmon, but please, don’t believe in these superstitions. It would just make things worse!”

“That’s right! Dr. Jansen has saved a lot of people. Don’t worry, Old Mr. Harmon will be safe in his hands!” the other doctors behind him chimed in.

Their confidence weakened Natasha’s resolve. However, she insisted, “We should wait for Mr. Rhys to come back.”

“Why should we?” Ruth said. “Maybe he’s already gone, Natasha!”

“Ms. Harmon, I’m a busy man. I’m not going to waste any more time here. If I pull out these needles and anything happens to Old Mr. Harmon, it’ll be on me.” With that, Dr. Jansen pulled out all of the needles.

As soon as the needles were removed, something strange happened.

Andrew’s body began convulsing. His face began to turn black, and blood gushed out from his nose and mouth. The machines on either side of the bed began beeping.

“What’s going on?” Dr. Jansen was surprised by the turn of events.

“What’s this, Dr. Jansen?” Natasha frowned.

“That’s strange, he was fine earlier...” Dr. Jansen felt uneasy.

“Sir, the patient is coding!”

“Quick, get the machines!”

Without delay, Dr. Jansen began emergency resuscitation. Even after a lot of effort, Andrew did not seem to get better at all. In fact, his stats were declining uncontrollably. Dr. Jansen was panicking.

“Ms. Harmon, I think... I think Old Mr. Harmon is... dying...”

“What?” Both Natasha and Ruth were shocked.

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Chapter 6

“You useless thing!” Natasha was livid. She grabbed Dr. Jansen by the collar and yelled, “I told you not to remove the needles! Now that the worst has happened, this is all you have to say?”

“No, this has got nothing to do with me!” Dr. Jansen shook his head fervently. “It must be that other healer. His needles must have caused this to happen!”

Natasha slapped him.

“Stop pushing the blame on others, you bastard! I’m warning you now if anything happens to my grandfather, I’ll kill you!”

At those words, Dr. Jansen paled. The Harmon family was powerful enough to get rid of him without anyone knowing.

“What’s going on?”

At that moment, Dustin entered. When he saw Andrew’s state, he frowned.

“Didn’t I tell you not to remove the needles?” he asked with displeasure. “Why didn’t you listen to me?”

“Mr. Rhys, just now...”

Before Natasha could explain, Dr. Jansen shot forward and grabbed Dustin by the collar.

“So it’s you who placed the needles?” he shouted. “It’s your stupid needling that caused Old Mr. Harmon to go into critical condition! You’re responsible for this!”

Dustin was a convenient scapegoat that he could use to avoid the blame.

“Am I right to presume that you were the one who removed the needles, then?” Dustin raised an eyebrow.

“So what if it’s me?”

“Nothing much. I’m just a little curious. How did you become a doctor when you’re so unskilled and irresponsible?”

“You—”

“Shut up!”

Natasha pushed Dr. Jansen away, then pulled Dustin over to the bed.

“Mr. Rhys, we have no time to lose. Please save my grandfather!”

“Ms. Harmon, he’s just a conman! He won’t be able to do anything for your grandfather. Don’t be scammed!” Dr. Jansen said angrily.

“If you think he can’t do anything, then why don’t you do something?” Natasha glared at him.

“I...”

Dr. Jansen was rendered speechless. If he could save Andrew, he would’ve done so earlier instead of standing around.

Just as Dustin was about to begin his treatment, Dr. Jansen said suddenly, “A word of warning, young man. Old Mr. Harmon is a man of influence. If you fail, you’ll have a lot to answer for.”

“If that’s so, then I’m not treating him. You guys can deal with it yourself.”

Dustin had no wish to continue arguing with them. He turned and made to leave.

“You f*cking bastard! Shut your craphole!”

Natasha was livid. She slapped Dr. Jansen again. The slap was so forceful that Dr. Jansen stumbled and almost fell to the ground. Seeing his swollen face, Dustin felt vindicated, even though he remained expressionless. Natasha’s expression changed into pleading when she spoke to him.

“Please, Mr. Rhys. The Harmon family will owe you a big favor if you can save my grandfather.”

“It won’t be easy. The toxin has been aggravated, so it’s more aggressive now. Acupuncture alone won’t be enough to cure him. I need something else,” Dustin said.

“I will give you whatever you need,” Natasha said.

“I’ll need a quarter pound of caterpillars, a quarter pound of spiders, and a quarter pound of cockroaches. Fry them and seal them in an airtight container.”

“Ew. Why do you need those things? How gross.” Ruth said in disgust.

“Stop your yakking. Go find those items!”

Natasha glared at her. Reluctantly, Ruth went out with her bodyguards to look for the insects. Soon, they came back with a container filled with fried insects.

“Ms. Harmon, after I finish the acupuncture treatment on your grandfather, please open this container and place it in front of his nose and mouth,” Dustin said.

“Will do!”

Natasha nodded.

“I shall begin.”

Dustin took out his silver needles and took a deep breath. Then, he gathered his concentration and inserted the first needle into Andrew’s lower abdomen. With a flick of his finger, Dustin made the needle rotate quickly. A sliver of energy entered Andrew’s body through the needle.

His second needle went slightly above the first. Dustin inserted it without any hesitation. The next three needles were placed quickly and determinedly in a straight line from the first two. Interestingly, Dustin did not just stick the needle into Andrew. Instead, he was slowly forcing the needles upward from the abdomen. With every needle he placed, Andrew’s skin bulged slightly, as if something was crawling underneath his skin.

“What bullshit.” Dr. Jansen pursed his lips disdainfully. “Acupuncture is a bunch of crap. It’s not even based in science!”

“That’s true! He’s just embarrassing himself!” The other doctors in the room were also whispering amongst themselves.

They clearly had no confidence in alternative medicine. When Dustin finally placed the last needle, he was drenched in sweat. What he did was not regular acupuncture. It was the long-lost art of Miracle Needling. Miracle Needling could raise the dead, but only if the performer had the internal power to do so. It was a draining task, so he only used it for emergencies.

“Ms. Harmon, the container,” Dustin reminded.

Natasha opened the container hurriedly, and a pungent smell filled the room. Andrew got the brunt of it.

“More absurdities!” Dr. Jansen snorted again. “Do you really think some needles and fried insects can save a man from dying?”

“Just because you can’t, it doesn’t mean others cannot,” Dustin replied lightly.

“If you succeed, I’ll eat this container of insects!” Dr. Jansen said.

Just as he finished speaking, Andrew opened his mouth for the first time after days of being unresponsive. A black centipede crawled out of his mouth. Attracted by the smell of the fried insect, it climbed into the container and began eating them.

“A centipede? Is that a centipede?”

“Oh my god, there was a centipede in old Mr. Harmon’s body!”

“Ew!”

When the people in the room realized what was happening, they were shocked. Ruth even started vomiting. It was terrifying to see a centipede climb out of a human’s mouth. This was the stuff of nightmares. Suddenly, there was a sound of loud coughing from the bed. Andrew opened his eyes.

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Everyone was stunned when they saw Andrew return to consciousness. The doctors were dumbstruck when they noticed the monitors showing Andrew's vital signs were all normal. Who would have expected a young man like Dustin to cure an unknown disease that had stumped the entire specialist team? This was unheard of!

"That's amazing! Grandfather is awake!"

Ruth burst into tears of happiness when she saw her grandfather's recovery. Natasha also breathed a sigh of relief.

"Mr. Rhys, I don't know how to thank you for this. From now on, you are the Harmon family's honored guest!"

She bowed deeply to Dustin.

"You're welcome, Ms. Harmon. It was no trouble at all."

Dustin gave her a small smile. However, Dustin's humble words irked Dr. Jansen. He and his team had done all they could to cure Andrew, but this punk called it "no trouble at all?" Clearly, Dustin was insulting them indirectly!

"Hey, you! What's up with the centipede? Why would there be a centipede in my grandfather's body?" Ruth spoke up.

"This is not a normal centipede. It's actually a venomous curse." Dustin turned to Andrew. "Mr. Harmon, where were you recently? Have you eaten anything out of the ordinary?"

"You're spot on. A few days ago, I was at Millsburg for a party and drank some wine." Andrew nodded.

"If I'm not mistaken, you must have been cursed," Dustin concluded.

"Cursed?"

Andrew was taken aback. The rest of them stared at each other in surprise. After all, it wasn't every day that someone got cursed.

“Don’t spout nonsense! It’s illogical that this could be a curse! If you ask me, Mr. Harmon must have ingested centipede eggs by mistake!” Dr. Jansen interrupted.

“Dr. Jansen, any normal centipede eggs would have been digested by the stomach’s acid! It’s fine if you are not familiar with this, but do not spread false information!” Dustin retorted calmly.

“You...” Dr. Jansen shut up when he caught sight of Natasha’s deadly glare.

“Mr. Rhys, thank you for your diagnosis. I will investigate this further,” Natasha said seriously.

She had heard of venomous curses before, however, she had no personal experience. Who would have thought that her grandfather was suffering from this? Natasha was determined to make the perpetrators pay for this!

“Now that the curse is lifted, you should feed him this prescription for five days to remove the toxins from his body.” Dustin scribbled on some paper.

“Thank you so much, Mr. Rhys.” Natasha took the prescription gratefully.

“Alright, I will excuse myself since there’s nothing more to be done.” Dustin got up to leave.

“Let me see you off.” Natasha got up as well.

“Sis, what should I do with these insects?” Ruth interjected.

“Dr. Jansen mentioned that he was going to eat those insects. Since he was the one who requested it, we shall fulfill his wish! All of you, make sure he finishes those insects before leaving!” Natasha said coldly.

“What?” Dr. Jansen went pale.

At this moment, in another hospital room, a similar scene of chaos was unfolding.

“Mom! How could Rhys hit me? Please, you have to teach him a lesson!”

James was whining on the hospital bed with his head bound up tightly. Only his nose and mouth could be seen.

“Don’t worry, I will get even with him for you!” Florence comforted James gently.

“Mrs. Nicholson, it is unthinkable that Dustin had the nerve to physically assault both of you!” A handsome young man dressed in a suit spoke up. He was the second son of the Nolan family, Chris Nolan. He was also deeply infatuated with Dahlia.

“Chris, you wouldn’t believe it. That punk went mad and hit my son like a maniac. No one could stop him!” Florence gritted her teeth.

“Really? Was he such a crazy person?” Chris frowned. “I know some thugs who can teach him a lesson. Shall I help you out, Mrs. Nicholson?”

“Oh, that would be great!” Florence broke into a smile.

“Chris, make sure they knock some sense into him. Fracture a bone or two!” James snarled in anger.

“Sure thing. I assure you, he is as good as dead!” Chris laughed maliciously.

To be honest, Dustin’s marriage to Dahlia had bothered him long ago. How was it possible that a useless bum like him could have such an attractive and successful lady as his wife? Chris couldn’t pass up this opportunity to beat Dustin up!

“James, how are your injuries?” Dahlia asked as she entered the hospital room suddenly. She was dressed in a slinky black dress that showed off her voluptuous curves. Chris’s eyes brightened considerably.

“Dahlia, you’re finally here! Look at me, I’m terribly hurt!” James sat up immediately and pointed at his bandaged head.

“Alright, Dustin told me what happened and apologized over the phone. Let’s forget about it and move on,” Dahlia comforted her brother.

“Forget about it?” James raised his voice. “Dahlia, are you kidding me? I was beaten black and blue! An apology isn’t going to cut it! What do you take me for?”

“Well, what do you want?”

“I want him to kneel before me and beg for forgiveness!”

“He is still your brother-in-law. Don’t make a mountain out of a molehill.”

“Don’t lie to me! I know that both of you have divorced!”

“Regardless of what happened, we were once family. Besides, you are partly to blame.”

“Dahlia, why are you taking his side? What did I even do wrong? I only broke his stupid necklace! What’s the big deal?” James snapped angrily.

“What? What did you say about a necklace?” Dahlia frowned.

“The necklace you wore previously. He claimed that it was an heirloom, but I’m sure it’s just rubbish!” James mumbled under his breath.

“Did you destroy that necklace?” Dahlia probed further.

“Yeah, he was being extremely rude! That insolent punk refused to give me the crystal necklace, that’s why I smashed it on the ground!” James said stubbornly.

“You’re really asking for a beating!”

When Dahlia learned of this, she was furious. After everything that had happened, she finally understood why Dustin would beat James up. James was the one who demanded and shattered the precious crystal necklace.

Other people might not have understood its significance, but Dahlia knew otherwise. The necklace wasn’t just a family heirloom, it was also the only thing that reminded Dustin of his mother. It was a symbol of his mother’s love for him. When they got divorced, Dustin didn’t want anything but the necklace. From this, it was evident that the crystal necklace meant the world to him.

“Dahlia, it’s just a necklace! Why are you lecturing me over this?” James whined.

“That’s right! Is that trinket more important than your brother’s life?” Florence demanded.

“I’ll deal with the both of you later!”

Dahlia didn’t bother to argue and left immediately. She didn’t have the energy to quarrel with her spoiled brother and unreasonable mother. Moreover, in her

haste, she hurt Dustin with her words. Now that Dahlia thought about it, she regretted saying them. With his temperament, Dustin would never have lost his temper so easily. She had made a mistake...

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“Mr. Rhys, this is the Harmon family’s platinum card. Please accept it as a token of our gratitude.” Natasha handed Dustin a black card edged with gold as she explained. “With this, you will be treated as an honored guest in all establishments under the Harmon family.”

“Ms. Harmon, I don’t need this.” Dustin shook his head.

“Don’t worry, Mr. Rhys. This is just a personal gesture. Regarding Mr. Anderson’s request for the canscora, I will send the herb to your place tomorrow,” Natasha said with a smile.

“That’s very kind of you, Ms. Harmon. Thank you very much.” Dustin chuckled and accepted the card.

Since it was a gift from her, it would come in handy. As they were talking, the car suddenly pulled over.

“I’m sorry, Ms. Harmon! I was forced to do this!” The car driver confessed before getting out and running for his life.

At that moment, two black SUVs swept by. They blocked the silver Benz in the front and rear. More than ten men got out of the SUVs. They approached the car, armed with weapons, and with covered faces. A bald, burly man who seemed to be the leader set his foot on the Benz’s bonnet.

Brandishing his knife, he threatened, “Ms. Harmon, my boss wants to meet you. We will escort you.”

“How bold of you to hijack my car!” Natasha replied, unfazed. She emitted a stately aura befitting a queen.

“We wouldn’t have dared with all your bodyguards around. However, they are now at the hospital guarding your grandfather. You are alone with your little boy toy! How could we pass this precious opportunity up?” the bald guy smirked.

“Well, you do have some brains in that numbskull of yours to bribe my driver. However, please satisfy my curiosity. Who’s your boss?” Natasha asked calmly.

“You will know once we get there! Now, will you get off?” the bald guy urged.

“You have no right to order me around!” Natasha didn’t budge.

“Since you are going to be difficult, I have no choice but to resort to force!” The bald man gestured to the others for a large hammer. As he was going to smash the windscreen, Dustin opened the door and got out.

“Ms. Harmon, your boy toy has no guts. I’ve not even started and he is already peeing his pants in fear. What did you see in him?” the bald guy said mockingly.

Natasha frowned and reached into her bag silently.

“You have five seconds to cram,” Dustin warned.

“Punk, do you know what you’re saying? Are you trying to be a hero? Go to hell!”

Before the bald man could finish his sentence, a slap landed on his face. The overwhelming pressure almost dislocated his jaw. He staggered back, stars spinning around his head.

“Fuck! How dare this punk fight back? Kill him!”

The other men immediately rushed toward Dustin with their weapons in hand. Dustin faced them fearlessly. He weaved through the crowd, his movements as light as a feather. Each time someone came within arm’s length, he dealt out a firm slap.

After a few loud cracks and cries of pain, the men fell over one by one. None remained standing after receiving a slap from Dustin. Beating up more than ten muscular men seemed as easy as pie for him. The bald man was scared shitless. Never in his dreams would he have thought that the young man before him was such a terrifying monster. Even though all of them came at Dustin at once, not a hair on his head was harmed.

“Interesting.”

Natasha’s eyes shone with interest, a slight smile playing on her lips. She replaced the handgun she had lying in her bag. Initially, she thought that Dustin was going to have some trouble taking down a group of bloodthirsty

men by himself. Who knew that he was such a capable fighter? He was much more skilled than her bodyguards. Not only was he skilled in medicine and combat, but he was also handsome as well! A man like him was one in a million!

“Stop! Stand back!” The bald man pleaded for his life as Dustin approached him. “Don’t come near me! I will make you pay—”

Before he could finish, Dustin landed a punch on his abdomen. The man threw up and kneeled on the ground in pain.

“He’s all yours, Ms. Harmon.”

Dustin stepped aside.

“Thank you.” Natasha nodded and stared down at the bald guy. “Tell me, who’s your boss?”

Sweat running down his forehead, the man hesitated.

“Are you not going to tell me?” Natasha smirked and picked up a knife from the ground. She held the blade against his neck and threatened, “I shall have to torture you slowly until you confess then.”

With that, she raised her arm and swung.

At the last moment, the bald man screamed, “Please don’t kill me! I’ll tell you everything! It’s Trevor Spanner of the Drey Group!”

His life was more important than his loyalty right now.

“As expected.” Natasha smiled. “Return and inform Trevor that I’ll remember this! When I have some free time, I’ll visit him. Get lost right now!”

The bald man and his men ran away with their tails between their legs.

“Ms. Harmon, things are not as simple as it seems. First, your grandfather was cursed. Next, your car was hijacked. Trevor will not be easy to deal with,” Dustin warned.

“Trevor Spanner is just a crazy bastard. However, he has strong allies backing him up. I’m not going to do anything about this yet. It’s better to lay in wait for an opportunity to round all of them up at one go!”

Natasha narrowed her eyes. It would be rash to attack right now. She would take all of them down in one blow!

“As long as you have a plan, that’s alright.” Dustin nodded.

He had no interest in the conflicts between rival families.

“Mr. Rhys, it seems that you are really my family’s benefactor. You saved my grandfather, and now you have saved me from getting kidnapped. I have no way to pay you back.” Natasha fluttered her eyelashes.

“It’s no trouble at all,” Dustin replied carelessly.

“No, we owe you too much! I must return the favor!” With that, Natasha shot him a sultry smile. “To show my sincerity, shall I repay you with my body?”

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He never thought Natasha would say something like that. Taking a closer look, he found that her beauty was different from Dahlia's. She was sensual like Aphrodite, and her smile could take anyone's breath away. In short, she was a natural femme fatale, ensnaring men with her bewitching charms.

"Why are you so shocked? I'm just playing around." Natasha's breasts heaved as she laughed heartily at Dustin's face. It was all Dustin could do to tear his eyes away from her voluptuous curves. The more he looked at her, the harder it was not to gawk at her figure.

"Mr. Rhys, back to the issue at hand. I need to ask a favor from you again." Natasha's expression grew serious.

"What is it?" Dustin asked.

"You know that all my bodyguards are stationed at the hospital, so I don't have anybody to protect me. Now that this incident has happened, no one knows when the next attack could occur. I hope that you can be my bodyguard and protect me 24/7," Natasha said in earnest.

"Personal bodyguard?" Dustin raised his eyebrows. "Ms. Harmon, wouldn't it be better for you to stay at a safe place?"

"It's impossible, Mr. Rhys. For your information, the Harmon family will be organizing a charity dinner tonight. As the main organizer, I have to be present. What if someone appeared tonight and made a scene? A damsel like me would be defenseless. Besides, who would bring you the canscora if something unfortunate befell me?" Natasha blinked innocently.

"Well..." Dustin hesitated for a moment and nodded. "Alright, I'll protect you."

Although it was a hassle, he had to do it for the canscora. Nothing could be allowed to go wrong until he managed to get his hands on the herb.

"Many thanks, Mr. Rhys." Natasha gave him a sly smile. Truth be told, she was much more interested in the bodyguard than being protected.

...

It was the evening at the Mirage. The Mirage was the most prominent club in Swinton. The building was as large as a hotel and inspired by the Victorian period. It had gabled roofs, large bay windows, and decorative sculptures. The interior was similarly designed, exuding grandeur and magnificence. Outside, the club was surrounded by vast gardens, vineyards, and even a man-made lake.

A black Benz stopped at the entrance of the Mirage. A gorgeous woman dressed in a black evening gown got out of the car. She had flawless skin and legs that went on for miles. Her intricate features complemented her graceful motions. The second she arrived, everyone's eyes were drawn to her as she outshone all the other women in her presence.

"What a beautiful woman! Is she a famous actress?"

"Her face and figure are of out of this world!"

"Isn't she the president of Quine Group? She is one of Swinton's Four Beauties!"

People milling at the entrance whispered among themselves, marveling at Dahlia's beauty. However, none of them went forward to introduce themselves as they were too intimidated.

"I've never thought that the Mirage could be so grand! What beautiful designs and sculptures!" Lyra exclaimed as she got out of the car.

"The Mirage is one of the main establishments of the Harmon family, that's why the design and quality are impeccable. It is extremely difficult for most people to get an invitation to the Mirage." Dahlia surveyed the surroundings. Even with her high standards, she had to admit that the Mirage was in a class of its own.

"Dahlia, there you are!" A bespectacled young man in a suit came up to both of them. It was Chris, the second son of the Nolan family.

"Mr. Nolan, are you interested in tonight's charity dinner as well?" Dahlia greeted him.

"I'm not interested in just any charity dinner. Having said that, this dinner is organized by the Harmon family. Who wouldn't be interested?" Chris answered with a smile.

The Harmon family was one of the Mighty Three, the top three most reputable families in Swinton! Their financial power and influence were unrivaled in Swinton. Many people would die for the chance to just enter the Mirage, let alone to be invited to the Harmon family's charity dinner.

"Mr. Nolan, are you sure that's all you are interested in?" Lyra smirked knowingly.

"Of course I have an ulterior motive. I'm here to be of help to both of you." Chris chuckled.

"Help us?" Lyra was confused.

"I heard rumors that the Quine Group is shortlisted to be one of the Harmon family's partners. It's not easy to be partners of such a powerful group, especially for Quine Group. That's why I'm here to put in a good word on your behalf. This will boost the possibility of signing a contract with the Harmon family!" Chris boasted, his voice filled with confidence.

"That would be great! Thank you, Mr. Nolan!" Lyra was overjoyed.

If the Quine Group became partners with the Harmon family, not only would this elevate the company's reputation, her status as secretary to the president would rise significantly as well.

"You're welcome. Granting my relationship with Dahlia, this is no trouble to me at all." Chris shot her a deliberate smile.

"Of course, we are already one family." Lyra returned the gesture.

Dahlia had not heard a word of their conversation. Her gaze was fixed on a luxurious car in the distance. A man's silhouette was standing by the car.

"Could that be Dustin?"

Dahlia finally recognized the man. After she found out the truth about that fight, she had been feeling guilty about it. Dahlia decided to address the misunderstanding since Dustin was coincidentally here. With that thought, she walked up to him.

"Dustin!"

Dahlia was about to continue when she stopped in her tracks. She noticed a striking figure next to Dustin. The woman was dressed in a skin-tight, fiery red dress that showcased her tiny waist and alluring curves. In addition, her porcelain skin and captivating features radiated an aura of nobility, like a queen who had come to grace her presence on her subjects.

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Chapter 10 -

Chapter 10

“Ms. Nicholson, nice to meet you. How can I help you?” Dustin’s eyes widened when he saw Dahlia walking toward him, but his gaze turned cold in a moment.

“What a coincidence seeing you here.”

Dahlia choked back the speech she had prepared to explain herself and greeted Dustin stiffly. She did not believe it when her mother told her of Dustin’s new love interest. Who would have thought that it was true? Although they were divorced, Dahlia felt a little uncomfortable seeing her ex-husband being with another woman. There was an awkward and uneasy feeling in her heart.

“Mr. Rhys, is she a friend of yours?”

Natasha sized Dahlia up. According to her female intuition, she could detect a hint of hostility from this woman standing before them.

“She’s my ex-wife,” Dustin replied.

“Really?” Natasha raised her eyebrows and gave Dahlia a charming smile. “Hi, I’m Natasha Harmon. Nice to meet you.”

She stretched out her hand to shake Dahlia’s. Although her actions seemed friendly enough, the atmosphere around her was slightly intimidating.

“Nice to meet you, Ms. Harmon,” Dahlia answered politely.

Although she was usually very self-assured, she had to admit that the woman before her was stunning. Natasha was on par with her in looks, height, and conduct. Furthermore, Natasha’s figure was much more voluptuous than hers. Any man would be enamored by her!

“Dustin, when did you befriend Ms. Harmon? You’ve never introduced me!” Dahlia couldn’t help but ask.

“Were you ever interested in my friends?” Dustin replied sarcastically.

His sharp words rendered Dahlia speechless. She had never expected Dustin to be so direct. The atmosphere around the three of them grew tense.

“Dustin, can I have a word with you?” Dahlia tried after a few seconds of silence.

“About what?” Dustin retorted with a poker face.

“It’s about something private, let’s go elsewhere.” Dahlia turned to find a quiet corner but she realized Dustin didn’t move an inch. Her brows furrowed with frustration.

“Let’s talk about it here and now. I don’t want another misunderstanding,” Dustin insisted.

“Must you be so difficult?” Dahlia frowned.

She was trying to make peace with him, but Dustin seemed to not be having any of it. He was being mean and talking down to her in a disagreeable manner.

“Ms. Nicholson, we are already divorced. Since your status is of such a high rank, it is better for us to not be seen together. I would only embarrass you.” Dustin scoffed.

“I don’t understand. Why are you being such a jerk?” Dahlia was getting annoyed.

“Are you seriously asking me?” Dustin stared back at her. “Wasn’t this your choice?”

“I…” Dahlia couldn’t say a word in retaliation. Yes, she did initiate the divorce. However, there was no need to keep bringing up the past.

Despite her struggle to calm herself down, Dahlia could feel resentment rising within her. Seeing Dustin with another woman triggered her frustration and anger. These feelings became more and more intense as their fight escalated.

“Dustin, I know you despise me. Nevertheless, I don’t think I’ve made a mistake. Besides, I’ve given you many chances to redeem yourself!”

Dahlia’s tone turned icy. It was not easy for her to reconcile with others, given her prideful nature. Moreover, Dustin threw it in her face.

“So you mean that I’m still in the wrong?” Dustin could only laugh.

“I’m not in the mood to argue with you as we are irrelevant now. Having said that, you shouldn’t be flaunting your new partner in front of me if you have any respect for me as your ex-wife!” Dahlia said gravely.

“Respect?” Dustin laughed harder. “How about Chris, then? Even before we got divorced, you were already having an affair with him. How could you even demand respect?”

“Regardless of whether you believe me, I’m innocent and my conscience is clear,” Dahlia retorted, her head held high.

“Is that so?” Dustin smirked and pointed at Chris, who was walking toward them. “I would like to have a look at that clear conscience of yours!”

Both of them had been fooling around in bed. Now, they were even at the charity dinner together.

What a joke for her to claim that she was innocent! Dahlia frowned slightly, but she did not explain herself. First, there was nothing to explain. Second, Dustin wouldn’t believe her anyway.

“Dahlia, we were having a conversation just now. Why did you slip away?” Chris said to her with a smile.

Out of the corner of his eye, he noticed Natasha. Chris was astounded when he saw her alluring beauty. Desire burned in his eyes as his breathing quickened.

What a gorgeous woman! He had never seen such an extraordinary lady in his life. If Dahlia was like water, Natasha was like a burning flame. She could arouse the desires of men with her sultry gaze, without even moving a muscle. Natasha was a natural seductress!

Sneaking a few glances at Natasha, he quickly diverted his gaze. He knew that it was unbecoming of a man to make his intentions known so early, especially in the presence of such dazzling women. Making a first good impression was extremely important.

“Dustin, what a surprise to see you!” Chris turned to Dustin with a frown.

Chris was green with envy when he saw Natasha being so friendly to Dustin. How could this punk be surrounded by hotties all the time? After getting a divorce from Dahlia, here he was with another attractive woman on his arm. Was he blessed with lady luck?

“Why would it be a surprise to see me?” Dustin retorted.

“I’ve heard from Dahlia that you were just an errand boy at the Quine Group. With your status, you have no right to enter the Mirage. Were you planning to sneak in?” Chris narrowed his eyes.

“Don’t you worry about it, it’s none of your business,” Dustin said calmly.

“I must have guessed correctly.” Chris smirked and turned to Natasha. “Don’t be deceived by him, gorgeous. Dustin is not some rich scion but a lowly pauper. He has no right to be breathing the same air as you, gorgeous.”

In Chris’s mind, Dustin must have lied to the beautiful lady. Why would she be together with a useless guy like him otherwise?

“What’s wrong with that? It’s fine as long as I like him!” Natasha chuckled.

“Gorgeous, with your beauty and looks, you can definitely marry into a wealthy family. Why would you choose to live a difficult life with him?” Chris replied, puzzled.

“Wealth means very little to me. In my eyes, Dustin is an outstanding man.” Natasha slipped her arm into Dustin’s naturally.

“Outstanding?” Chris laughed mockingly. “He doesn’t have wealth, fame, or power. How could he be regarded as outstanding?”

“At the very least, he is more handsome than you.” Natasha snapped.

“What’s the use of a handsome face? In the end, he is just a boy toy!” Chris’s expression darkened. “I have warned you, Dustin is a conman. You are going to regret it once he takes advantage of your wealth and body!”

“Take advantage of me?” Natasha laughed merrily. “I do hope that he will take advantage of me, but it seems that he isn’t interested.”

Her bold words made Dahlia and Chris frown in disapproval. Even Dustin couldn’t take it any longer. This woman was really a shameless flirt.

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Chapter 11

“Hey, did you not hear me? That guy is a liar! It won’t do you any good if you stay with him!” Chris’s face was etched with concern when Natasha was unfazed by his provocation. He couldn’t bear to watch a beautiful woman like her be ruined at Dustin’s hands.

“Damn, you sure are annoying. It’s none of your business who I hang out with!” Natasha snapped, having lost her patience.

“You...”

Chris was on the verge of a breakdown. Never had he imagined her to be so stubborn. How could she still go back to Dustin knowing that he deceived her? Was that guy so charming?

“Mr. Nolan, this kind of person deserves to be deceived. Not only does she not appreciate your kind reminder but also speaks rudely to you. How ungrateful!” Lyra uttered unkindly from the side.

“Hmph! So showing kindness is a crime now?” Chris felt unjust, but obviously, he was more jealous.

“You two must have known each other for a long time, right?” Dahlia asked abruptly. Judging from Natasha’s behavior, she couldn’t help but suspect that they had long had a secret affair. Otherwise, there wasn’t a reasonable explanation for Chris’ determination.

“That’s not important. What matters is that our feelings are mutual.” Natasha smiled. While speaking, she pressed her chest against Dustin’s arm as though swearing sovereignty.

At this sight, Dahlia’s gaze became fiercer. Despite knowing that Natasha was deliberately pushing her buttons, she couldn’t suppress her irritation. It felt like someone had snatched away something of hers.

“Dustin, I’ve seriously misjudged you. We aren’t officially divorced, yet you’ve already found yourself another woman.” Dahlia tried to calm her emotions. In fact, she had been brooding about their divorce because she felt like she

owed Dustin. However, the latter had begun fooling around with women while she was busy thinking of a way to make up to him. At the end of the day, she was the clown.

“If that’s what you think of me, I have nothing to say.” Dustin shrugged as he was lazy to explain anything.

“Fine. I was thinking that I owed you something, but it looks like we’re even now!” Dahlia’s expression turned indifferent. She felt as if she was looking at a complete stranger.

“Great.” Although Dustin’s poker face remained, his heart momentarily twitched for some reason.

“Ms. Nicholson...” Just then, Nastsha spoke up with a smile. “The choice you made was rather unwise, but I still have to thank you.”

“What for?” Dahlia slowly looked up at her.

“Thank you for letting me have Dustin. If not, I wouldn’t have discovered such a treasure by myself.” Natasha was flashing a satirical grin, her words meant to humiliate Dahlia.

“Hey! You b*tch...” Lyra was about to explode when Dahlia raised her hand and cut her off.

She looked Natasha in the eyes and replied, “Your so-called treasure is just average in my opinion.”

“Average?” Natasha raised her eyebrow. “You’re calling a highly educated martial artist average? Ms. Nicholson, you do have high standards. However, the guy you’re with doesn’t seem to be any better.”

“At least he’s better than Dustin.” Dahlia didn’t back down.

“Oh, really? Why don’t we make a bet then?” Natasha dared playfully.

“About what?”

“Let’s bet which of them will have greater achievements within a month. What do you say?”

Hearing this, the three of them were taken aback. They didn't expect she would suggest something like that.

Chris sneered as he looked at Natasha incredulously. "Say, did you hit your head or something? Are you making me compete with this piece of trash? Is he even worthy?"

"Exactly! Mr. Nolan is the successor of Nolan Pharmaceuticals with assets worth over a billion dollars under his name. What does Dustin have?" Lyra pursed his lips in disdain.

"Are you sure you want to bet on this?" Dahlia felt a little lost. To her, Dustin had nothing other than his good looks. Conversely, Chris was excellent in all aspects, be it his family background or personal capabilities.

The two of them were far from being on par with each other. Dustin could never beat Chris even if he were given five years, much less a month.

"Of course. It's only about whether you dare to accept the bet." Natasha raised her chin obnoxiously.

"What are we betting on?"

"Whoever loses the bet will have to apologize to the other and admit that she had no standards."

"Sure. The bet is on." Dahlia nodded.

"Good. I hope you don't regret it!" Natasha chuckled.

Both of them possessed equal beauty but contrasting temperaments. At that moment, a rivalry had silently formed between the two.

"We shall find out when the time comes." After casting one last glance at Natasha, Dahlia turned around and entered Mirage without another word.

"Pfft, you're digging your own grave." Chris and Lyra sneered again before following Dahlia into the building. Not once did they take Dustin seriously.

"Mr. Rhys, what do you think? Did I do well?" Natasha asked coquettishly as she tucked her hair behind her ear. Even though her action looked simple, there were many meanings behind it.

“You went slightly over the top,” Dustin said helplessly. “If we lose, you’ll lose your reputation.”

“Lose? Are you kidding me? Don’t tell me you can’t even beat that loser?” Natasha started to agitate Dustin.

“I’m an ordinary man. How am I supposed to compete with a successor of a wealthy family?” Dustin shrugged.

“Ordinary? You’re too modest, Mr. Rhys. Your looks alone are out of this world!” As Natasha blinked at him flirtatiously, she appeared like a street thug harassing a lady.

Feeling speechless, Dustin pretended not to see it. Nevertheless, he had to admit that her performance was impeccable. It saved his pride. After all, very few women could steal Dahlia’s limelight, and Natasha was undoubtedly one of them.

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Chapter 12

After entering Mirage, Lyra vented her anger. “Ugh, that woman is hot, but she’s blind to fall for an incompetent fool like Dustin.”

“I know, right? What a waste,” Chris chimed in with a long sigh. He was rich and handsome, so why was he unable to meet a beautiful woman too?

“That’s enough talk. We’re here for business,” Dahlia interrupted them and said, “Lyra, go and find out which Harmon is in charge tonight. It’d be best if we could promote ourselves.”

“I know a close friend who works at this place. I’ll give her a call.” As Lyra spoke, she fished out her phone and dialed a number. Before long, she informed Dahlia of good news. “Ms. Nicholson, tonight’s charity event is organized by the Steel Lady herself. As for the partner, it’ll depend on her preferences.”

“The Steel Lady? Could she be the famous business prodigy?” At the thought of this, Dahlia’s eyes lit up with excitement. The Steel Lady had a well-known reputation for being the only woman who singlehandedly conquered the business world of Swinton, surpassing nearly all of the other businessmen.

Dahlia couldn’t help but admire such an exceptional businesswoman. However, she’d never met the Steel Lady.

“Lyra, ask your friend whether she could help us arrange a private meeting with the Steel Lady. We can’t miss this opportunity,” said Dahlia.

“I can try and ask her, but there’s no guarantee.”

“Okay. I will thank her afterward.” Deep down, Dahlia was bubbling with anticipation. Being the Harmon family’s partner meant a lot to her. If she could meet the Steel Lady in advance, she was confident that she would be able to convince the other and prove herself.

...

As time passed, the number of guests gradually increased in Mirage. Although the charity event had yet to commence, Natasha was already busy.

“Mr. Rhys, feel free to look around. I have to excuse myself. You can ask anyone here if you need anything.”

“Alright. Thanks.”

“Julie, help me look after Mr. Rhys.” Then, Natasha headed toward her office.

“Ms. Harmon...” Upon entering the room, a middle-aged manager approached her with some documents. “Here is the information you asked for. After several screenings, we have narrowed down only four companies that qualify to be our partner. Please have a look and see if there’s anything else you need.”

Natasha hummed in acknowledgment and nodded silently. She accepted the documents and began reviewing them. After a while, she raised her eyebrow as her interest was piqued.

“Huh, what a coincidence.”

A mischievous smirk formed on Natasha’s lips. It turned out that Jackson Group was among the candidates, and in the documents was Dahlia’s resume. Out of curiosity, she read everything about Dahlia and soon, discovered something unusual.

Three years ago, Dahlia was a nobody while Jackson Group was unheard of. Nonetheless, ever since she’d gotten married, her career experienced inexplicably rapid growth. In merely three years, the small company with assets worth less than millions of dollars had developed into one of the most valuable corporations.

During that period, Dahlia not only received a tremendous amount of investments but also orders for various projects. In Natasha’s opinion, these achievements were questionable and there must have been strings pulled behind the scenes. The problem was, however, Dahlia did not come from an influential family nor did she have connections to pull this off.

“Could it be... him?” An image of Dustin appeared in Natasha’s mind. Besides Dustin, she couldn’t think of anyone else who would help Dahlia so

unconditionally. Subsequently, she became even more intrigued. Who on earth was Dustin?

No one could easily build Jackson Group into a large corporation in only three years.

“Dustin, oh, Dustin. What exactly are you hiding?” Narrowing her eyes slightly, Natasha was enthralled by the mystery surrounding Dustin.

“And that woman, Dahlia... What were you thinking? Why did you let go of a wealthy husband and choose to get entangled with that bastard named Chris instead? Are you really that stupid?” Natasha pondered and silently heaved a sigh.

A man had sacrificed so much for a woman, but in the end, she was ignorant and even self-righteously decided to divorce him. Natasha couldn't wrap her head around that. Nevertheless, she realized that the situation had given her a chance to have Dustin all for herself.

“Ms. Harmon, are you considering Dahlia Nicholson from Jackson Group?” asked the manager tentatively upon the rare sight of Natasha reading the documents so intently.

“Dahlia? Hmph,” Natasha answered with a dissatisfied tone. “She is qualified to be our partner, but I don't like her.”

“Understood. I will remove her from the list right away!”

“No need. Reorganize the documents and show them to Mr. Rhys. Let him decide,” Natasha instructed with an ambiguous smile.

“Yes.”

Although the manager was dumbfounded, he didn't dare to question her orders.

“Is there something else?” Natasha asked when he did not leave.

“Ms. Harmon, Edward Spanner from Drey Group had arrived earlier and he wishes to meet you,” the manager explained with his head bowed.

“Edward? Trevor Spanner's son? What is he doing here?”

Natasha was stunned.

“He says he wants to discuss business matters with you, but I doubt that it is his true intention. Should I order the guards to kick him out?”

“Trevor sent his son in his place? Ha... Never mind. I want to see what tricks he has up his sleeves.”

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Chapter 13

The hall where the event was held had become lively. On the stage, a group of dancers dressed in vintage clothing danced to classical music. Every facial expression and move was full of charm and grace, leaving a lingering impression in the audience's mind.

Below the stage sat a crowd of well-dressed celebrities. While some clinked their glasses and chatted, others quietly enjoyed the performance. Dustin had found an empty seat and sat down, sipping on a glass of juice as he watched the show.

"Yo, Rhys! Didn't think you would actually sneak in here!"

Suddenly, a discordant voice disrupted Dustin's moment of peace. Glancing over at the source, Dustin spotted Chris and Dahlia together with the secretary.

"Hmph, what an unlucky day. Why are you everywhere?" Lyra huffed in annoyance.

Dahlia didn't say a word. She threw a cold glance at Dustin and went to take a seat in the front row.

"Hey, the charity auction is starting soon. Can you even afford to participate? Why are you sitting here?" Chris jeered.

"Who says I can't sit here because I can't afford it?" retorted Dustin.

"That's the rule! How can a sucker like you sit with us?" Chris said with a contemptuous look.

"Are you deaf? Get up now!" Lyra kicked the chair Dustin was sitting in.

"What happens if I don't?" Dustin looked up at him.

"I'll call the guards to kick you out!" threatened Lyra.

"Go ahead and try," Dustin responded with an unbothered expression.

“Fine, you asked for it! Don’t blame me when you get humiliated!” Just as Lyra wanted to raise her hand and call for the guards, Dahlia stopped her.

“Cut it out. Let him be.”

“But...” Lyra frowned.

“Mind your own business,” Dahlia simply replied.

“Hmph, consider yourself lucky.”

Lyra glared at Dustin and left it at that. At this moment, her phone rang. After answering the call, her expression froze and the arrogance on her face was quickly replaced with horror.

“What’s wrong?” Dahlia asked upon sensing something amiss.

“Ms. Nicholson... it’s... it’s bad!” Lyra blurted nervously. “I just received a tip-off that the Harmon family wants to remove the Jackson Group from the candidate list!”

“What?” Dahlia’s face fell at the news. “Are you sure the tip is reliable?”

“It should be. My friend overheard it at work!”

“How could this happen?” Dahlia’s expression was awful. After all, she’d expended great effort in getting the Jackson Group on the candidate list. Not only were large sums of money involved but she even owed countless favors over this.

She thought that since they passed the preliminary screening and got on the list, she could effortlessly secure the position of the Harmon family’s partner as long as she met with the Steel Lady beforehand.

Who knew that they would get removed at the very last minute? It was so sudden that Dahlia couldn’t comprehend what had happened.

“Ms. Nicholson, what do we do now? If we make it on the candidate list, all of our hard work will be in vain!” Lyra lamented unhappily.

“Let me think...” Dahlia’s brows furrowed as she fell deep in thought.

Working as the Harmon family's partner, they would be able to elevate their social status while making extra profits. Although the Jackson Group had grown quickly over the years, it lacked a solid foundation. Hence, if they could join the Harmon family's business venture, they would have sure backing. Dahlia was so close to tasting success, yet everything had come to naught.

"Mr. Rhys." Just then, a manager from the Harmon family walked up to Dustin's side and handed him a folder. "The Iron Lady wants you to review these documents and make the final decision."

"Hmm?"

Dustin took the folder and his expression became a little strange. He was looking at documents consisting of Dahlia and the Jackson Group's information. Natasha was indirectly making him choose to whether kick them out of the candidate list.

"What the hell is she planning?"

Dustin held his chin while thinking, feeling some uncertainty. Needless to say, Natasha was doing this on purpose. She wanted the power in deciding the fate of Dahlia's company to fall on him.

After thinking it over, Dustin chose not to remove them. Although they were divorced, their relationship wasn't as bad as to require revenge. Besides, they had been married for three years. One way or another, he genuinely hoped that Dahlia would do well in her life.

"Mr. Rhys, are you sure about your decision?"

The manager couldn't help asking because he knew that Natasha wasn't fond of Dahlia.

"Yes." Dustin nodded.

"Okay. We'll do as you say."

After giving him a polite smile, the manager promptly left with the documents. Deep down, however, his impression of Dustin dropped slightly. To him, this was Dustin's best window of opportunity to gain Ms. Harmon's favor. Meanwhile, in the front-row seat, the clueless Dahlia and Lyra were still

worrying about the matter. Based on their status, they weren't qualified to change the Harmon family's decision.

"Ahem..." Chris suddenly cleared his throat to get their attention before saying, "Dahlia, if you're worrying about the candidate list, I might be able to help."

"Really?" Lyra lit up at once and asked hurriedly, "Mr. Nolan, how can you help us?"

"To be honest, my father has some connections with Old Mr. Harmon. As long as my father makes the request, I believe the Harmon family will do something about it."

"Is that so? That's awesome!" Lyra was filled with excitement as she said, "Mr. Nolan, if you can help us with this, you will be our greatest benefactor!"

"It's not a big deal. I'll make the call now."

Chris laughed heartily, then dialed his father's phone number to briefly explain the situation.

"Alright, I got it. I'll talk to Andrew when I have time," Chris' father, David, agreed perfunctorily and hung up the call. Thinking that he'd solved the problem, Chris started to claim credit and said, "My father has agreed to help. You guys don't have to worry. It'll be over soon."

"Great! Mr. Nolan, thanks to you, we can rest assured."

Lyra sighed in relief.

"Thank you, Mr. Nolan," added Dahlia.

"It's a small matter. Don't worry about it."

Chris pretended to wave his hand generously. Then, he looked toward Dustin with a provocative gaze. Dustin was enjoying his juice, completely ignoring Chris. At this moment, Dahlia received a phone call. Taking out her phone, she realized that it was from the general manager of Harmon Group.

"Hello, is this Ms. Nicholson? I have good news for you. The top management has decided to appoint you as the Harmon family's partner."

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Chapter 14

“We were chosen?” Dahlia was shocked. She couldn’t believe his words. The general manager wasn’t talking about her place on the candidate list, but was referring to their appointment as the Harmon family’s partner! They’d even skipped the final assessment. What was happening?

“Did you mean what you said?” Dahlia questioned tentatively.

“Of course. If you don’t believe it, you may come to our office tomorrow to sign the contract. I have other things to attend to, so I’ll hang up now.” After saying a few words, the general manager ended the call.

Dahlia on the other end was feeling both astonished and delighted. Never had she expected things to go so smoothly. A few moments ago, the Jackson Group was just about to get removed from the candidate list but in the blink of an eye, they had become the Harmon family’s partner. Everything was happening too abruptly.

Of course, it must’ve been due to Chris’ help that she was able to make it this far. The Nolan family’s influence was surprisingly impactful. Only a phone call was needed to change the Harmon family’s mind.

“Ms. Nicholson, what happened? Did the Harmon family change their mind?” Lyra asked.

“Yes.” Dahlia nodded and flashed a rare smile. “The general manager of Harmon Group called me just now and said I’m chosen to become their partner!”

Lyra cheered. “Oh my god! I knew you could do it!”

“It’s all thanks to Mr. Nolan. This wouldn’t have happened without his help,” Dahlia said gratefully.

“That’s right! Mr. Nolan is indeed the greatest. He solved our problem with just a few words!” praised Lyra.

“You’re exaggerating. It was my father who did the favor,” Chris replied with a smile. Although his words sounded humble, the smugness on his face was unconcealable. In fact, he was also somewhat surprised by the news. Since when did his father work so efficiently?

“Dustin, did you see that? This is the difference between you and Mr. Nolan.” Lyra turned to look at Dustin and remarked mockingly. “Mr. Nolan can easily secure us the position as the Harmon family’s partner with a word. What can you do?”

“Don’t say that. At least, he’s good at sucking up to people,” Chris added with a chuckle.

“Hmph, what else can he do? He’s an absolute good-for-nothing.” When Dustin didn’t retort, Lyra’s arrogance was boosted and she continued, “It’s a pity that the b*tch isn’t here to see how useless the man she chose is.”

“Are you done talking? Move out of the way if you are, don’t block my view,” Dustin uttered indifferently.

“Why? You can’t stand it when we said only a few words? If you have half of Mr. Nolan’s capabilities, would you be afraid of others calling you out? You’re hopeless.” Lyra sneered.

“Oh? Then, tell me, what is Chris capable of?” Dustin’s expression became solemn. He might prefer to be low-key, but he wouldn’t tolerate anyone who insulted him. He wasn’t a saint, after all.

“Mr. Nolan made us the partner of the Harmon family through a simple phone call. If this isn’t capability, I don’t know what is,” Lyra answered while staring down at Dustin condescendingly.

“How are you so sure that it was him? What proof do you have?” Dustin countered.

“Who else if not Mr. Nolan? It’s definitely not you. I mean, look at your terrible attitude!” Lyra snorted coldly.

“Hey, Rhys, what makes you think that the Harmon family would suddenly change their mind if it wasn’t because of me?” Chris asked haughtily.

“That’s right. The truth is right in front of you. Why can’t you just admit it?” Lyra echoed.

“Don’t get too conceited. If I were you, I would go and confirm the truth myself before thanking the wrong person,” Dustin said, expressionless.

“From what I see, you’re just jealous of others because of your incompetence,” scolded Lyra.

“Whatever floats your boat.” Dustin shrugged it off.

“Rhys, you wanted proof, right? Fine, I’ll give it to you!” Chris sneered as he pulled out his phone to call David again, “Hey, Dad.”

“What is it this time?” David sounded annoyed over the phone.

“Nothing. I just wanted to know how did your talk with Old Mr. Harmon go.”

“What talk? I’m still in a middle of a meeting. I don’t have the time to help you with your nonsense. Don’t ever bother me over stuff like this again!”

“What?” Chris was caught off guard when his father hung up the phone angrily. The smile on his face had stiffened. Instantly, his intention to boast about his capability was shattered. If his father didn’t help him, then who did? Could it be a coincidence?

“Mr. Nolan, what did your father say? Let’s hear it,” Dustin said with a fake smile. As he was seated right behind Chris, his keen ears could pick up everything David had said on the phone. He didn’t even need to listen to their conversation to know what was going on. Chris’ stupefied expression was self-explanatory.

“Mr. Nolan, don’t hesitate to tell us. We should let this bastard understand that he could never compete with you!” Lyra prompted.

Meanwhile, Chris’ eye twitched. He pretended to be calm and replied with a dismissive smile, “What’s there to tell you about? My father has confirmed that he made a request to the Harmon family and helped us big time. Otherwise, Dahlia wouldn’t have qualified to be their partner!”

Hearing this, Dustin frowned deeply as he didn’t expect Chris to be so stubborn. How could he lie in front of everyone?

“Did you hear that, Dustin? I told you so, but you didn’t believe it. What do you have to say now?” Lyra barked proudly.

“Would you believe me if I told you that Chris is lying?” Dustin questioned back.

“Dustin, that’s enough!” At this moment, Dahlia couldn’t stand it anymore. “Can you drop with your act for once? I know that you’re jealous of Chris, but you can’t just slander him! Is it so difficult to admit he’s good?” Dahlia stood up and yelled, a hateful look on her face.

Initially, she didn’t wish to argue with Dustin. However, seeing how obstinate he was behaving, she really couldn’t bear to watch any further.

“Jealous? Slander?” Dustin paused, feeling slightly taken aback. “So, that’s the kind of person I am in your eyes?”

“Look at yourself. Am I wrong?” Dahlia retorted. Her question rendered Dustin speechless.

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Chapter 15

Never in Dustin's wildest dreams would he think that was how Dahlia viewed him. She had no faith in him at all. As it turned out, three years of marriage meant nothing when compared to an outsider.

"You're right. I'm despicable, while Chris is a hero. I slandered him. Are you happy now?" Dustin said self-mockingly. It was pointless to defend himself when there was no trust to begin with.

"What's with your attitude? Are you saying I'm accusing you?" Dahlia frowned.

"Not at all. I'm the one to blame for badmouthing a good person," Dustin replied curtly.

"You're so stubborn!" His words angered Dahlia. She never knew that Dustin would act like this out of spite and refuse to admit his mistake. Was he finally showing his true colors after their divorce?

"It's all right, Dahlia. Don't get too worked up." At this time, Chris put up a pretentious act of kindness and said, "Dustin must be doing this because he doesn't like that I'm too close to you. I don't blame him. Everyone makes mistakes."

"Do you see how forgiving Chris is? This is the difference between you and him!" Dahlia spat, disgusted.

"I'm not even going to try arguing with you if that's what you think," Dustin replied in a clipped tone.

"Hmph, I bet it's because you feel guilty," Lyra commented disdainfully.

"People like you are detestable. Why do you insist on putting on an act when you don't have what it takes?"

"I don't care about what you think of me." Tired of bickering with them, Dustin stood up and left.

Just then, a man with curly hair appeared at the hall entrance. He had on a pair of sunglasses and was smoking a cigar.

“Damn, what a lively atmosphere!” Edward grinned as he looked around. As soon as his eyes landed on Dahlia, he was momentarily dazed. Then the look in his eyes quickly turned fiery.

“Tsk, tsk. I wasn’t expecting today to be my lucky day. I’ve met another stunning woman!” Edward licked his lips and approached Dahlia right away. He smiled and said, “Hey, beautiful. You look familiar. Have we met before?”

Dahlia threw him a glance and ignored him.

“Our meeting must be fated. Why don’t you come and get a drink with me?” Edward invited.

“I’m not interested,” Dahlia rejected without hesitation.

“Money can buy your interest,” Edward stroked his chin and uttered slyly. “Let me get straight to the point then. If you sleep with me for one night, I’ll pay you any amount you like.”

“Get lost,” Dahlia growled.

“Oh, dear. How feisty. I like it!” Edward laughed gleefully. While speaking, he reached out his hand to touch her.

A loud slap sounded when Dahlia struck his face with her palm. Clear, red fingerprints were imprinted on his cheek within seconds.

“You... you dare to slap me?” Edward touched his burning cheek, his gaze darkening.

“What are you going to do about it? What an uneducated prick,” Dahlia said impassively.

“Bitch! You’re asking for trouble!” Edward’s blood boiled and he lifted his hand to hit Dahlia, but he was suddenly shoved away by Chris.

“Fucker, you dare to act out at this kind of occasion? Are you asking for a beating?” Chris glared at Edward. How dare that bastard flirt with his woman in front of his face?

“You rascal, you’d better stay out of this or face the consequences!” Edward bellowed.

“Ha! Are you threatening me? Bring it on. Show me what you got!” Chris provocatively waved his hand.

“Go to hell!” Without another word, Edward threw a punch at Chris. The latter swiftly dodged his fist and countered his attack, landing a blow on his face. Edward staggered backward with blood tricking down his nose.

“You want to fight? Too bad you picked the wrong person!” Chris scoffed.

“Mr. Nolan, you’re awesome! This thug deserves to be beaten up!” Lyra praised loudly.

“Yeah! Good one!” The guests at the scene followed suit and applauded, which stroke Chris’ ego. At last, his time to shine had arrived. It felt incredible!

“Bastard, do you know who I am? You dare to hit me?” Edward seethed through gritted teeth. If looks could kill, Chris would have been six feet under.

“I couldn’t care less about who you are. Get out of here if you want to live!” Chris barked fiercely.

“You’ve got guts, I’ll give you that. You’d better not have run away when I return!” After that, Edward quickly left the place. Chris sneered.

“What a fool. How dare he act all mighty in front of me?”

“Mr. Nolan, I didn’t know you were so strong. You beat him with just a punch!” Lyra complimented him, her eyes glowing with admiration after witnessing the fight.

“Haha, I can beat ten weaklings like him!” Chris laughed. It seemed like his workout routine had paid off.

“Thankfully, you are here to stop him. Or else, we would’ve been in trouble.”

“Fret not. If you reencounter such situations, give me a call and I’ll protect you.” Chris patted his chest confidently. Naturally, he wouldn’t let an opportunity to show off slip by.

“Ms. Nicholson, this is what a real man looks like!” Lyra said while glancing at Dustin with sarcasm, “Not someone who runs away like a scaredy cat whenever he faces small hurdles. How useless.”

Although Dahlia was quiet, she was filled with even more disappointment. When she was in trouble just now, Dustin had stood idly and watched without any sign of wanting to help. Putting their past relationship aside, any other ordinary person would've stepped in to help out even if they were strangers. She might not have noticed this before, but now, Dustin's uselessness was apparent as day. Compared to Chris, he was far from being on par.

"Quick, seal off the exits!" All of a sudden, a burst of commotion sounded. It was none other than Edward, who'd stormed out earlier. This time, he was back with even more malice.

"What? Do you want to get another beating?" Chris stepped forward like a heroic person. However, his vanity eventually faded away upon seeing the group of burly bodyguards following behind Edward.

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“What the hell? Why did he bring so many people?” Chris gulped, feeling faint for some reason. Weren’t they supposed to fight one-on-one? Edward had disrespected the rules of a fair fight by involving a gang. Though Chris was cursing in his heart, he had no choice but to face them head-on. No matter what, he couldn’t lose face in front of Dahlia.

“That’s them. Surround them!” With a wave of his hand, the bodyguards led by Edward dashed forward at once, surrounding Chris, Dahlia, and Lyra.

“What are you doing? I’m warning you, don’t you dare touch me. My father is David Nolan, the president of Nolan Pharmaceuticals!” Sensing that he was at a

disadvantage, Chris hurriedly threatened them with his father’s status.

“So what?” one of the bodyguards yelled. “Do you know who you’ve messed with? He is Sir Spanner’s son, the heir of Drey Group!”

His words caused an uproar among the crowd. 2

“Sir Spanner? Is he talking about Trevor Spanner, King of the Underworld from East City?”

“It must be him!”

“Poor guy. I can’t believe he messed with Sir Spanner’s son. Looks like he’s doomed.”

Everyone started whispering to one another, expressing their fear.

“You... you guys work for Sir Spanner?” Chris stammered out of intimidation.

Trevor, also known as Sir Spanner, was East City’s infamous King of the Underworld, second only to the Mighty Three. He was a man of ruthlessness who showed no mercy to those who wronged him. Under his command were hundreds of subordinates specialized in blackmail and other types of crimes.

In simpler terms, Trevor would be the most feared villain in a story. Whoever offended him would face consequences

worse than death.

“Fuck, I’ve made a huge blunder this time,” thought Chris in a cold sweat.

“What’s wrong? I thought you were confident. Are you scared now?” Edward closed in on Chris, his eyes filled with viciousness.

“Um, this is a misunderstanding…” Chris forced a smile, sounding extremely submissive.

“Misunderstanding, my ass!” Edward roared in fury, slapping Chris across the face twice, leaving his face marked with red fingerprints. Suppressing his exasperation, Chris bit the bullet and smiled apologetically.

“My father is acquainted with Sir Spanner. Could you let this slide for once? I’ll make it

up to you.”

“Who the f*ck do you think you are? You’re not in the position to ask me for that.” Edward forcefully poked Chris on the forehead with his index finger. With each poke, Chris was forced a step back. At this very moment, Chris had his tail between his legs, not daring to make a sound.

Lyra couldn’t take it anymore and shouted, “Hey, you bunch of thugs! Do you think it’s cool to bully others?”

“Why? Are you angry?” Pushing Chris aside, Edward headed in Dahlia and Lyra’s

direction with an evil smirk.

“This is the Harmon family’s territory. Don’t you dare cross the line!” Lyra warned

sternly. 2

“You think I’m afraid of the Harmon family?” Edward scoffed and said, “Besides, you guys were the ones who started the fight. I’m only acting out of self-defense. What is the Harmon family going to do about it?” 2

“What... what bullshit are you spouting?” Lyra started to become frantic.

“Hmph, looks like you’ve not understood the situation. Let my men knock some sense into you if that’s the case!” Edward gestured for his bodyguards to make a move, and two of them stood forward menacingly.

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“Stop right there!” Dahlia suddenly interrupted with a cold voice. “This has nothing to do with her. Let her go.”

“Does that mean you will take the responsibility?” Edward let out a cruel chuckle. Sure. I’ll let her off the hook, but in return, you have to sleep with me tonight. If you manage to satisfy me, I’ll pretend that none of this happened.”

“You’re shameless!” Dahlia raised her hand to slap him, but Edward caught her wrist just in time.

“Bitch, how dare you hit me again? Boys, tie her up!”

“Yes, sir!” Several bodyguards complied and immediately seized Dahlia.

“Let go of her, you thugs!” Just as Lyra was about to rescue Dahlia, Edward ruthlessly

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kicked her to the ground.

“Mr. Nolan... Please save her!” Lyra cried out in pain, unable to get to her feet. Helplessly, she could only beg Chris.

“Edward, let’s talk this out. Why involve the women?” Chris tried to persuade Edward. For Dahlia’s sake, he had to resort to pleading for mercy.

“Fuck you. I’m not done with you yet, and you’re trying to save someone else?” Edward

cussed.

“No, no! That’s not what I meant. There’s no need to get violent. We can settle this peacefully,” Chris explained politely.

“Shut your trap!” Edward’s heavy slap sent Chris stumbling to the ground.
“Say one more word and I will kill you.” a

Chris shrank back and kept silent. Although he cared about Dahlia, he had to save his skin first. After all, it was unreasonable to offend Sir Spanner over a woman.

“Hmph. Turns out you’re just a coward!” Edward jeered, “I don’t understand why these women would stick with you.”

Chris felt insulted, but he couldn’t do anything about it.

“You two, stop struggling already. Take them away. I’m going to have a blast tonight.” Then, Edward ordered his men to tie Dahlia and Lyra up and bring them away.

“Mr. Nolan! Please, help us!” Lyra screamed at the top of her lungs. However, Chris didn’t react as he kept his head bowed. His cowardness made the people around shake their heads. Obviously, Chris was too timid to do anything. Just when everyone thought that Dahlia would inevitably be violated, a figure suddenly appeared in front of Edward and blocked his path.

“You’re not allowed to touch her.”

“What the f*ck? Are you trying to be the hero too?” Edward sneered.

“I advise you to let her go before things get out of hand,” Dustin stated coldly.

Edward chuckled with indifference.

“What if I refuse?”

“Then, go to hell!”

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“Then go to die!” Dustin stated expressionlessly, but his hard gaze was unnerving.

“Go to thehell?” Edward burst out laughing.

Even the group of bodyguards standing behind him burst into laughter; all of them looked at Dustin as though he were an idiot.

“You little punk! Don’t you know who I am? You’ve got some nerve speaking to me that way,” Edward said cockily.

“I don’t know who you are, and I couldn’t care less. You have three seconds to let her go, or else,” Dustin stated plainly.

His words instantly caused a stir; even the people who were holding Dahlia were

shocked.

None of them expected that Dustin would say such a thing; he was remarkably brave compared to the silent Chris.

However, such bravery was useless.

“You really don’t know what’s good for you. You’re going to die!” Chris’ face was full of resentment because Dustin’s show of bravado only made his cowardice even more

apparent.

Naturally, Chris was irritated and even filled with resentment when a good-for-nothing like Dustin was braver than he was.

“Are you f*cking insane?” Edward looked Dustin up and down before continuing, “So you want to play hero, huh? Fine! I’ll see just what you’ve got!”

With that, he raised his hand and gave another signal.

Two burly bodyguards swiftly charged forward at the same time to tackle Dustin. Both of them were 6.3 feet tall, extremely muscular, and the size of a bear. They each had an imposing presence.

Dustin looked like a mere child in comparison, so everyone present assumed that this confrontation would be over without suspense.

They were wrong.

As they drew nearer to him, Dustin delivered two swift punches that connected loudly with each of the men's faces.

And just like that, the two huge men collapsed to the floor as though they had been struck by lightning and were motionless.

"Huh?"

Everyone was visibly shocked by what they had just seen.

No one understood what had happened as, in the blink of an eye, both of the bodyguards were on the floor.

Meanwhile, Dustin was standing there unscathed.

"Fuck! What did that punk just do?" Edward's expression sank.

The two men who had just fallen were his most capable bodyguards; they could take on a group of people on their own without any problem.

Hence, it was strange that they were both laying unmoving on the floor after just one face-off.

"This is your last chance. Let her go," Dustin threaten coldly.

"In your dreams! Get him!" Edward retorted angrily and waved his hand to signal his

men.

The remaining bodyguards behind him immediately surrounded Dustin, but he merely scoffed and attacked first, not wasting any more time on words.

His movements were as fast as lightning, and his attacks were extremely fierce. Each of his punches connected loudly with its target.

The burly bodyguards were utterly defenseless, like sheep waiting to be slaughtered, in the face of Dustin, who was like a ferocious tiger.

Muffled grunts could be heard, and in the short span of a few breaths, they were all lying on the floor.

The hall was completely silent as the last bodyguard dropped to the floor with an audible thud.

All the guests had their jaws slack and were staring at Dustin with wide eyes as though he were an anomaly. None of them would've ever guessed that he was so fearsome.

He had effortlessly taken down so many men with his own strength, just like in a movie

scene.

"How is this guy so strong?" Chris' eyes were wide open in disbelief.

"How can it be? Is this really that piece of trash, Dustin Rhys?" a dumbfounded Lyra wondered out loud, feeling unsettled.

"He... knows how to fight?" Dahlia had an indecipherable expression on her face once she came back to her senses.

They had been married for three years but she never knew that Dustin was such a formidable fighter.

"Was he just really good at hiding it? Or was it because I never cared enough to notice?"

she wondered. 1

"Y— you! Who are you!" Edward started panicking at this point and he involuntarily took two steps back.

"I... am your reckoning," Dustin stated as he slowly advanced toward Edward.

“Stay back!” Edward shouted as he suddenly pulled out a switchblade and held it against Dahlia’s throat. “Come any closer, and I’ll slit her throat!”

“The thing I hate most is being threatened.” Dustin’s expression turned cold and in a flash, he charged forward and grabbed hold of Edward’s hand that was holding the

knife.

Then, with a forceful twist, the switchblade fell to the floor with a loud clattering sound.

Edward was stunned for a moment before he let out a piercing shriek, similar to that of a pig being slaughtered.

“Argh-”

“Shut up.” Dustin cut Edward off with a slap to his face just as his shriek barely left his

mouth.

Edward’s expression instantly soured, as though he had just tasted shit.

“You... you’re dead meat! All of you are dead meat!” Edward somehow mustered up the courage to throw out a threat.

“Is that so?” Dustin questioned stoically as he kicked Edward over with one foot.

Seeing this, Dahlia immediately stood in front of Dustin to block him. “Stop! You can’t harm him, the consequences will be too severe!”

“I don’t care,” Dustin stated indifferently.

“But I do!” Dahlia’s expression was grave. “Do you even know that we will all suffer the

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consequences with you if you beat him up?”

Dustin frowned upon hearing her words.

He thought she was concerned for his well-being, but it turns out she was only

concerned for herself.

“Stop while you’re ahead, Dustin. Don’t drag us down with you!” Lyra called out.

“That’s right! I see you’ve grown tired of living to dare lay a hand on Mr. Spanner!” Chris

called out before hurriedly helping Edward to his feet and explaining, “We have nothing to do with Dustin Rhys hitting you just now, Mr. Spanner.”

His words weren’t just to shift the blame onto Dustin; they were also a direct accusation.

Dustin narrowed his eyes, feeling as though a weight had been placed on his chest. The only reason he had taken action earlier was to save Dahlia, but he was now being painted as a violent villain in the end.

It was hard for him not to feel displeased about this.

“You little punk! You’re good at fighting? So what!” Edward, having mistaken Dustin’s silence for terror, instantly rediscovered his confidence. “Let me tell you, power and status are what matter in society. You better believe I’ll make you meet a tragic end if you dare lay another hand on me!”

Dustin didn’t say anything in return, but his furious expression could be seen in his

eyes.

“What’s the matter? Scared?” Edward grinned. “Since you’ve got no guts, get on your knees and bow down to me! I might just let you off if you put me in a good mood.”

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“Why are you just standing there? Hurry up and beg Mr. Spanner for forgiveness!” Chris chimed in, taking advantage of the situation to add to Dustin’s humiliation.

Chris was green with jealousy when Dustin was showing off earlier, so he was now

trying to get some payback.

“Will he kneel? Or will he not? If he does, he will forever be too ashamed to show his face. But if he doesn’t, he might be dead or maimed once Edward retaliates,” Chris thought.

“Hey punk, don’t say I didn’t give you a chance to make amends! I’ll spare you if you grovel at my feet today. If not, don’t blame me for being merciless.” Edward jabbed Dustin’s chest with his finger with a smug expression on his face.

“What does it matter if he knows how to fight when he has no power and no status? In the eyes of the public, he’s nothing more than a foot soldier,” he continued mentally.

“Are you aware that you’re playing with fire?” Dustin asked as he looked at Edward’s finger.

“Playing with fire?” Edward smirked. “Not only do I want to play with fire, but I also want to play with your woman! Believe it or not, I’m going to have my way with her tomorrow while you watch. And not only me, but my men will each get a turn as well, and I want you to watch it all helplessly. I want you to understand what it’s like to despair, to believe that living is worse than death!”

Dustin’s expression instantly turned thunderous at Edward’s words, and he could no longer hold back his rage.

“You asked for this!” he shouted as his hand shot forward to forcefully grab Edward by

the throat and lift him above his head.

He then raised his other hand and ruthlessly landed two punches on Edward's abdomen.

Edward made a gagging sound as he felt his stomach churn, making him want to vomit, but he found that he couldn't as his throat was being constricted.

His face soon turned red as he felt himself suffocating. Suddenly, he had a sense that he had made a grave mistake.

"Stop it!" Dahlia yelled, moving forward to intervene.

Dustin ignored her and dealt another vicious punch, this time to Edward's crotch. The

gruesome sound of flesh being minced could be heard before blood flowed to the floor.

Edward let out a groan as his body spasmed. He was in such excruciating pain that he couldn't cry out even though he wanted to, and in the end, his head lullled to one side as

he fainted.

Everyone was stunned as they stared at the bloodstained area.

Not even in their wildest dreams would they ever imagine that Dustin could be so cruel

as to discontinue Edward's family line with a single punch.

After all, he was Sir Spanner's son! Sir Spanner was the kind of man who would come after you for touching even a strand of hair on his son's head, much less injuring him.

Safe to say, from today onward, Dustin had incurred Sir Spanner's vengeful wrath.

"Have you lost your mind!" Dahlia's expression changed drastically as she forcefully shoved Dustin. "Do you even know what you've done? You've just gotten yourself into deep shit this time!"

An apology or money could be used to rectify the situation if it was only a light injury or bruise, but there's no way Trevor will let things slide so easily now that Edward has been beaten to such a state.

"All I did was take care of one of society's scum, is that so wrong?" Dustin shot back, perfectly composed.

"That's not the point, the point is you shouldn't have harmed him!" Dahlia rebuked, frowning.

"Hey Dustin, you shouldn't drag us all down with you if you're so eager to die! Do you know what the consequences of harming Sir Spanner's son are?" Chris' face was flushed with rage.

Although Dustin was the one who had harmed Edward, Chris had also shoved Edward previously; hence, he's also worried that he wouldn't be able to get a way with it when Sir Spanner investigates and finds out about it.

"Alright, that's enough! Since it's come to this, you should hurry up and run. Get as far

from here as you can while there's still time!" Dahlia reacted quickly. away

She knew that once news of Edward's maiming got out, Sir Spanner would surely be furious. And when that time came, Dustin would be at a dead end once he mobilizes all

of his forces.

"I don't think I need to," Dustin stated, his demeanor still indifferent.

"Stop acting tough! Sir Spanner is more powerful than you think, your martial arts skills won't be enough to save you!" Dahlia chastized.

Even if he knew how to fight, he couldn't stop bullets!

“He’s not the type of person to listen to reason, Ms. Nicholson, stop wasting your breath. Furthermore, we should not interfere in matters unrelated to us in order to avoid bringing trouble upon ourselves.” Lyra quickly interjected.

“That’s right, this guy can’t run!” Chris said, suddenly blocking the exit as though something had occurred to him. “What are we going to do if he runs away? What if Sir Spanner exacts his revenge on us instead? Won’t we just become the fall guys!”

“Mr. Nolan has a point!” Lyra chimed in, coming to the same realization. “If Dustin runs away, we’re going to be the ones who suffer!”

“What are you talking about? Dustin just saved us!” Dahlia’s brows furrowed.

“Nobody asked him to, he’s the one who poked his nose into our business!” Lyra

scoffed.

“Exactly! And seeing as he has brought this upon himself, he should be the one to face it!” Chris chimed in self-righteously.

“Both of you-”

Dahlia’s pretty face turned cold as she started to speak when Dustin interrupted her.

“You all can be at ease. I will take responsibility for my actions; I won’t implicate any of you.”

“This is a matter of life and death! Could you please drop the macho act!” Dahlia raised her voice, slightly annoyed.

“You don’t need to worry about what happens to me, Ms. Nicholson. This has absolutely nothing to do with you, so just sit back and watch,” Dustin declared loudly,

“What do you mean by that? Do you think I’m worried about being implicated?” Dahlia asked, frowning.

“Is that not the case?” Dustin looked directly at Lyra and Chris as he said this.

Dahlia was at a loss for words after his subtle hint. Although the thought never crossed her mind, the same couldn't be said for her secretary, who had already drawn a line early on.

In Dustin's eyes, he thought **her** secretary's words were the same as hers.

“I don't care what you think; you have to leave today!” Dahlia's tone suddenly became

forceful.

“And I don't care what you say, I'm not leaving.”

With that, Dustin turned and walked out to the flower garden.

“You!” Dahlia was fuming.

“Why is he so rebellious?” she wondered.

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Chapter 19

The hall was in an uproar because of Dustin's actions.

The timid guests had long left, in fear of becoming caught in the crossfire.

As for the unconscious and critically injured Edward, his bodyguards had immediately taken him to the hospital.

"This is troublesome." Dahlia had a concerned look on her face as she scowled.

Sir Spanner was infamous for being cruel and ruthless, and he surely wouldn't be inclined to just let things go when his son had been beaten into such a state.

Dustin may not have much longer to live.

"Lyra, I want you to find out if there's any way this can be resolved peacefully," Dahlia suddenly said.

Lyra was puzzled. "What do Dustin's actions have to do with us, Ms. Nicholson? Why do we need to expend effort for his sake?" a

Dahlia had a frosty expression as she retorted, "He saved my life earlier. Should I just

watch him die?"

"That's not what I meant, I just think it would be very unwise to cross Sir Spanner at this point. Moreover, no one would willingly get involved in this mess," Lyra explained.

"It doesn't matter, we have to try." Dahlia had a resolute look in her eyes.

"... Very well then," Lyra responded, having no choice but to comply. She then immediately started making calls to all their connections.

However, all the big bosses immediately hung up from fright once they had gotten a grasp of the situation, and none of them dared step in since Sir Spanner was involved.

“You see, Ms. Nicholson? It’s not because we don’t want to help, but because we can’t,” Lyra said, waving her hands.

“Try again,” Dahlia ordered, frowning.

“There’s no point-

” Lyra shook her head as she began to speak when she noticed Chris off to the side. “Hey, maybe Mr. Nolan will be able to help us.”

“Me?” Chris asked, surprised, as he pointed to himself.

“Yes! Didn’t you say before that your father was friends with Sir Spanner? Your father

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might be able to mitigate the situation, right?” Lyra asked expectantly.

“Err...” Chris was taken aback.

His father did indeed know Sir Spanner, but their relationship was strictly all business. There might be a chance of mitigation if it were just a small matter, but Edward had been severely harmed, so how could Sir Spanner possibly be persuaded to refrain from retaliating?

“I’ll owe you big time if you’re able to help with this, Mr. Nolan!” Dahlia exclaimed

earnestly.

Looking at her expectant expression, Chris couldn’t help having a dilemma. This was his best chance of wooing her, so naturally, he wasn’t willing to let it pass him by.

“I can give it a try, but I can’t guarantee anything. After all, it is Sir Spanner.” Chris eventually agreed after briefly mulling it over.

Dahlia visibly relaxed. “I understand. I’ll already be so grateful as long as Dustin

doesn't lose his life!"

"Alright, I'll try my best," Chris said casually, nodding.

It would be great if it worked out, but there weren't any cons if it didn't. After all, Dahlia already owed him a favor by asking for his help.

Meanwhile, at a lounge in Mirage.

Natasha's lips curled into a meaningful smile as she watched the events unfold on a

monitor.

She had a clear view of Edward being beaten and almost gave in to the urge to clap her

hands and cheer.

She had always found some members of the Spanner family to be as annoying as flies, but she hadn't been able to take any action toward them due to certain reasons.

Thankfully,

Dustin did not disappoint. She was quite delighted with his performance today.

"Ms. Harmon, I'm afraid Mr. Rhys does not have enough influence to protect him from Trevor's wrath. Should we assist him?" Alfred Jarvis, a butler who was standing by her side, suddenly asked.

"Let's **not** be hasty. Have someone monitor him—it's too soon to say if Trevor outmatches him." Natasha's eyes narrowed as she looked at Dustin's imposing figure

on the screen.

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"Oh? Do you think so highly of him?" Alfred asked, slightly bewildered.

Natasha smirked. "More like intrigue—I have a feeling that he's full of surprises."

“You don’t actually have feelings for him, do you, Ms. Harmon? Please keep in mind that you already have a fiancé-”

“Hm?” Natasha cast a chilly glance in Alfred’s direction, and he instantly went silent from fear.

“Remember this: You are in no position to say anything about my personal affairs; just focus on **performing** your own duties well.”

“Yes, **Ms.** Harmon.” Alfred didn’t dare say anything further as he felt a chill run down his **spine.**

Midnight at the district hospital.

In an instant, Edward was surrounded by a crowd of people as the emergency operating room’s doors opened, and he was wheeled out on a hospital bed with his lower half completely bandaged. At the forefront of the group was a tall and brawny man with a full beard and mustache.

It was none other than East City’s King of the Underworld, Trevor Spanner.

“Doctor! How’s my son!” Trevor asked first.

The doctor sighed. “His life is not in peril, however, the damage to his genitals is quite extensive. I’m afraid he won’t be able to regain full function.”

“What!” Trevor’s expression changed drastically upon hearing this.

Won’t be able to regain full function? Didn’t that just mean he’d become impotent!

“Don’t you all know how to do your jobs? You can’t even treat such a light injury?” Trevor yelled, grabbing the doctor by the collar of his shirt.

“We’ve tried everything we could, sir, but I’m afraid the injury is just too severe. Preserving his life was no easy task either,” the doctor replied with a tinge of exasperation.

The doctor had never encountered something so tragic—the patient’s genitals had been reduced to a pile of mush. If he hadn’t arrived at the hospital in time, he might

have even lost his life.

“You’re useless! Get out of my sight!” Trevor, whose expression was frighteningly thunderous, bellowed as he shoved the doctor aside.

If the best doctors at the district hospital couldn’t do anything, then his son really was

invalid.

“Talk! What the hell happened!” Trevor abruptly turned and demanded angrily from the bodyguards who stood behind him. “Edward was fine, why has he been beaten to a pulp!”

“Sir Spanner, he...” One of the bodyguards mustered up the courage to summarize what had happened.

Trevor’s temper immediately flared once he finished listening, and he raised his hand and brutally slapped the bodyguard across the face.

“Useless pieces of shit! What’s the point in hiring all of you if you can’t even defeat one man!” Trevor roared out.

However, his rage didn’t subside at all, so he slapped each of them multiple times.

The bodyguards lowered their heads, not daring to speak.

“Why are you still standing there? Go gather more men and bring that punk to me! I don’t care who he is. I’m going to cut him into pieces for daring to harm my son!”

Trevor’s forces began mobilizing with his one order.

It would appear that a turbulent storm was rapidly brewing...

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Chapter 20

The next morning, in the most luxurious private room at Mirage.

“Mr. Rhys, thank you for protecting me. Here is the canscora you wanted. Please take a

look.”

Natasha put an exquisite wooden box on the table before pushing it forward.

“Huh?”

Dustin opened the box and saw a blood-red canscora in it.

The herb was crooked, like a dragon’s tooth. It had an interesting appearance.

He gently sniffed it, and its unique stench filled his nose.

“It is really a canscora! Thank you, Ms. Harmon!”

Dustin’s face lit up. He had been searching for various rare herbs all these years. Finally, he found another one.

There were still five herbs left. If he could collect the remaining five herbs, there would be hope!

“You’re welcome. You deserve it. Come to think of it, I should be the one thanking you.” Natasha smiled.

“Ms. Harmon, I have a favor to ask. Can you contact me immediately next time if you find such rare herbs? I am willing to pay heavily for them!” Dustin looked serious.

“Of course I can do that. But I’m curious about the reason you’re collecting these herbs.” Natasha asked hesitantly.

“To save someone.”

Dustin hesitated before saying, "I have a friend who is seriously injured. I need these rare herbs to save him."

"Oh, what disease did he get? Even you can't cure him?" Natasha appeared surprised.

She had witnessed Dustin's medical skills before. It was not an overstatement to say that he could even bring the dead back to life.

"Medical skills alone are not enough. I need various herbs to heal him." Dustin shook

his head.

One could not make bricks without straw. No matter how good his medical skills were, he could not cure many diseases without the proper herbs.

"I see."

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Natasha nodded as realization dawned upon her. "Alright. I'll keep an eye out for you.

I'll contact you immediately if there's any news."

"Thank you in advance, Ms. Harmon." Dustin gave a slight nod.

"No problem. Let's keep in touch." Natasha gave a wink.

"Sure. We'll keep in touch."

Dustin did not stay for long. After making some small talk, he excused himself and left.

20 minutes later, in front of Peaceful Medical Center.

Holding two bottles of alcohol, Dustin strolled into the medical center.

"Hey, drunkard, look what I've brought you!" He exclaimed while scanning the area.

He followed the sound of a man snoring, and soon he saw a drunk man with a flushed face under a table in the medical center. The man was one-eyed and had a broken leg. He looked like a shaggy beggar.

“Hey, wake up!”

Dustin pushed him.

The man ignored him, turned around, and continued sleeping. His snore became louder.

“You seem to be sleeping rather soundly.”

Smirking, Dustin opened a bottle of alcohol. The fragrance of the alcohol spread across the room. The next second, the sleeping man was jolted out of his sleep. He bumped his head on the table with a bang and broke the table in half!

Ignoring the glass shards on the floor, he instantly snatched the bottle in Dustin’s hand and poured it into his mouth.

“This is some good stuff!” The one-eyed man exhaled a sigh of relief, feeling refreshed.

“This alcohol cost me a lot of money. You’d better save some for later.” Dustin reminded him.

“Come on.” The man rolled his eyes. “You’re a wealthy guy. Two bottles of alcohol are nothing to you.”

“Even so, you can’t waste them!”

“Cut the nonsense! Why are you here?” The one-eyed man glared at him.

“I’ve found another rare herb.”

Dustin handed him the box with the canscora.

“Huh?”

The man opened the box and immediately frowned. “Bastard, I told you not to search for herbs for me anymore. I’m going to die anyway. Dying now and dying later doesn’t

make a difference.”

“That’s your problem, but I’m going to continue searching for herbs. It has nothing to do with you.” Dustin shrugged.

“Hey! Why are you so stubborn?”

The one-eyed man began to panic. “Do you know that the Rhys family controls all the main herbs needed for the production of life-sustaining medications? They will eventually find out if you keep searching for herbs!”

“So what? I’m not the same person I was ten years ago,” Dustin answered.

“Kid, I know you’ve progressed and are better than them, but the Rhys family is unbeatable. Nobody can fight against them. I don’t want you to get involved again!” the man said somberly.

“Life is guided by destiny. I’ve been hiding for ten years, and I don’t want to hide anymore. I want to live the rest of my life confidently!” Dustin was determined.

“You will face many hardships if you choose this path. Your mother wanted you to live peacefully like a normal person.”

“My mother has passed away and she will never come back. You are the only relative I have left in this world. How can I watch you die just like that?” Dustin shouted.

“My life is worthless. It doesn’t matter!”

“Then I’ll die with you!”

“Gosh! Why are you so stubborn? Even if you don’t think of yourself, you should consider your pretty wife. Do you want her to become a widow?” The one-eyed man used his trump card.

He had already noticed Dustin's ambition three years ago, so he had even chosen a

pretty lady to marry Dustin so that Dustin would settle down. He would use this method every time they got into an argument, and it always worked!

"It's no use. We're divorced." Dustin shook his head.

"What? Divorced?" The one-eyed man was stunned.

No way. He couldn't use Dustin's wife as an excuse anymore.

Without any ties, Dustin would go all-in soon!

"I've already made up my mind. No matter if you agree or not, I will do it. You know my character," Dustin said firmly.

"Whatever. If that's what you want, go ahead." The one-eyed man waved his hand. "The worst that could happen would be me losing another leg and becoming completely

blind."

"You won't become blind. I'll make sure you stay alive." Dustin gently clenched his fist as determination filled his eyes.

Ten years ago, the one-eyed man had protected him. Now, it was Dustin's time to protect him.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 21 -

Chapter 21

At noon, in the president's office of the Quine Group.

Dahlia was distracted while reading her documents. Her mind was completely occupied by Dustin.

She was worried that Trevor would track down Dustin. If that happened, Dustin would

be doomed.

"Lyra!" Finally, Dahlia couldn't hold herself back after imagining all the possible

scenarios.

"Ms. Nicholson, how can I help you?" Lyra came in after knocking.

"Help me prepare some gifts. I'm going to the Drey Group," Dahlia said.

"The Drey Group? Isn't that Sir Spanner's place?" Lyra was shocked.

"That's right. I want to talk to him." Dahlia nodded.

"Why do you want to talk to him? Is it about Dustin?" Lyra panicked. "Ms. Nicholson, please calm down! Sir Spanner is still angry. Why would you visit him and poke the

hornet's nest?"

"No matter what, I have to try!" Dahlia was adamant.

"Wait! We still have Mr. Nolan! He said he would help. Why don't we wait some more?"

Lyra advised Dahlia.

“We’ve waited for one whole night, and there’s still no news from him. I don’t think he’ll be able to help us. I have to do this myself.” Dahlia shook her head.

“Ms. Nicholson, don’t we have any better way? Why don’t we think about it again?” Lyra was worried.

“Dustin got into trouble because of me. I can’t sit still and do nothing. Go do as I say.”

Dahlia waved her hand.

Seeing the determination in Dahlia’s eyes, Lyra couldn’t help sighing. Left with no choice, she had to obey Dahlia’s order. She knew that Dahlia wouldn’t change her mind once she made up her mind.

30 minutes later, they arrived at Drey Group.

“Lyra, you can wait in the car. You don’t have to go in with me.” Dahlia ordered.

Chapter 21

“No way. We must help each other out through thick and thin. How can I let you take all the risk by yourself?” Lyra was a loyal person.

“This is dangerous. Just in case, I need you to wait outside. Call the police if I don’t come out in half an hour, got it?” Dahlia looked serious.

“Alright! I will make sure to complete my task!” Lyra nodded vigorously. She knew that she had a great responsibility. It was entirely up to her whether Dahlia could return

safely.

“I’ll go in then.” Without saying much, Dahlia opened the door and entered the building.

with

Unlike ordinary companies, the people in the Drey Group were all buff guys with tattoos. One could tell that they weren’t kind people. After Dahlia reported her identity, a bald guy led her to an office on the top floor.

In the office, the bearded Trevor sat calmly on a sofa with a cigar in his mouth.

“Are you Ms. Nicholson from the Quine Group?”

Seeing Dahlia enter his office, Trevor narrowed his eyes. “As expected, you’re gorgeous.

No wonder my useless son would get into a fight with other people for you.”

“Sir Spanner, may I ask how your son is doing?”

“He’s fine. He won’t die, but he’s crippled,” Trevor said faintly.

“Crippled?” The look in Dahlia’s eyes wavered.

Although Trevor sounded calm, he couldn’t hide the anger in his eyes.

“So, what do you plan to do about this?” Trevor crossed his legs on the table and sat

comfortably.

“Sir Spanner, I’m the one who caused everything and am willing to take full responsibility for this. I hope you can be generous and let Dustin go,” Dahlia said

solemnly.

“You want to take responsibility? Are you sure you can do that?” Trevor grinned evilly.

“I will hire the best doctors to treat your son. Also, I will bear the corresponding compensation. Just tell me how much you need,” Dahlia continued.

“I don’t need money.”

Suddenly, Trevor put a bottle of alcohol on the table. “If you really want to negotiate

Chapter 21

with me, finish this bottle of alcohol first.”

“I...”

Dahlia was put in a difficult position. She wasn't good at drinking. She didn't know if she could handle it after drinking the whole bottle.

“What's wrong? You don't want to drink it? In that case, no deal.” Trevor waved his

hand.

“I'll drink it!”

Dahlia hesitated for a few seconds. Eventually, she picked up the bottle. A bottle of alcohol was nothing compared to Dustin's life. Hence, she took a deep breath, put the bottle in front of her mouth, and started gulping down the alcohol.

After finishing one-third of the alcohol, she began to cough violently, and her face turned red. Gritting her teeth, she ignored the discomfort and continued drinking. She began to feel dizzy when she finished two-thirds of the bottle.

Panting slightly, she finished the whole bottle.

“Sir Spanner, are you satisfied now?” Staggering, Dahlia grabbed the table.

“Haha, interesting.”

Trevor smiled teasingly. “Since you seem sincere, I'll give you another chance. Take off

your clothes now.”

“What?”

Dahlia frowned. “Sir Spanner, what do you mean?”

“Don't you understand? I want you to take off your clothes and serve me. I will consider letting you go if you manage to satisfy me. To be completely honest, even though I've slept with many women, I've never done so with a woman as stunning as you.” Trevor

smirked.

Dahlia's face darkened as soon as she heard that. His son, Edward, was a greedy pervert. She never expected his father to be the same. Indeed, an apple didn't fall far from the tree!

"Sir Spanner, I can promise you anything else except for this!" Dahlia begged desperately.

"Except for this? Haha..." Trevor threatened evilly, "You should know how powerful I am. You should be honored that I'm willing to talk to you. If I don't want to talk to you,

Chapter

there will be no use, even if you strip yourself naked and kneel before me. You better think twice! I'll go take a shower, you better have all your clothes removed when I come back. Otherwise, I'm going to do it myself! By then, I won't be alone, all my brothers outside will join me!"

Dahlia's face turned pale when she heard that. She suddenly realized that she had thrown herself into the lion's den.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 22 -

Chapter 22

At Peaceful Medical Centre, Dustin and the one-eyed man were drinking when his phone rang suddenly.

"Hey, Dustin! Ms. Nicholson is in danger. Hurry up! We need your help!" Lyra shouted.

as soon as the call connected.

"Danger? What's going on?" Dustin frowned.

"It's all because of you! Ms. Nicholson was worried about your safety, so she personally approached Sir Spanner to talk to him. She hasn't come out since then. I think she is in danger!" Lyra sounded urgent.

“What the hell was she thinking? I told her it was none of her business. Why is she looking for trouble?” Dustin’s face darkened.

“Dustin Rhys! Don’t you have any conscience at all? Ms. Nicholson is trying to save you!” Lyra shouted angrily.

“Where is she?”

“The Drey Group!”

“I’ll be there straight away!” Without saying anything more, Dustin hung up and rushed straight there.

At the same time, in the Drey Group’s offices.

Dahlia slumped on the couch, feeling lightheaded. Her face was dripping with sweat. She could feel the aftereffects of the alcohol hitting her. Her hands and legs went weak, and she was losing her balance.

Most importantly, her bag and mobile phone were confiscated right when she entered the office. She couldn’t even call anyone for help.

What should she do?

As she was thinking of a plan, the office door opened, and Trevor strode in wearing a robe.

“Why are you still dressed? Do you want me to take action?” Trevor sized her up. In his eyes, Dahlia was just too alluring. She exuded a unique sort of charm.

He was eager to taste her.

“Sir Spanner, you’d better not do anything stupid. I’ve already got everything prepared. My subordinate will call the police if I don’t go out in half an hour. The police are about

to arrive!” Dahlia warned.

“What? Are you trying to scare me?” Trevor laughed dryly, “How do you think! managed to put myself in this position? I’ll be honest with you. Many of the people in the police station are my men. Do you think they will dare to touch me?”

“What?”

Hearing what he said, Dahlia turned pale. She thought she would be safe since she had a backup plan. Never did she expect Trevor to have no fear at all,

“Come on. Stop struggling. Nobody can save you today. Obey my orders if you don’t want to die!” Trevor began to step closer to Dahlia.

“Don’t come near me!”

Suddenly, Dahlia grabbed a pair of scissors from the table, wanting to defend herself

for the last time.

“Damn it. You ungrateful thing!” Trevor was furious. He struck Dahlia with his fist, and she fell to the ground unconscious. Then he trapped her under his huge body. Forcefully, he tore Dahlia’s clothes open, revealing her fair thighs and slim waist.

Just as he was about to reach out and explore her body, a loud bang rang out, and the door was kicked open. A handsome guy came in with a murderous expression on his face, his bloodthirsty eyes made him look like he was about to devour a person alive.

“Who are you? How dare you interrupt my business?” Trevor stood up, looking frustrated.

Dustin did not say anything. He only took off his jacket and covered Dahlia with it.

Half-

conscious, Dahlia thought she was surrounded by a familiar scent for one second. A sense of security washed over her.

“Sir Spanner, huh? I’m the one who injured your son. Well, do you have any last words?” Dustin lifted his head and stared at Trevor as though he were a dead man.

“So it was you!” Trevor let out an evil laugh. “You could’ve lived peacefully, yet you chose to walk right through the gateway to hell! How dare you break into my territory alone? You must have a death wish!”

With that, he stretched out his hand and pressed a button under the table.

An ear-deafening alarm rang out, instantly, a commotion broke out,

A bunch of men filled the hallways and gathered in front of the office. Soon, the hallway outside the office was crowded with people, looking ahead, it was dark out there. There were at least hundreds of people!

Additionally, the number of people was still increasing

“Kid, I heard that you’re good at fighting,” laughing, Trevor uttered, “So what if you can fight ten or 20 people? I have more than 200 men here. Let’s see how you’re going to fight them today,”

So what if Dustin was a skilled fighter? He could never beat so many people.

“It seems like you’re prepared,” glancing at the people, Dustin remained calm. “But nobody can stop me from killing you,”

“You’re surely a bold one! Let’s see what you’ve got! Attack!”

Hearing Trevor’s order, all the men started rushing toward Dustin.

“Stop!”

Suddenly, a roar echoed across the room, followed by a few gunshots.

Everybody was shocked upon hearing the gunshots, and they automatically spread out.

An elderly man with white hair strode over, dressed in a suit. Behind him were a few fierce-looking shooters.

“Mr. Anderson, why are you here?”

Seeing Hunter, Trevor immediately smiled and went up to greet him.

Everyone knew that Hunter was the president of the Swinton Group. He was one of the Mighty Three! He could make the whole Swinton shake with a stomp

“Get lost!”

Ignoring Trevor, Hunter directly walked up to Dustin. Anxious, he asked, “Mr. Rhys, are you okay?”

“I’m fine, Why are you here?” Dustin was slightly shocked.

“I heard you’re in danger, so I immediately rushed here. Thank God I’m in time!” Hunter wiped his sweat, looking worried. If anything happened to Dustin in his territory, he would be doomed as well.

Chapter 22

“Mr. Anderson, do you know each other?” Trevor’s eyes widened in bewilderment.

“Bastard!” Hunter was furious. He lifted his hand and slapped Trevor hard across the face. “Who the hell do you think you are? How dare you try to fight Mr. Rhys? You must have a death wish!”

“Huh?” Trevor was in a daze. He couldn’t believe it. According to his investigation, Dustin was a nobody with no background. Why did Hunter seem so nervous? Had Dustin been hiding his true identity the entire time?

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Chapter 23

“Why are you still standing there? Let them go!”

The corners of Trevor’s eyes twitched, and his face turned pale. If Hunter had asked politely, he wouldn’t be angry. However, Hunter shouted at him as soon as he arrived and even slapped him. He would be too embarrassed to face his men if he let Dustin go just like that.

“Mr. Anderson, this guy crippled my son and barged into my place. How could I stand in front of the public if they know I let him go today?” Trevor retorted in a low voice.

“Your son deserved to be crippled! I will destroy the Drey Group if you don’t let him go today!” Hunter smirked coldly.

“Mr. Anderson, I know you are influential, and I can’t offend you. But don’t forget that I have someone supporting me too!” Trevor shouted fiercely.

“Are you talking about Edwin? Let me tell you. Even if Edwin were here today, you would still have to let Mr. Rhys go!” Hunter gave a chilly smile.

Trevor’s expression instantly darkened as soon as he heard what Hunter said. He didn’t expect Hunter to be so stubborn. Hunter was even disregarding Edwin for two strangers.

“Great! I will tell Sir Hummer what happened today!” Trevor said, somewhat annoyed.

Edwin Hummer was the leader of the three most influential families in the country. He would definitely be able to control Hunter.

Hunter would have to pay for disrespecting him.

“Cut the nonsense, and let them go right away!” Hunter could not bother to say one more word to Trevor. He took out his gun and pointed it at Trevor’s head.

“Let them go!” Seeing that Hunter was serious, Trevor gritted his teeth and gave in. He didn’t want to risk his life for such a small matter.

“Trevor, this is a warning for you. If anything similar happens again, even Edwin can’t help you!” With that, Hunter escorted Dustin and Dahlia out.

None of the 200 men outside dared to move.

“Sir Spanner, are you going to let them go just like that?” Some of his men felt frustrated.

“What else can I do? Do you want to die then?” Trevor retorted.

Hearing that, his men kept quiet.

“Damn it! I won’t let them go just like that!” Trevor continued with a gloomy expression, “Contact Fletcher and ask him to come back right away. That guy must die today!”

“Yes!”

After exiting the Drey Group, Dahlia finally sobered up.

“Ms. Nicholson, are you okay?” Hunter asked caringly.

“Mr. Anderson? Why are you here? Did you save me just now?” Dahlia looked shocked.

“I didn’t do anything. I just tried to help out. Mr. Rhys risked his life and didn’t back down, even when facing 200 men, only to save you. How devoted!” Hunter smiled.

“Really?” Dahlia turned her head and looked at Dustin next to her. She seemed

confused.

“Mr. Anderson, didn’t you say that you have some matters to deal with?” Dustin asked abruptly.

“Oh, yes. Look at how forgetful I am. I almost forgot. Go ahead and talk. I’ll make a move first.” Hunter didn’t stay for long. After bidding them goodbye, he left with his

men.

“Ms. Nicholson!” Lyra came down from the car. She had been waiting in front of the door, yet Dahlia came out before the police arrived.

“Ms. Nicholson, was that Mr. Anderson who just left?” Lyra asked tentatively.

“That’s right. Thanks to him, we are safe.” Lyra nodded her head.

“Mr. Anderson is not close to us. Why would he help us?” Lyra was shocked.

“Well, I’ve been wondering too.” Dahlia seemed lost in her thoughts.

She barely knew Hunter. Why would he help her?

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Chapter 24

I know! Mr. Nolan must have helped us out!”

Lyra seemed to have thought of something. Suddenly, she said, “I called him after calling the police just earlier. He must have sent President Anderson here.”

“Chris Nolan?” Dahlia frowned, feeling doubtful.

“That’s right. Mr. Nolan is the only person who would help us and has the power to ask President Anderson for help!” Lyra analyzed, convinced that she was correct.

“Well, that makes sense.” Dahlia agreed.

As they were talking, a red Ferrari stopped by the road. The door opened, and Chris, wearing a set of bright clothes, came down hurriedly.

“Dahlia! Are you okay? I came here immediately after receiving the call!” Chris seemed

worried.

“Mr. Nolan, thanks for your help. Otherwise, Ms. Nicholson would be in danger.” Lyra hurriedly thanked Chris.

“Help?” Chris was stunned. He almost couldn’t snap back to his senses.

“Yes! Mr. Anderson had already come just now. He came to rescue Ms. Nicholson.” Lyra

smiled.

“Huh?” Chris was even more shocked.

“Mr. Nolan, I didn’t expect you to be able to get President Anderson’s help. You are amazing. I’m impressed!” Lyra began to flatter him.

The corners of Chris’ mouth twitched. He seemed confused. Hunter Anderson was a big shot, and Chris was in no position to ask for his help. Actually, Chris didn’t even have the right to meet him, much less ask for his help. Although he wasn’t

sure what happened, Dahlia and Lyra had misunderstood him. Since things had already played out, he decided to continue with the flow.

In any case, he wouldn’t lose out on anything.

“Ahem, well... I was just trying. I didn’t expect Mr. Anderson to be so kind.” Chris fixed his tie and accepted the praise.

Hearing that, Dustin couldn’t help laughing. This guy was so thick-skinned. Wasn’t he afraid the ladies would find out the truth?

“Dustin! How dare you laugh?” Lyra cried, annoyed. “Look at Mr. Nolan. He so loved everything easily, but what about you? You only know how to be violent, and you nearly put Ms. Nicholson in danger!”

“Why did he only show up now if he is so amazing?” Dustin responded calmly.

“Although he was late, he got Mr. Anderson’s help. Otherwise, do you think you can walk out of Sir Spanner’s territory alive?” Lyra replied angrily.

“You’re the only one who thinks that way. I don’t think Chris saved me,” Dustin responded calmly.

“Hey! Why are you so ungrateful? Mr. Nolan saved you. Not only did you not thank him, but you’re also sprouting nonsense here. How shameless!” Lyra was displeased.

“Forget it, he doesn’t know how to appreciate other’s help. Let’s not lower our standards and argue with him.” Chris feigned generosity.

“Did you see that? This is what we call grace!” Lyra glared at Dustin.

“Dustin, Mr. Nolan saved us, after all. I think it won’t hurt for you to thank him.”

Dahlia seemed dissatisfied too.

“Go ahead and thank him if you want. It’s none of my business.” Dustin couldn’t care

less.

“Why are you acting this way?” Dahlia frowned minutely. He didn’t even thank Chris for saving them earlier. How could he be so petty? a

“I’m always like that. This isn’t the first time you’ve met me.” Then, Dustin continued relentlessly, “Also, please don’t be a busybody and barge into Trevor’s territory next

time. You are so dumb!”

“I’m dumb? I did it to save you!” Dahlia was getting angry.

“Save me? Who asked you to save me?” Dustin raised his voice. “How are we even related?

Do I need your help? Stop being a busybody. You almost killed yourself, yet you’re trying to act tough. You asked for it.”

Hearing his words, Dahlia was stunned. She couldn’t believe Dustin would say such a

thing.

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Chapter 25

“Is this what you wanted to tell me?”

Dahlia was dumbfounded and rooted to the ground in disbelief. Looking at Dustin’s cold expression, she thought he felt unfamiliar. She could feel grief and sadness. washing over her as a result.

“That’s right! That’s what I wanted to tell you! Please keep in mind not to meddle in my business. My life and death have nothing to do with you. We are no longer related. Do you get it?” Dustin scolded her fiercely.

His cruel words froze Dahlia. She didn’t expect Dustin would complain and blame her instead of thanking her for her kindness. When had they become enemies?

“Hey, Dustin Rhys! Are you even human?” Standing on the side, Lyra couldn’t take it anymore. She scolded, “How can you say that to Ms. Nicholson? She was trying to help you! How can you be so ungrateful?”

“What do you want me to say? Am I supposed to praise her for being brave and barging into Trevor’s place?” Dustin asked coldly.

“You are such an ungrateful guy!” Lyra was pissed off.

“That’s enough! Stop it! From now on, I will never meddle in your business. Whether you’re alive or dead, it has nothing to do with me!”

Finally, Dahlia could no longer hold herself back. With that, she left angrily. No body noticed the usually tough lady had started to tear up.

“Dustin Rhys! You’d better remember what you said today! Don’t come and ask for our help next time!” Lyra glared at him and caught up with Dahlia.

“What an idiot,” Chris uttered, following after them. This was a chance for him to swoop in. He couldn’t let this chance go.

“Silly woman...” Confusion filled Dustin’s eyes as he stared at Dahlia leaving. He had purposely said that to protect her. Trevor would have taken advantage of her if Dustin hadn’t arrived on time earlier. He didn’t want anything similar to happen again, so he had to cut ties with her heartlessly!

“Finally, it’s time to take action.” Dustin took a deep breath, turned around, and stared at Drey Group’s building. He hadn’t left earlier because he was afraid. He simply hadn’t wanted to put Dahlia in danger. Now that Dahlia was safe, he had no worries anymore.

Revenge was a dish that must be served cold. Unfortunately, Dustin was an impatient guy. He had to take revenge today!

With that thought in mind, Dustin strode into the Drey Group without hesitation. Under the people's shocked gazes, he locked the main door. Soon, cries and **howls** rang out from the building.

The whole process took about 20 minutes.

20 minutes later...

With a loud bang, the office door on the top floor was smashed by one of the bodyguards' dead bodies.

Dustin stepped on the corpse as he entered the room, covered in blood. He looked like a devil from hell. The whole place was covered in gore.

It was terrifying!

In the office, Trevor's bodyguards were shocked. They were dumbfounded, and chills started creeping up their bodies.

Dustin was like a monster; they didn't expect him to be so strong. He had killed everybody from the first floor to the top floor!

He had killed almost 200 men all by himself!

Was he even human?

"Who—

Who are you?" Panicking, Trevor stumbled backward. When he saw Dustin coming back, he smiled smugly, assuming that Dustin must have a death wish. Soon, he realized he was wrong.

He was completely wrong!

Dustin didn't have a death wish. He was on a killing spree!

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Chapter 26

As soon as Dustin entered the building, he gradually worked his way up and killed everybody he came across. None of his opponents could stand up to him at all, each

felled in mere seconds.

“You want to take revenge on me, but you don’t know who I am?” Dustin began to close in on Trevor. The look in his eyes was exceptionally cold.

“Damn it! Don’t come near me, or I’ll kill you!” Trevor suddenly took out a gun from

his drawer.

However, Dustin immediately rushed forward and grabbed the muzzle before Trevor could lift his hand. Then, he grabbed the gun.

A metallic groan rang out.

Trevor was shocked to realize that the muzzle of his gun had been twisted by Dustin.

The gun was made of iron! How could he manipulate the gun like it was mud?

—

“Mr. Mr. Rhys, it’s a misunderstanding. I swear I won’t bother you anymore if you leave now.” Trevor started breaking out in a cold sweat. He decided to give in. Dustin’s power was beyond the level of ordinary people. It was no wonder a big shot like Hunter would be so respectful toward Dustin.

“You won’t bother me, but I want to bother you.” Dustin suddenly grabbed Trevor’s shoulder and pulled him violently. With a crack, Trevor’s arm was broken

.

“Argh!” Trevor cried out.

“How dare you touch my woman?” Dustin remained expressionless. He struck again

and broke Trevor’s other arm.

Trevor couldn’t help sweating. His face turned pale while the other people in the room shivered in fear. None of them dared to go near Dustin.

“Fuck! Do you know who my supporter is? It’s Edwin Hummer! The leader of Swinton’s Mighty Three! If you kill me today, Sir Hummer will tear you into pieces!” In the face of death, Trevor threatened Dustin fiercely. He tried to scare Dustin away by invoking his

patron.

“Are these your last words?” Amused, Dustin frowned and threw him to the ground. “If you have nothing else to say, you can die now.”

“No! Don’t kill me! Please don’t kill me! I have power, influence, and money. No matter what you want, I can give it to you as long as you don’t kill me,” Trevor spat blood and collapsed to the ground, pleading ferociously. He was terrified,

“Power and influence? Now that you say that, it reminds me of something.” Dustin scanned his surroundings and looked at a corner. A man in a bright outfit was standing there. “You must be his henchman, seeing that you are by his side,”

Afraid, the man nodded his head without answering,

“Good. Kill him, and all his assets will belong to you,”

With that, Dustin kicked the knife next to his feet toward the man,

The man looked at the knife. After hesitating for a moment, his eyes became fierce,

“No...”

Before Trevor could say anything more, the man had already picked up the knife and stabbed his chest violently. Blood instantly gushed out of Trevor’s body,

Trevor's eyes widened, and he collapsed to the ground. Even after he died, he had no idea who he had offended.

"S—Sir, I've killed him."

"Trevor is pretty influential in East City. Now that he's dead, do you think you can handle the situation?" Dustin asked calmly.

Since the man had chosen his path, Dustin wanted to train him.

"Don't worry, Sir. I'm sure I can handle it!" the man said confidently.

"Oh? You sound confident." Dustin frowned. Slightly surprised, he said, "Let me ask you. What position do you hold in the Drey Group?"

The man didn't answer immediately. Instead, he pointed at Trevor, who was lying in a pool of blood. "He's my father."

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Chapter 27

"He is my father."

Dustin was shocked. He didn't expect the two of them to be related. "I heard Trevor has a son called Edward. Who are you then?"

"My name is Mason. I'm Trevor's illegitimate son." The man bowed his head as he explained, "Trevor forced himself on my mother and got her pregnant. In order to save his image, he kept my existence in the dark and made me his foster son instead."

"So, you hate him?" Dustin asked.

"Yes!" Mason gritted his teeth and seethed angrily, "He abandoned my mother and me, leaving us impoverished all those years ago. Now, he's only using me as a pawn to assist Edward. I can't let them trample over me again. I must get back what's mine!"

“Good.” Dustin nodded in approval. “Since you’re ambitious, I will help you. If you do as I say, I will not only help you climb the ladder but also help you rule over Swinton.”

“Thank you!” Delighted, Mason immediately knelt on the ground to show his gratitude. As wise as Mason was, he could tell that Dustin was an extraordinary man. After all, the latter had taken down the entire Drey Group all by himself, so his capability was unfathomable. Working by Dustin’s side would no doubt make Mason’s future bright.

“You can call me Mr. Rhys. If you need anything next time, feel free to give me a call. All I ask is your loyalty,” Dustin reminded.

“I swear to be loyal to you until the day I die, Mr. Rhys!” Mason nodded, determined.

“You know what to do from here, right?”

“Yes. Whatever happened today is on me. You have no involvement at all,” Mason

replied shrewdly.

“You’re smart.” Dustin smiled. The pawn he found had some potential.

Suddenly, the phone on the table vibrated. Only after getting Dustin’s permission did

Mason answer the call.

“Hey, what’s up? You need 50 million dollars? I heard that you guys haven’t repaid the bank loan. You’re going bankrupt soon, yet you’re still asking me for money? Are you trying to use me? Whatever, I don’t have time for your problem. Get lost.” After saying that, Mason hung up the phone without hesitation.

“What was that about?” Dustin asked.

“It’s nothing. This guy named David Nolan was asking for a loan. 50 million dollars in one go.”

“David?” Dustin raised an eyebrow. “He has a son named Chris, right?”

“I think so. How did you know?” Mason got curious.

“Forget it. Go on and tell me more.”

“Well, I would’ve agreed to lend him the money if it were in the past since that’s the kind of business my company runs. However, I recently learned that Nolan Pharmaceuticals has been investigated for selling fake drugs, though the news has yet to be disclosed to the public. How can I possibly lend money to a business on the verge of bankruptcy? What would I do if they ran off with the money?”

“That’s right. It looks like you’re experienced in handling a business. It shouldn’t be a problem for you to take over Trevor’s business.” Dustin gave a nod of approval.

“Thank you for the compliment, Mr. Rhys,” Mason answered respectfully.

“Alright. Clean up the mess here. I’m leaving now. We’ll get in touch again if needed.” Without wasting time, Dustin changed into a clean set of clothes and left the Drey Group.

It was his first time going on a killing spree in ten years. His emotions were stable, almost peaceful. This was a piece of cake compared to what he’d been through a decade

ago.

“Honk! Honk!”

Just as Dustin wanted to hail a taxi home, a yellow sports car rushed over at him with the sound of a roaring engine. When it seemed like it was going to run into Dustin, the car firmly skidded to a stop. Then, the car window rolled down and revealed a gorgeous face. It was a girl with a ponytail, appearing to be around 18 years old. She was youthful and beautiful.

“Hey, Rhys, get in!” She waved at him.

“Who are you?” Dustin asked, completely baffled.

“Damn, did you forget me already? We met yesterday!” The girl huffed annoyingly.

In her own opinion, her natural beauty attracted attention wherever she went.

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Chapter 28

She was the type to make men fall in love with her at first sight. Thus, she was shocked to learn that Dustin had forgotten about her after just one night. Was her presence so insignificant?

“Um... you do look familiar. I think I've seen you somewhere.” Dustin tried to dig through his memories.

“Yesterday, at the hospital. You treated my grandfather. Do you remember now?” The girl uttered through gritted teeth.

“Oh! You're Natasha's sister, Roth. Am I right?”

“Who the hell are you calling Roth? My name is Ruth! Ruth Harmon!” Ruth nearly exploded out of exasperation. She wanted to step on the gas pedal and run Dustin over with her car. All this time, she'd never been treated this way. How insulting!

“I'm sorry. Ms. Ruth, are you looking for me for some reason?” Dustin quickly changed the topic.

“Of course! Why would I be here otherwise?” Ruth rolled her eyes and ordered, “Hurry up and get in the car. Natasha has fallen sick and is demanding to see you.”

“Hmm? What happened to her?”

“How would I know? You're the doctor. You should go and find out. Now, get in!” Ruth ordered in an unfriendly tone.

Helplessly, Dustin got into the car and then left under the jealous gaze of the passersby.

After half an hour, the car finally pulled over in front of a luxurious building called Java Joys. The place boasted a large backyard, which not only had hot springs but also a garden and a swimming pool. Meanwhile, the main entrance was guarded by security

24/7. O

“Follow me.” Upon getting out of the car, Ruth led the way, and they hurriedly made it to a bedroom. At this moment, inside the private bathroom was Natasha, who was

dressed in a business suit while she soaked in a bathtub full of ice cubes.

Her face was flushed, her gaze blurry, and her breathing was labored. As her chest rose and fell, it caused ripples in the water.

“Ms. Harmon, what happened to you?” Dustin walked over and was stunned the moment he noticed that she wasn’t wearing anything under her suit. While it wasn’t

obvious at first, certain parts of her skin became visible when the fabric was slowly soaked with water. Like any other man, Dustin found it hard to resist when a stunning

woman like Natasha was in this state.

“Mr. Rhys, you’re here...” Natasha opened her hazy eyes and spoke with difficulty, “My body feels so hot. I’m so thirsty and in pain... It feels like my chest is on fire. Quick, help me find out what’s wrong...” As she spoke, she put out her wrist.

With an observant look, Dustin was fast to find out the issue. “Ms. Harmon, if I’m not mistaken, it looks like you’ve been drugged. And with a potent aphrodisiac at that.”

“Bullshit! Who would drug my sister?” Ruth scolded.

“What do I do now, Mr. Rhys?” asked Natasha lethargically.

“Although it’s a special case, it can be treated. But we must move you to a bed. It won’t be easy to treat you in this bathtub.” Dustin signaled for her to get up.

Natasha nodded, struggling to get up. However, as soon as she took a step out of the bathtub, she slipped and collapsed into Dustin’s arms. a

Subconsciously, Dustin’s reflex kicked in, and his hands shot out to hold her, and they just so happened to touch her chest. Natasha felt as though

h she had been hit by a bolt of lightning. At that moment, both of them froze in place.

Dustin's mind was blank, but Natasha's expression was agitated. Her eyelashes fluttered, and her breathing hitched. The fire inside her had only gotten bigger.

Without a warning, Natasha parted her lips and raised her head, surging upward to kiss

Dustin.

"Hey!

What are you guys doing in broad daylight? Aren't you embarrassed?" Ruth, who was at the door, let out a scream at this sight. She covered her face with her hand, but her curious eyes couldn't help peeking through her fingers, and she watched the two of them kiss intimately.

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Chapter 29

"Sorry, I didn't mean to." Dustin instantly came to his senses and rushed to push Natasha away. His face was etched with awkwardness. Everything happened so quickly that he hadn't had time to think.

"It's okay. It was my fault. The drug might have been too strong, as I really couldn't control myself," Natasha replied coyly. While speaking, she cast a glare at Ruth, silently cursing her sister for ruining the rare opportunity for her to get a man.

"Ruth could've just left. Why did she have to scream? I'm cutting her allowance this month!" thought Natasha.

"Ruth, help your sister to lie on the bed," instructed Dustin.

"Hmph! Of course, I will. Did you think you could take advantage of her again?" With a roll of her eyes, Ruth went to hold the grumpy Natasha and walked her to the bed.

“Ms. Harmon, please remove your shirt and lie on your front,” Dustin added.

“What? You pervert, what are you trying to do!” Ruth’s anger immediately flared.

“Don’t get me wrong. I have to use a needling method to extract the toxins from your sister’s body. Otherwise, she’d get worse over time, to the point where she’d lose control,” Dustin patiently explained.

“Are you serious? You’re not trying to scare me, are you?” Ruth looked skeptical.

“Why would I lie to you about this?” Dustin was in disbelief.

“Fine. I will trust you for once. But you have to look away. Don’t peek!” warned Ruth.

“Okay.” Without saying much, Dustin turned around.

“Natasha put on your bra. You can’t let him do anything to you,” Ruth said as she

handed Natasha her bra.

“Ah... How considerate of you, Ruth.” Natasha’s voice sounded strained.

“Don’t mention it. Come, let me help you.” Smugly, Ruth quickly helped Natasha. Then, the latter gave her a look and said, “I think you can head out now. Don’t disturb Mr. Rhys from treating me.”

“No way! What if he tries to lay his hands on you? I must watch him closely!” Ruth rejected her instantly.

Chapter 29

Natasha’s eye twitched, feeling helpless with her upright sister. Why was the girl so dense? She had to teach her a lesson later,

“Hey, Rhys, you can look now.” After getting Ruth’s permission, Dustin turned around at last. Natasha was lying obediently on her front, her smooth and fair back exposed. Her ass, waist, and neck nearly formed a line of perfect curves. At first glance, she looked like an exquisite piece of artwork.

“What are you waiting for? Get to work!” Ruth yelled from the side, staring at him firmly. Dustin regained his composure and took out his needles, sitting by the bedside to start treating Natasha.

Even though the aphrodisiac was potent, it wasn’t difficult to treat once it was discovered. The only problem was that Natasha’s body was too alluring. Added to her charmingly flustered expression, his heart couldn’t help skipping a beat.

Fortunately, Dustin possessed excellent concentration. He only focused on the important parts to resist her allure.

Around 15 minutes later, Dustin breathed a long sigh and removed the needles from Natasha’s back. “Ms. Harmon, your body is free of toxins now. You can flush out the remaining drugs by drinking more water.”

“Thank you for your help, Mr. Rhys.” Natasha smiled shyly. On her flawless face was a lingering seductiveness. It was like sweet wine—so intoxicating.

“Natasha, hurry up and put on your shirt!” Ruth immediately wrapped her sister up tightly, fearing that she would be taken advantage of.

“Ms. Harmon, the aphrodisiac you’re drugged with is very similar to the one your grandfather was poisoned with. Based on my judgment, it must have been the same culprit,” Dustin suddenly said.

“No wonder I felt something amiss.” Natasha nodded thoughtfully.

“It can’t go on like this. To avoid similar incidents like this, we must find out the person behind this as soon as possible,” Dustin advised.

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Chapter 30

“Do you have a plan in mind, Mr. Rhys?” Natasha asked.

“I need to get a clear understanding of the situation first. I hope you don’t mind if

I ask you some questions.” Dustin cleared his throat before continuing, “Where did you go today, and did you meet anyone there?”

“I met Edwin today. We talked about work, and he asked about us being in a partnership, but I rejected his offer,” Natasha answered truthfully.

“I see. Did you drink anything he offered you?”

“Of course not. That man has been eyeing my family business for ages. I’d never let my guard down around him.”

“Then it really is strange how you got drugged, sis,” Ruth piped up.

“Truly.” Natasha rolled her eyes.

“When you two met, did you smell or touch anything in particular?” Dustin then asked.

“Now that you mention it...” Something suddenly dawned on Natasha. “When I stepped into the place, I did smell something particular. I didn’t pay much attention because I thought it was just perfume. But then, after a while, I started feeling dizzy. My body felt oddly warm too. Good thing I left soon after that. Who knows what could’ve happened if I had stayed longer?”

“It seems like that fragrance really is the problem,” Dustin concluded.

“What’s next, Mr. Rhys?”

“There was ambergris residue found on your skin earlier. It must’ve been the main ingredient in the fragrance that was used to drug you.” a

“So what? We still need to track down the person who made that drug,” Ruth huffed, crossing her arms in front of her chest.

“Ambergris is a rare substance, so our target pool is quite limited. We can look at recent buyers and narrow down our search from there,” Dustin replied.

“Good plan. I’ll have someone get to it right away!” Natasha agreed. With her family’s influence, this sort of thing could be settled in a jiffy.

“I trust my work here is done, Ms. Harmon. I’ll take my leave now.” Dustin made a move to stand up.

“One more thing!” Natasha suddenly stopped him.

“Why don’t you join us for dinner?”

“Thank you, but I... already have plans tonight.”

Natasha gave him a curious look. “It can’t be with your ex-wife, can it, Mr. Rhys? Don’t you find me attractive? Hm?”

With that, she arched her body to show off her curves.

Dustin froze up. “U-uh...”

“Hahaha, alright, I’ll stop teasing you,” Natasha giggled, “I won’t make you cancel your plans. But before you go, here is a token of my appreciation.”

She made a quick gesture, and a servant came over with an elegant-looking box.

“I hope you can make good use of these wines, Mr. Rhys. I’ve had them in store for quite some time.” Natasha beamed, handing him the box.

“You have my thanks, Ms. Harmon.” Dustin gladly accepted it. He deserved some compensation for work done, and a gift from Natasha Harmon herself wouldn’t be just some lousy trinket.

“See Mr. Rhys out, Ruth,” Natasha called.

“Okay,” Ruth’s tone was tinged with reluctance, but she still brought Dustin out to his Lamborghini,

Suddenly, his phone rang. It was a phone call from Henry Nicholson, Dahlia’s grandfather,

“Hey Dustin, are you up for lunch today?”

“Thank you, but I already have plans today, sir.”

“You still need to eat, don’t you? Dahlia should’ve cut you some slack. I’ll make sure to tell her about this!” The old man grunted.

“It’s just some personal business, sir, nothing to do with Ms. Nicholson.”

“Alright, enough defending her. I know how you are, and I’m sure this is because of her. Don’t you worry; I’ll make sure to confront her about this. We’re family, and family needs to spend time together.” 9

“Uh... sure, I guess,” Dustin reluctantly agreed.

In the three years after marrying into this family, only this old man treated Dustin as his own. That was why he respected and cared for him deeply.

But they wouldn’t see each other for a long time after that. So let this meal be the final goodbye for both of them...

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Chapter 31

Dustin drove over to the Nicholsons' home at noon. The villa was in a secluded neighborhood, with flowers and hedges decorating the front yard.

Dahlia was right outside. Dustin tried to avoid her but was still spotted.

"Stop right there! I need to talk to you!"

"What is it?" Dustin asked. Their backs were to each other as they spoke.

"I haven't told Granddad about our divorce because of his condition."

"Do you think we can keep him from finding out?"

"I'll find a chance to tell him after, just not today."

"Alright. Anything else?"

"Nope." Dahlia turned and went inside the house without another word.

They never once looked at each other, acting like complete strangers.

Dustin took a deep breath and went in as well, wine in hand. The living room was filled with people, including most of the Nicholsons.

Only John, Dahlia's father, was absent, still outside on his trip.

Yet someone was sitting in his usual seat this time, an outsider too—Chris Nolan.

"How rude to have us elders wait on him like this," Florence jeered, her expression

mean.

“Shh, Mom. He might get upset and hurt you!” James chirped loudly. He hadn’t let go of what had happened yesterday. The bruises were still visible on his face.

“Alright, now that everyone’s here, let’s have dinner.” Henry Nicholson announced, beaming at Dustin. “Come and sit beside me, kid.”

“Sure.” Dustin smiled in return and helped the old man to his seat.

James scowled, his eyes burning with jealousy. “Kiss—ass!”

He had never understood why his grandfather doted on Dustin. James was the old man’s grandson by blood!

“Come, let us all drink!” Henry toasted.

“Granddad, look at this.” James pulled up a decorated box of wine. “Chris brought this beautiful wine over, a fine Grand Cru from La Romanee Conti. We should all toast with this!”

“La Romanee Conti? That’s a really expensive vintner, no?”

“Yes, it is. It was 100 thousand dollars a bottle!” Chris boasted.

“What? 100 thousand dollars a bottle?!” everyone exclaimed in shock. The sky-high price had been way beyond their expectations.

The Harmons were pretty well-off, but even they hadn’t had a chance to try something this expensive.

“Why’d you spend all that money on this, Chris? It’s too much, no?” Florence questioned, though pride laced her tone. After all, Chris was her first choice for a son-in-law.

“100 something thousand isn’t much. I have another barrel of this at home, so please, you all enjoy,” Chris grinned like a cat that ate the canary. The pride was evident on his face, however.

“Mr. Nolan, you’re really generous.”

“Yeah, we’re really in for a treat tonight!”

The family began praising Chris for his wine, feeding his ego further.

“Hey, boy, look at how sincere James is. His wine costs 100 thousand dollars. But what about yours, hm? You bought them from the dollar store, didn’t you? Cheapskate!” Florence sneered and even kicked James in the calf.

“Why don’t we have a look?” James proposed with a conspiring smile. He swiftly opened Dustin’s box of wine.

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Chapter 32

The wines were quickly unboxed for everyone’s viewing pleasure.

“Teh, and here I thought they were decent quality. Looks like these are just craft brews, worth no more than two thousand dollars, I bet.” James had a look of disdain on his

face. “How could these compare to Grand Crus?”

“Craft brews have long lost their value on the market. We don’t even give our servants. these!” someone exclaimed,

Craft brews weren’t actually that terrible in terms of quality, but they were nothing compared to Grand Crus.

“What a cheapskate!” Florence scoffed,

“How are craft brews cheap when they’ve been on the rise in the country? Is our taste. in fine wine only limited to those brewed overseas?” Dustin casually responded.

“How is it not cheap when they cost only a couple thousand? Chris’ wines cost more

than 100 thousand dollars.” James rolled his eyes.

“Wines don’t have to be expensive to be good. Plus, you don’t know how much exactly

my wines cost.”

“Are you still trying to make a comeback?” James sneered.

Florence scowled. “Hmph! So damn stubborn, that one.”

“I’m not going to waste any more of my time trying to explain to people who won’t listen to reason,” Dustin said. He really didn’t want to waste his breath any longer.

“That’s enough. What matters most is the flavor, not the cost. I prefer whites over reds. anyway.” Henry finally interrupted, popped open one of the craft brews, and poured himself a glass.

“Wait, why is it so yellow? Shouldn’t craft brews be pale white?”

“It’s murky too! It isn’t fake, is it?”

“My goodness, bringing fake wine to dinner! What kind of person would do that?”

The people started whispering to each other upon seeing the yellow liquid in the old man’s glass.

“Now you’ve really done it! How dare you mock us all with this sham of a gift?! ”

Florence cried, slamming the table with one hand.

“What if something happens to us after drinking it?!”

“I never expected him to be so evil! Is he trying to poison us all or what?”

A commotion broke out at the table in an instant.

Cheap wine was already embarrassing enough, but fake wine? That was a conspiracy waiting to happen!

Not even the old man knew how to calm the situation down now. He never drank much

craft brews, but even he knew it was supposed to be a pale, nearly transparent color. Yet the wine Dustin had brought was not only yellow; it even seemed opaque.

It didn't look like anything good.

"This is how fine—aged craft brews usually turn out to look like," Dustin explained.

"Bullshit!" James cried. "Do you think we're idiots? No wine looks like this! It's piss,

that's all it is!"

"Yeah! Why do you continue to lie through your teeth?" Florence huffed.

Chris shook his head with faux empathy. "Oh, Dustin. You should've told me if you couldn't bring anything to the table. I could've given you a bottle or two for show. Why would you want to drag us down like this?"

His words seemed kind, but in truth, he was leaping for joy internally. Dustin truly was no match for him. His victory over this family nearly felt effortless.

"I don't care if you trust me or not. All I can say is this wine is genuine and as good as they come," Dustin reaffirmed.

"Whoa, what a crowd!"

Suddenly, a man appeared in the doorway, still dressed in his business suit, holding several gifts.

"Dad? You're back from your trip already?" James gasped.

It was John Nicholson, Dahlia's father.

"Well, the deal was a success, so I came home early." John smiled. The wines on the

table caught his attention. "Oh, is that La Romanee? It's a recent brew I think, but it must cost at least 100 thousand dollars a bottle, am I right?"

"Good on you, Dad! You're right!" James beamed.

"Dear, Chris brought this over for dinner. Isn't he sweet?" Florence spoke up, then she turned to glare at Dustin. "Unlike some people who tried to poison all of us with fake wine!"

"Fake wine?" John exclaimed.

"Yeah, look!" James showed his father the glass of yellow liquid. "Dustin brought this over for dinner. If we hadn't noticed in time, God knows what would've happened to us if we drank it."

John took a close whiff of the wine, then tossed the entire glass down in one go.

"Dad, what are you doing? Don't drink that! You'll kill yourself!" James yelled.

Yet John seemed to be reveling in the taste of the wine. "A smooth, creamy body, followed by a heady finish, this isn't fake. This is a priceless aged craft brew!" "What?!" Everyone gasped.

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Chapter 33

"You must be kidding, right, Dad? This can't be aged wine!" James' eyes were wide as dinner plates.

"Look at how yellowish it looks, though. It must be fake!" Florence accused.

"You guys must not have seen brews like this before. Aged craft brews get this color, and it only darkens the longer it's been aging. Every wine connoisseur knows this."

The looks on everyone's faces quickly changed. Their accusations had just been dampened significantly, not by just anyone but by John Nicholson himself, a well-known wine enthusiast. His judgment couldn't be wrong.

"I was blessed to be able to try such a fine wine years ago with a government official, but this brew right here must be finer than the one I had that body and finish tell me it must've been aged for at least 50 years!" John smacked his lips, still enjoying the brew's aftertaste. ?

"How much would it cost on the market?" James asked curiously.

"It's priceless. You couldn't find a willing seller even if you offered a city's worth. But if we judge based on recent wine auction values, it should cost at least two million dollars,"

"Two million?!" Everyone gasped. They've never even heard of wine that costs this much! Chris' Grand Cru was nothing compared to that!

"N—no way!" Florence refused to believe it. "Are you sure about this, John? How could Dustin be able to afford this?"

"Yeah! He can't even afford a nice pair of pants, not to mention something this expensive!" James cried. His argument brought forth the table's resounding agreement.

"He has a point. How could that **vagrant** have that much money?"

"Hmm... where did you get this brew, Dustin?" John asked gently.

"A friend gave it to **me**," he answered truthfully.

"Gave it to you?" Florence scowled. "How could **someone** like you have friends rich enough to buy a drink like that? Even if they did, why would they give it to you in the first place? I bet you stole it from them!"

"Yeah, he must've stolen it!" James nodded vigorously, finding a new accusation to

slap Dustin with. He refused to believe Dustin could afford this sort of quality wine, whether or not it was given to him by a friend.

"Why did you have to steal this of all things, Dustin? Do you know how

many years you'll have to spend in prison for theft?" Chris huffed, appearing to be considerate.

How could that pauper have gotten a hold of something not even he could.

“Whether you believe me or not doesn’t matter to me. I didn’t steal it, and that’s enough for me,” Dustin droned.

First, they called his wine cheap. Then, after revealing it wasn’t, they find another accusation of him having stolen it. Next, they would just say he blackmailed Natasha into giving it to him.

That’s why there was no use explaining to them further.

“Hah, see? Where’s your excuse now? I knew you stole this!” Florence screeched.

“You thief! I can’t believe you stole this just to look good in front of us!” James gasped, playing along.

“Whatever. I got this wine for Granddad and Granddad only, so you guys don’t have to drink any if you don’t want to!” Dustin rolled his eyes. He had had enough of this crap.

“Enough, all of you! I trust Dustin with my whole heart, and I know he didn’t steal this wine, so stop it!” Henry finally ground out.

“But Granddad...

“Be quiet! Eat your food!” the old man ordered once again. Only then did everyone shut

1. up.

Even Florence and James, who still didn’t believe **he** could have lawfully gotten his

hands on the craft brew.

Dinner finally began. Even though everyone had their turn at smearing Dustin’s name, they still gladly took their share of the craft brew. Even those who didn’t drink alcohol tried a few sips.

After all, this brew cost over two million dollars on the market, a precious delicacy they had never had the luck to try before. Why pass on the opportunity?

Dustin could only snort at how stubborn this family of people was.

Dinner **soon** came to an end.

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Chapter 34

Chris rapped on the table, calling for everyone's attention.

"Everyone, I would like to share some good news with you all. Nolan Pharmaceuticals has been looking to increase its share pool, so we are currently welcoming new investors. Is anyone here interested?"

"New investors?" Everyone's attention was immediately captured.

Nolan Pharmaceuticals was an industry-leading corporation with very limited shares available. That was why Chris' announcement came as a shock to everyone at the table.

"Hasn't the company been doing alright, Mr. Nolan? Why the sudden invitation?" Dahlia asked curiously.

"Of course, it has been. We've just been planning to list our company publicly, that's why. As everyone knows, our company is not short on talent or the capability to overcome competition. This share listing is just so we have some funds to give our employees a good bonus this season." Chris smiled. "We haven't officially announced this to the public yet, and the spots are **limited**. If anyone here is interested, we can save some spots for you.

That sure got everyone on board. Nolan Pharmaceuticals could easily bag the m all hefty profits!

"Count me in, Mr. Nolan. I have five million to spare!" James called out eagerly.

"Eight million on me!" Florence followed.

Chris beamed. "Alright, two spots for you guys.

"Hey, I want a share too! You've got yourself another three million!"

“Five... five million for me—that’s all my life savings!”

The family started shouting over each other, worried they wouldn’t be able to get at **share**. It was a perfect example of herd mentality.

“What about you, Dahlia? How **many** shares would you like to get?” Chris turned to Dahlia. “I can give you extra from the pot, given our relationship.”

“I...” Dahlia gave it some thought.

She had learned a lot on her way up to where she **was** today. Naturally, she knew not to make decisions based on **personal** sentiment.

“Don’t you trust me, Dahlia? I’m offering you a share because you’re important to me. You can say no if you want to—there are loads of other people waiting to get their share.” Chris huffed lightly.

“I didn’t mean it like that. It’s just that I’ll be joining as a shareholder in a company with the Harmons very soon, so I’m being extra careful with how I’m spending my funds, just in case,” she explained.

“How much do you have in hand right now?” Chris asked.

“Not much. So million tops.”

“That’s more than enough! To be frank with you, you don’t need that much to work with the Harmons. Why don’t you consider investing in my company instead? We pay out really solid dividends each year.”

“He’s right, Dahlia. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity!” Florence cried.

“What are you waiting for, sis? You can trust Mr. Nolan. He’s already helped you out so many times!” James added.

“If you believe in me, Dahlia, then invest in my company. But if you don’t, it’s fine too,” Chris finally relented.

“L... Alright then.”

After some hesitation, Dahlia finally nodded. She was only doing this to pay back the favor she owed Chris, and he had insisted so much that it would be disrespectful to reject his offer.

This investment wasn't a bad idea either.

Just like that, Dahlia's So million dollars were all promised to Nolan Pharmaceuticals.

"What about you, Dustin? Wanna buy a share?" Chris suddenly asked with a smirk he didn't bother hiding.

"Oh, and by the way, one million is the minimum investment amount. You can have at go at earning big if you have that much as a starter."

"Thanks, but no thanks."

"Heh, I see... Are you not interested? Or... don't you have that much to **spare**? How about this: For Dahlia's **sake**, I'll let you have a ten-million share if you can fork out a **hundred** thousand dollars at least." Chris grinned.

Dustin replied nonchalantly, "No, thank you. I have no interest in a company that's on

the verge of packing it up."

That brought Chris' mood to a shocked standstill.

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Chapter 35

"What did you say?"

Chris froze, thinking he had misheard him.

"I said I'm not interested in a business that's about to go bankrupt," Dustin repeated.

"Bankrupt?"

Everyone was too stunned to react to his words.

“How dare you! That’s nonsense!”

Chris was shocked, but he quickly denied it. “Nolan Pharmaceuticals is raking in profits every day and is at its prime. How could we go bankrupt? Stop fear-mongering!”

“Only you know whether this is fear-mongering or not. Anyways, I’ve received news that Nolan Pharmaceuticals will be investigated due to the sale of counterfeit illicit drugs. It’s just a matter of time before they go bankrupt.” Dustin’s words were very shocking.

“Counterfeit drugs? Investigated?”

Now, everyone was even more puzzled.

Their

gaze turned to Chris.

“Nonsense! All of it is nonsense!”

“Dustin, stop spreading these rumors. Nolan Pharmaceuticals is a law-abiding company. How could it go under investigation? I can sue you for defamation!” Chris threatened.

His words may appear firm, but he was in turmoil on the inside. Nolan Pharmaceuticals was indeed under investigation and would go bankrupt soon. He intended to list the company as a publicly traded company to raise capital so he could run off with a fortune.

However, the news had been suppressed. How did Dustin know without it being leaked?

“Dustin, what nonsense are you spewing? How **can** a company as successful as Nolan Pharmaceuticals go bankrupt?” Florence reprimanded.

“That’s right! Everyone knows **that** Nolan Pharmaceuticals has good assets and is at the peak **of** success. Stop spreading lies!” James also piped in.

It was obvious they doubted him. After all, the Nolan family had a long history in

Swinton. They also maintained a good reputation, so it did not seem possible to have

issues.

“It’s the truth. Nolan Pharmaceuticals is about to go under, and the so-called ‘capital increase and share expansion’ is nothing than a money-grabbing scam.”

Chris even contacted Mason to borrow money. The investigation of the company and its bankruptcy were obviously true.

“Bullshit! I just wanted to do everyone a favor because we’re close. It’s fine if you

choose not to accept my offer, but how dare you slander me? What intentions do you have?” Chris cried out.

“Mr. Rhys, it’s fine if you’re not able to help us. But why cause trouble when Chris just wants to help us? You’re really devious!”

“That’s right! This fellow must be slandering Chris because he’s jealous!”

“Dustin, you’re so despicable!”

Everyone started to chime in, one after another.

Dustin was poor, while Chris had power and money. Between the two, they were more inclined to believe Chris.

Dustin couldn’t help but frown as he watched the commotion. He did not expect his kind intentions to be returned with such a negative reaction. This proved that no one would believe a **man** without money or power. 1

“Dustin, do you have proof that Nolan Pharmaceuticals is going bankrupt?” Dahlia suddenly asked. She had invested eight million worth of funds. Naturally, she had to be

cautio

“I don’t have evidence. But what I said was the truth. You can check if you don’t believe me. You should be able to trace the information,” Dustin replied coldly.

Dahlia’s expression darkened at his words. Did this mean he was just making it up? She even had high expectations for him. It turned out he was just making false accusations. This must be the result of his jealousy turning into hatred.

“Everyone, since Dustin claimed I’m a swindler, just forget the matter about the

shares, lest I rip off everyone.”

Seeing that the timing was right, Chris deliberately put on an act as if he had been wronged.

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Chapter 36

Chris' words made everyone nervous.

How could they let this opportunity to make a fortune slip away so easily?

"Chris, ignore this fellow. He's obviously jealous of you. But we're not, we all believe you!" Florence immediately took a stand.

"That's right! Chris, you promised us about the stocks. You can't just forget about it."

Everyone agreed right away. As they spoke, they turned and glared at Dustin.

"Dustin Rhys, don't stop us from making a fortune! Otherwise, I won't let you off so easily!"

"Yeah! Get lost if you wish to continue on with this nonsense!"

The crowd chattered and chimed in one after another. From their perspective, Dustin was slandering Chris and preventing them from making money. He had such malicious intentions!

"Do all of you really trust Chris? Hasn't anyone ever doubted if he was lying?" Dustin asked with a frown.

"That's none of your business! We'll do what we want!" James glared at him.

"That's right! Even if we were cheated, it would be on our own terms! It has nothing to do with you! You're really such a busybody!" Florence looked at him with disgust.

Dustin smirked at these words. He appeared to be making a fool of himself or being disdainful.

"Since you all love to give **away** your money. Forget I ever said anything." He shook his head. It was hard to advise these stiff-necked people. These people were so blinded by money that they had no hope. He would

just be embarrassing himself if he tried to warn them any further. He even looked forward to their reactions after finding out they had been scammed.

“If you have nothing nice to say, you should shut up! You’re such a letdown!” Florence spat out.

She would have gotten rid of him if not for Henry’s sake.

“Alright, this is just a misunderstanding. Dustin must’ve been misled by some news.” Henry tried to smooth things over.

“Yeah! It’s all just a misunderstanding.”

John smiled and tried to change the topic. “Oh, Dahlia, you were saying you’re starting a company with the Harmon family. How’s it going?”

“I’ve become partners with the Harmon family and signed the contract. Our new company will be officially launched in two days. We’ll be having an opening ceremony at that time. Feel free to join if you have the time,” Dahlia offered with a smile.

It was her goal to work with the Harmon family.

“Is that so? That’s awesome. I’ll be sure to attend!” John answered happily.

“Dahlia, I didn’t expect you to partner with the Harmon family. We’ll be able to gain a stronger foothold in Swinton in the future.” Henry was very relieved.

“Chris helped out a lot in this matter. If he hadn’t pulled some strings, we would never even be eligible to **partner** with the Harmon family.” Dahlia spoke as she turned to face

Henry.

“Dad, not only that, today when Trevor tried to cause Dahlia trouble, Chris called for Mr. Anderson, who helped her out of the situation!” James added.

“Is that so? Then I’ll have to thank you, Chris!” James raised his glass and gave Chris a

toast.

“It’s nothing. I **was** just helping out.” Chris raised his glass in response.

“You must be very influential to be able to ask for Mr. Anderson. But some people who don’t know any better even tried to accuse the Nolan family of going bankrupt. What a joke?” James commented in a condescending tone.

Dustin sipped his wine quietly, acting as if he did not hear a thing. Although he knew the truth, he couldn’t be bothered to reveal it, because they wouldn’t believe him. The truth would prevail when the Nolan family went bankrupt.

As they continued to drink, the atmosphere at the table loosened up more.

Compared to Dustin, who had been left out, Chris was the center of attention. They surrounded him and greeted him **warmly**, laughing heartily. However, no one **in** the Nicholson family realized they were sinking into a mire of their own making.

Chapter 37

The following morning at the Hummer Villa.

As the richest man in Swinton, Edwin was drinking tea leisurely with an old man.

“Mr. Lawson, it’s too bad that the lady was so cautious and left before the drug could take effect. Otherwise, I will definitely have subdued her!” Edwin lamented.

“Don’t worry, Mr. Hummer. She doesn’t have the antidote for the drug I gave her. She will definitely come begging if she doesn’t want to die. You can have your way with her then,” Fletcher joked.

“Is that so? That’s perfect!” Edwin’s eyes lit up. He had been longing for a thorny rose like Natasha for a long time. The thought of toying with such an exquisite woman in bed made his heart race.

“Sir Hummer...”

Suddenly, a bodyguard came and whispered something in Edwin’s ear.

“What? Trevor is dead?”

Edwin's face darkened and he demanded, "Who did it? Who dared touch my men?"

Trevor was his right-hand man and did his dirty deeds. His sudden death was quite a loss to Edwin.

"It was rumored to be his adopted son, Mason. That man was in a hurry to take over his position, so he killed Trevor."

"Mason?"

Edwin narrowed his eyes, and thought, "That bastard is so cruel. He wouldn't even spare his adoptive father?"

"Mr. Hummer, I **think** there's something fishy about this matter." Fletcher had a

suspicion.

"Huh? Did you think of something?" Edwin raised his eyebrows.

"Trevor called me yesterday, asking me to get rid of someone related to Hunter Anderson. I planned to ask him about it today, I didn't expect him to pass so soon. Fletcher stroked his beard.

"So you think that person killed Trevor?" Edwin quickly understood what he was

implying.

"That's possible!" Fletcher nodded.

"If that person is related to Hunter, this matter is not as simple as it seems." Edwin rubbed his chin, deep in thought.

He had devoted all of his attention to the Harmon family, so if he were to provoke Hunter and both families joined forces, even he would be in deep trouble.

"Sir Hummer, I have an idea if you're afraid of causing trouble."

"Please, go on."

“Doesn’t Trevor have an older brother, Travis? I heard he is serving in a warzone in the west. Besides, he is also a lieutenant who commands thousands of men. We could just inform him of the news of Trevor’s death, and let him do the rest. Then, we can sit back and watch the show!” Fletcher smiled sinisterly.

“That’s a great idea!”

Edwin’s eyes lit

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make use of him!

“With a reckless man like Travis leading **the** way, I can definitely

At the same time, in the office of the Jackson Group.

Just as Dahlia took a seat, Lyra knocked on her door and entered.

“Ms. Nicholson! Something bad has happened!”

“What is it?” Dahlia felt her chest tighten.

“I heard there was a massacre at the Drey Group and Trevor was murdered!” Lyra’s words shocked her.

“What? Travis was murdered?” Dahlia was dumbfounded. He was Sir Spanner! The King of the Underground in East City, who did business with both lawful and unlawful people. How could he just die?

Besides, they had just seen each other yesterday.

“I’m not too sure of the details, but news on this has been released.” At this point, Lyra asked in a hushed voice, “Ms. Nicholson, do you think this has anything to do with

Dustin?”

“Dustin?”

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Chapter 37.

Dahlia pursed her lips and answered, "I don't think so. Even if he fights well, he doesn't have the guts to kill someone."

"That might not be the case." Lyra shook her head and added mysteriously, "As the saying goes, desperate times call for desperate measures. Trevor would definitely not let the issue of his son becoming crippled slide. Dustin might risk everything in order to protect himself!"

Dahlia couldn't help but frown at these words. That could indeed be the case.

"It's a good **thing** that he died. At least we don't have to worry about him any more. **In** that case, Dustin might have done a good deed." Lyra smiled. 1

"I'm afraid it's not that simple," Dahlia stated solemnly. "There's a reason why Trevor could act so lawlessly. He has someone very influential supporting him. This man is our greatest worry!"

"Someone supporting him? Who is it?" Lyra asked curiously

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Chapter 39

Before the matter of Trevor's death could come to a rest, there was a surprising announcement the next day. The Harmon family had decided on a partner, and today would be the opening ceremony of the new company. Once the news was released, everyone came forward to offer their congratulations.

At 8.00 am, luxurious cars were already gathered at the entrance of the Emerald Building. However, Natasha, one of the important attendees, was not present. Instead, she was drinking coffee leisurely at some coffee shop.

"Over here, Mr. Rhys." As soon as she saw Dustin enter, she jumped to her feet and

waved.

"Isn't today the opening ceremony of your new company? Why did you want to meet here?"

Dustin sat across from her. Natasha was wearing a white blouse and a skirt to day. Her dark hair was tied in a bun, making her look even more mature. Her top wrapped tightly around her chest, looking as if it were about to pop.

“It’s only the opening ceremony. A date with you is much more important.” Natasha blinked her eyes teasingly. Her fiery red lips were so alluring.

“Ms. Harmon, **stop** joking. Let’s talk business.” Dustin **was** starting to be flustered.

“Alright, I won’t beat around the bush.” She smiled and asked, “Mr. Rhys, does Trevor’s death have anything to do with you?”

“Why are you asking?” Dustin raised his eyebrows.

“I’m just curious. Although Trevor **is** a reckless bastard, he **has** many men. It’s not easy to kill him. I thought for some time, and it seemed only you, Mr. Rhys, had the ability to do so.” **Natasha** was deep in thought.

“Haha! **Ms.** Harmon, you think too highly of me.” Dustin laughed without giving a straight answer.

“Trevor’s death is nothing. It wouldn’t affect the situation in Swinton. But the problem is the men behind **him**,” Natasha continued.

“Are you talking about Edwin Hummer?”

“He is one of them. But he won’t do anything disadvantageous to himself because of Trevor. He’s easier to deal with.

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“Do you mean Trevor has other patrons?”

“That’s right. He has a brother, Travis. He’s a lieutenant with great power. He can’t be underestimated!” Natasha spoke in a grave tone.

Even the Harmon family did not want to go against people involved in the military. This was also why she did not immediately retaliate when Trevor had kidnapped her.

“Thanks for the warning, Ms. Harmon. I’ll take note of this.” Dustin nodded, his heart filled with gratitude.

“Oh, there’s also another thing.” Natasha changed the topic, continuing by saying, “Regarding the ambergris, I already have the results. According to the investigation, the one who drugged me is known as Mr. Lawson.”

“Mr. Lawson? What’s his background?” Dustin asked.

“This man is the same as Trevor. He’s Edwin’s right-hand man. However, his identity is a mystery. He has been living behind the scenes, giving advice, and carrying out shady activities.”

“What are you going to do?”

“I want to cut off Edwin’s limbs and teach him a lesson! But... my men are not able to deal with such people, so I have to ask for your help,” Natasha gently implored.

“Lure him out and create an opportunity for me to deal with him,” Dustin answered casually.

“Thank you, Mr. Rhys!” Natasha smiled and added, “I’ve invited Edwin to the opening of the new company today. Mr. Lawson will also be there. You can carry out your plan

then.”

“Okay.” Dustin nodded.

“Mr. Rhys, it’s almost time. Let’s **go**.”

The two did not linger for long. After finishing the coffee, they headed toward the Emerald building.

At this moment, there **was** a big crowd in front of the building. As they stepped down from the car, they saw Dahlia and her family entering the venue. Dahlia was part of the new company, so it wasn’t surprising to see a representative of the Nicholson family here.

“Dustin, why do I keep running into you?” a voice came from behind.

Dustin turned around only to be met with the sight of Chris Nolan.

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Chapter 40

“I don’t recall Dahlia inviting you. Are you really so shameless?” Chris sneered .

“I invited Dustin. Do you have a problem with that?”

Natasha took a few steps forward. Her domineering stance made Chris take a few steps

back.

“Hmph! You’re a man that needs a woman to stand up for you? What a useless man!” Chris grimaced disdainfully. He added, “And you! You’ll regret it sooner or later, staying with this trash!”

“What does that have to do with you? Stay away from me!” Natasha snorted coldly. She

put her arms around Dustin and walked into the hall without a care.

“Stupid b*tch! You’re so full of yourself! I’ll get you in bed one day!” Chris gritted his

teeth as he watched them walk away. He couldn’t understand why someone as useless

as Dustin was so good with women.

“Chris, you’re here to join the fun too?”

A fashionably dressed man exited a Maybach.

“Hey! Isn’t that Jeff Anderson? You’re here too?”

Chris’s eyes lit up.

It was none other than Hunter Anderson’s son, Jeff Anderson!

“The Harmon family is launching a new company, so I had to come!” Jeff smiled.

“Jeff! The Harmon family is honored to have someone like you attend the opening ceremony!” Chris started to butter him up.

“Nonsense! Even my dad has to show respect before the Steel Lady. What a business prodigy! I’m nothing compared to her.” Jeff was very composed.

“You’re being modest.”

Chris smiled smugly, and quickly changed the topic. “Speaking of the Steel Lady, I’ve never seen her before today. I wonder if she is as beautiful as they say?”

“Among the Four Beauties of Swinton, Natasha ranks first. Her beauty is unmatched. It’s a shame that no man can get their hands on such an exquisite woman.” Jeff

lamented.

“Not even you?” Chris was stunned.

“Bullshit! I would be honored even to carry her shoes!” Jeff rolled his eyes. He dared not speak informally of someone of equal status to his father.

“If even you aren’t worth it, what hope is there for the rest of us.” Chris sighed.

“To be honest, someone like the Steel Lady couldn’t care less about a man’s background. As long as she likes him, even a pauper could become a prince!” Jeff added.

“Someone so lucky wouldn’t exist!” Chris shook his head.

“That’s hard to say,” Jeff said with a chuckle, and continued, “Truth be told, I heard a rumor that the Steel Lady has found herself a boyfriend. She even plans to push him to the top in Swinton.”

“Huh? Is that true?” Chris was so startled his body quivered with excitement.

“Why would I lie to you about this? I guess you’ll be able to see it soon,” Jeff quipped.

“Who is so lucky to get her attention?” Chris narrowed his eyes, his gaze filled with jealousy and admiration. After all, she was a business prodigy, one of the wealthiest people in Swinton. Not only did she have money and power, but she was also breathtaking. Such an exquisite woman was as rare as a four-leaf clover.

“I don’t know who it is, but I’m sure if you could get on good terms with him, you would have a bright future!” Jeff reminded him.

“When you put it like that, I really want to know this guy.” His eyes lit up, and he quickly asked, “Jeff, you’re quite influential. Can you get me an introduction?”

“An introduction? I have yet to be introduced and you want me to introduce you?” Jeff answered exasperatedly.

Before coming, his father had asked him to strike up an acquaintance with this new guy. As long as they could become friends, he wouldn’t have to worry for the rest of his

life.

“I’ve told you what I can. It depends on yourself to change your fate.” Jeff couldn’t be bothered to say more. He waved his hand and entered the venue.

Chris smiled apologetically and trailed in behind. At this moment, he looked forward to meeting this person. Now that the Nolan family was facing bankruptcy, he could

get help from the Harmon family and overcome this matter if he could get acquainted with this guy.

Then he wouldn’t need to abscond with the money.

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Chapter 38

“Edwin Hummer, the richest man in Swinton!” Dahlia answered.

“What? Sir Hummer?”

Lyra's eyes widened in shock as if she had seen a ghost. Everyone knew that anything Sir Hummer said was obeyed without question in Swinton.

Trevor was big in East City, but Sir Hummer was the true master of Swinton. He was so powerful that he could just demand anything with the snap of his fingers. He was also very influential in business, politics, and the military.

Anyone who wronged Sir Hummer would face a fate worse than death.

"Ms. Nicholson, don't tell me this matter really involves Sir Hummer?" Lyra gulped.

"It's hard to say. Trevor was one of Sir Hummer's men. Now that he was suddenly killed, Sir Hummer will definitely investigate this matter. It would be troublesome if Dustin was involved." Dahlia's expression darkened.

"Even if that were the case, it would be Dustin's fault. It has nothing to do with us, right?" Lyra asked tentatively.

"This depends on how Sir Hummer sees this matter. If he thinks this has something to do with us, neither of us would be spared!" Dahlia added.

"What!" Lyra panicked immediately. She could still remain calm when facing Trevor. However, her legs trembled even thinking about Edwin Hummer.

"Ms. Nicholson, why don't we ask Chris Nolan for help? Ask him to have Mr. Anderson intervene." Lyra reacted quickly.

"I owe Chris too many favors. I don't want to trouble him further." Dahlia shook her head.

"Then what should we do? If Sir Hummer pursues this matter, aren't we all in trouble?" Lyra cried.

"**Don't** be flustered. I'm now partnered with the Harmon family. As long as we have their protection after the company's launch tomorrow, Sir Hummer won't be too harsh on us," she **explained**.

"That's right! We still have the Harmon family!" Lyra revealed a smile. "As long as the ceremony goes smoothly, we'll be under the Harmon family after the announcement.

Nobody would dare bully us!"

Now all their hope depended on the Harmon family.

In the evening, outside the gates of Spanner Manor.

Countless military vehicles roared. The car in front carried a flag with the words "Western War Zone."

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As the vehicle stopped, rows of heavily armed soldiers stepped down, one after another.

There was a murderous aura surrounding the area.

"Sir, we have arrived!" A commander walked up to the car and saluted.

The door quickly opened, and a burly middle-aged man in battle armor stepped out.

This man was the lieutenant of the western war zone, Travis Spanner.

"Uncle Travis! You're finally here!"

At this moment, the doors of the manor opened slowly. Edward was being supported by two men as he limped out.

"Let me see the body," Travis demanded.

Edward did not dare say anything else and immediately led the way.

There was a coffin right at the entrance to the living room. Trevor was lying inside, his eyes tightly closed.

"What on earth happened? Why did your father die so suddenly?" Travis gritted his teeth, a look of rage on his face. He only had one brother. Naturally, he was furious that he had been murdered.

"It was Mason! That ungrateful brat killed Dad!" Edward began to whine.

"Mason? He's nothing but a bastard. He wouldn't have the guts." Travis narrowed his

eyes.

course, not him alone. I guess he worked with someone on the outside who wanted to take advantage of this at the same time!" Edward's face was clouded with hatred.

"Did your dad make enemies with anyone recently?" Travis asked.

"Uh... Dad easily offends people, but they're all insignificant people," Edward explained.

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"So you don't know anything after all?" Travis frowned.

"It all happened too suddenly. I was at a loss for a while."

"Useless! You're no better than a bastard!" Travis snorted coldly, not bothering to say another word, and gave an order. "Someone investigate this matter at once! I don't care what it takes. Find me the murderer, even if you have to turn the entire Swinton

upside down!"

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Chapter 36

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"I'm afraid it's not that simple," Dahlia stated solemnly. "There's a reason why Trevor could act so lawlessly. He has someone very influential supporting him. This man is our greatest worry!"

"Someone supporting him? Who is it?" Lyra asked curiously

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Chapter 39

Before the matter of Trevor's death could come to a rest, there was a surprising announcement the next day. The Harmon family had decided on a partner, and today would be the opening ceremony of the new company. Once the news was released, everyone came forward to offer their congratulations.

At 8.00 am, luxurious cars were already gathered at the entrance of the Emerald Building. However, Natasha, one of the important attendees, was not present. Instead, she was drinking coffee leisurely at some coffee shop.

"Over here, Mr. Rhys." As soon as she saw Dustin enter, she jumped to her feet and

waved.

"Isn't today the opening ceremony of your new company? Why did you want to meet here?"

Dustin sat across from her. Natasha was wearing a white blouse and a skirt to day. Her dark hair was tied in a bun, making her look even more mature. Her top wrapped tightly around her chest, looking as if it were about to pop.

“It’s only the opening ceremony. A date with you is much more important.” Natasha blinked her eyes teasingly. Her fiery red lips were so alluring.

“Ms. Harmon, **stop** joking. Let’s talk business.” Dustin **was** starting to be flustered.

“Alright, I won’t beat around the bush.” She smiled and asked, “Mr. Rhys, does Trevor’s death have anything to do with you?”

“Why are you asking?” Dustin raised his eyebrows.

“I’m just curious. Although Trevor **is** a reckless bastard, he **has** many men. It’s not easy to kill him. I thought for some time, and it seemed only you, Mr. Rhys, had the ability to do so.” **Natasha** was deep in thought.

“Haha! **Ms.** Harmon, you think too highly of me.” Dustin laughed without giving a straight answer.

“Trevor’s death is nothing. It wouldn’t affect the situation in Swinton. But the problem is the men behind **him**,” Natasha continued.

“Are you talking about Edwin Hummer?”

“He is one of them. But he won’t do anything disadvantageous to himself because of Trevor. He’s easier to deal with.

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“Do you mean Trevor has other patrons?”

“That’s right. He has a brother, Travis. He’s a lieutenant with great power. He can’t be underestimated!” Natasha spoke in a grave tone.

Even the Harmon family did not want to go against people involved in the military. This was also why she did not immediately retaliate when Trevor had kidnapped her.

“Thanks for the warning, Ms. Harmon. I’ll take note of this.” Dustin nodded, his heart filled with gratitude.

“Oh, there’s also another thing.” Natasha changed the topic, continuing by saying, “Regarding the ambergris, I already have the results. According to the investigation, the one who drugged me is known as Mr. Lawson.”

“Mr. Lawson? What’s his background?” Dustin asked.

“This man is the same as Trevor. He’s Edwin’s right-hand man. However, his identity is a mystery. He has been living behind the scenes, giving advice, and carrying out shady activities.”

“What are you going to do?”

“I want to cut off Edwin’s limbs and teach him a lesson! But... my men are not able to deal with such people, so I have to ask for your help,” Natasha gently implored.

“Lure him out and create an opportunity for me to deal with him,” Dustin answered casually.

“Thank you, Mr. Rhys!” Natasha smiled and added, “I’ve invited Edwin to the opening of the new company today. Mr. Lawson will also be there. You can carry out your plan

then.”

“Okay.” Dustin nodded.

“Mr. Rhys, it’s almost time. Let’s **go**.”

The two did not linger for long. After finishing the coffee, they headed toward the Emerald building.

At this moment, there **was** a big crowd in front of the building. As they stepped down from the car, they saw Dahlia and her family entering the venue. Dahlia was part of the new company, so it wasn’t surprising to see a representative of the Nicholson family here.

“Dustin, why do I keep running into you?” a voice came from behind.

Dustin turned around only to be met with the sight of Chris Nolan.

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Chapter 40

“I don’t recall Dahlia inviting you. Are you really so shameless?” Chris sneered .

“I invited Dustin. Do you have a problem with that?”

Natasha took a few steps forward. Her domineering stance made Chris take a few steps

back.

“Hmph! You’re a man that needs a woman to stand up for you? What a useless man!” Chris grimaced disdainfully. He added, “And you! You’ll regret it sooner or later, staying with this trash!”

“What does that have to do with you? Stay away from me!” Natasha snorted coldly. She

put her arms around Dustin and walked into the hall without a care.

“Stupid b*tch! You’re so full of yourself! I’ll get you in bed one day!” Chris gritted his

teeth as he watched them walk away. He couldn’t understand why someone as useless

as Dustin was so good with women.

“Chris, you’re here to join the fun too?”

A fashionably dressed man exited a Maybach.

“Hey! Isn’t that Jeff Anderson? You’re here too?”

Chris’s eyes lit up.

It was none other than Hunter Anderson’s son, Jeff Anderson!

“The Harmon family is launching a new company, so I had to come!” Jeff smiled.

“Jeff! The Harmon family is honored to have someone like you attend the opening ceremony!” Chris started to butter him up.

“Nonsense! Even my dad has to show respect before the Steel Lady. What a business prodigy! I’m nothing compared to her.” Jeff was very composed.

“You’re being modest.”

Chris smiled smugly, and quickly changed the topic. “Speaking of the Steel Lady, I’ve never seen her before today. I wonder if she is as beautiful as they say?”

“Among the Four Beauties of Swinton, Natasha ranks first. Her beauty is unmatched. It’s a shame that no man can get their hands on such an exquisite woman.” Jeff

lamented.

“Not even you?” Chris was stunned.

“Bullshit! I would be honored even to carry her shoes!” Jeff rolled his eyes. He dared not speak informally of someone of equal status to his father.

“If even you aren’t worth it, what hope is there for the rest of us.” Chris sighed.

“To be honest, someone like the Steel Lady couldn’t care less about a man’s background. As long as she likes him, even a pauper could become a prince!” Jeff added.

“Someone so lucky wouldn’t exist!” Chris shook his head.

“That’s hard to say,” Jeff said with a chuckle, and continued, “Truth be told, I heard a rumor that the Steel Lady has found herself a boyfriend. She even plans to push him to the top in Swinton.”

“Huh? Is that true?” Chris was so startled his body quivered with excitement.

“Why would I lie to you about this? I guess you’ll be able to see it soon,” Jeff quipped.

“Who is so lucky to get her attention?” Chris narrowed his eyes, his gaze filled with jealousy and admiration. After all, she was a business prodigy, one of the wealthiest people in Swinton. Not only did she have money and power, but she was also breathtaking. Such an exquisite woman was as rare as a four-leaf clover.

“I don’t know who it is, but I’m sure if you could get on good terms with him, you would have a bright future!” Jeff reminded him.

“When you put it like that, I really want to know this guy.” His eyes lit up, and he quickly asked, “Jeff, you’re quite influential. Can you get me an introduction?”

“An introduction? I have yet to be introduced and you want me to introduce you?” Jeff answered exasperatedly.

Before coming, his father had asked him to strike up an acquaintance with this new guy. As long as they could become friends, he wouldn’t have to worry for the rest of his

life.

“I’ve told you what I can. It depends on yourself to change your fate.” Jeff couldn’t be bothered to say more. He waved his hand and entered the venue.

Chris smiled apologetically and trailed in behind. At this moment, he looked forward to meeting this person. Now that the Nolan family was facing bankruptcy, he could

get help from the Harmon family and overcome this matter if he could get acquainted with this guy.

Then he wouldn’t need to abscond with the money.

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Chapter 38

“Edwin Hummer, the richest man in Swinton!” Dahlia answered.

“What? Sir Hummer?”

Lyra's eyes widened in shock as if she had seen a ghost. Everyone knew that anything Sir Hummer said was obeyed without question in Swinton.

Trevor was big in East City, but Sir Hummer was the true master of Swinton. He was so powerful that he could just demand anything with the snap of his fingers. He was also very influential in business, politics, and the military.

Anyone who wronged Sir Hummer would face a fate worse than death.

"Ms. Nicholson, don't tell me this matter really involves Sir Hummer?" Lyra gulped.

"It's hard to say. Trevor was one of Sir Hummer's men. Now that he was suddenly killed, Sir Hummer will definitely investigate this matter. It would be troublesome if Dustin was involved." Dahlia's expression darkened.

"Even if that were the case, it would be Dustin's fault. It has nothing to do with us, right?" Lyra asked tentatively.

"This depends on how Sir Hummer sees this matter. If he thinks this has something to do with us, neither of us would be spared!" Dahlia added.

"What!" Lyra panicked immediately. She could still remain calm when facing Trevor. However, her legs trembled even thinking about Edwin Hummer.

"Ms. Nicholson, why don't we ask Chris Nolan for help? Ask him to have Mr. Anderson intervene." Lyra reacted quickly.

"I owe Chris too many favors. I don't want to trouble him further." Dahlia shook her head.

"Then what should we do? If Sir Hummer pursues this matter, aren't we all in trouble?" Lyra cried.

"**Don't** be flustered. I'm now partnered with the Harmon family. As long as we have their protection after the company's launch tomorrow, Sir Hummer won't be too harsh on us," she **explained**.

"That's right! We still have the Harmon family!" Lyra revealed a smile. "As long as the ceremony goes smoothly, we'll be under the Harmon family after the announcement.

Nobody would dare bully us!"

Now all their hope depended on the Harmon family.

In the evening, outside the gates of Spanner Manor.

Countless military vehicles roared. The car in front carried a flag with the words "Western War Zone."

¶

As the vehicle stopped, rows of heavily armed soldiers stepped down, one after another.

There was a murderous aura surrounding the area.

"Sir, we have arrived!" A commander walked up to the car and saluted.

The door quickly opened, and a burly middle-aged man in battle armor stepped out.

This man was the lieutenant of the western war zone, Travis Spanner.

"Uncle Travis! You're finally here!"

At this moment, the doors of the manor opened slowly. Edward was being supported by two men as he limped out.

"Let me see the body," Travis demanded.

Edward did not dare say anything else and immediately led the way.

There was a coffin right at the entrance to the living room. Trevor was lying inside, his eyes tightly closed.

"What on earth happened? Why did your father die so suddenly?" Travis gritted his teeth, a look of rage on his face. He only had one brother. Naturally, he was furious that he had been murdered.

"It was Mason! That ungrateful brat killed Dad!" Edward began to whine.

"Mason? He's nothing but a bastard. He wouldn't have the guts." Travis narrowed his

eyes.

course, not him alone. I guess he worked with someone on the outside who wanted to take advantage of this at the same time!" Edward's face was clouded with hatred.

"Did your dad make enemies with anyone recently?" Travis asked.

"Uh... Dad easily offends people, but they're all insignificant people," Edward explained.

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"So you don't know anything after all?" Travis frowned.

"It all happened too suddenly. I was at a loss for a while."

"Useless! You're no better than a bastard!" Travis snorted coldly, not bothering to say another word, and gave an order. "Someone investigate this matter at once! I don't care what it takes. Find me the murderer, even if you have to turn the entire Swinton

upside down!"

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Chapter 41

As time passed, more guests arrived to give their congratulations. The entire venue was filled with people. A famous entertainer was also putting on a performance on the main stage. Below, the guests were talking and laughing over some wine.

“Dahlia, this is a nice place. You would be the owner in the future, right?” Florence glanced around, thrilled.

“Mom, I’m just partners with the Harmon family. I’m merely a secondary stakeholder even if we established a company together,” Dahlia explained.

“That’s good enough. Once we get on the same boat with the Harmon family, we won’t have to worry in the future!” Florence was delighted.

“Sis! Your career is booming right now. You must have made a lot of money, right? When are you getting me a nice car?” James smiled flatteringly beside her.

“I give you quite a lot of pocket money every month. Is it not enough?” Dahlia asked unhappily. She did not like giving handouts, even to her own brother.

“It used to be enough. But I’ve invested all my savings into Nolan Pharmaceuticals, so now I’m broke,” James said exasperatedly.

“Then you just sit and wait for the dividends,” Dahlia said dismissively. As she turned around, she caught sight of Dustin and Natasha out of the corner of her eye.

“You invited Dustin here? What a downer!” James followed her line of view and frowned.

“I didn’t,” Dahlia denied flatly.

“He came without any invitation? That’s **so** shameless!” James grimaced. The next gaze landed on Natasha, and he immediately perked up. “Hey, who’s that beauty next to him? She’s stunning!”

“**What** beauty? She’s **a vixen!**” Florence continued rather calmly, “She was the one causing trouble at the Jackson Group, and I nearly slapped her!”

“It was her?” James’ tone turned cold, and he spat, “**Shit!** Dustin is so heartless. How dare he bring this b*tch to such an important occasion today? He’s such an eyesore!”

“Look, Dahlia, he’s finally revealed **his** true colors. It’s a **shame**. You were so nice to **him**, yet he’s so ungrateful, and even tried to ruin this occasion. I have to teach him a lesson today!” As she spoke, Florence got ready to confront **him**.

“Mom! Today is the opening ceremony, don’t cause any trouble!” Dahlia quickly grabbed her mother. She knew once her mother started making a scene, it would not end well.

“Hmph! I’ll let him get away with it this time!” Although Florence was very upset, she tried to calm herself down. No matter what, she couldn’t embarrass her own daughter.

“Dahlia, you’re here?” Chris brought Jeff and walked over with a smile.

“Here, I want to introduce you to someone.”

“This is Mr. Anderson’s son, Jeff!” Chris stretched out his hand as if he was presenting something valuable.

“So, you’re Jeff Anderson? It’s a great pleasure to meet you!” James immediately tried to curry favor with him. This was Swinton’s most distinguished elite, and he had at much more respected status than him.

“I didn’t expect you to come, Mr. Anderson! The Nicholson family is honored!” Florence was smiling broadly.

Needless to say, Mr. Anderson’s son had to be some big shot.

“Nice to meet you, Jeff.” Dahlia smiled and greeted him warmly.

“You must be Ms. Nicholson. It seems the rumors are true, you’re really stunning!” Although he had never met Dahlia, he had heard of her. She was one of the Four Beauties in Swinton and a rising star.

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Chapter 42

His dad had also warned him never to get involved with a woman like Dahlia Nicholson.

“You’re too kind.” Dahlia smiled politely.

“Dahlia, I have good news for you.” Chris suddenly changed the topic and said, “I heard from Jeff that even the Steel Lady will be present for today’s grand opening.”

“Oh?”

Is that so? That would be perfect!” Dahlia raised an eyebrow in pleasant surprise. Previously, only the Harmons’ general manager was present to sign contracts or discuss business matters. She had never met the daughter of the Harmon family. However, she had heard of Natasha before.

Ever since Andrew retired, she took over the entire Harmon family’s business unaided. She relied entirely on herself to build and flourish the Harmon family business to greater success. In a way, they were both very similar to each other. Dahlia even regarded Natasha as her idol.

Yet, it was a shame that she had never even met Natasha up to this day.

Now that she knew Natasha would be present today, Dahlia looked forward to it greatly. She was really interested in how this business prodigy carried herself.

“Sis! I heard that Natasha Harmon is one of Swinton’s Four Beauties. She must be very beautiful. Can you set me up with her after you get to know her?” James asked with

anticipation.

“Yeah! James is no longer young. It’s time to discuss his marriage. If he can get to know Ms. Harmon, it’s fine even if he took their last name instead!” Florence immediately lit

1. up.

“Mom! What nonsense are you saying? Why would Ms. Harmon ever set her eyes on James?” Dahlia said harshly.

“Hmmm, I disagree. What’s wrong with James? He’s young, muscular, and handsome. It’s more than enough for Ms. Harmon!” Florence boasted.

“That’s **right!** Look at my muscles! Women go crazy over them!” James flexed his biceps confidently.

Dahlia was speechless **as** she watched them. She was starting to regret inviting them

here.

“Ms. Harmon is already **taken.** We can stop daydreaming about it,” Chris interjected.

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“Does that mean I don’t have a chance?” James continued dejectedly, “Who’s the lucky bastard to get Ms. Harmon’s attention?”

“I don’t know. We’ll find out **soon.**” Chris smiled.

“Huh! I really want to see if he’s as handsome as me!” James was quite irked.

The performance on the stage had ended. The host took the stage, and the crowd quietened down.

“Welcome, everyone! The grand opening has officially begun! Now, please give a warm welcome to Ms. Harmon!”

As the host gave the introduction, the guests gave a round of applause..

“She’s here! Ms. Harmon is here!” Chris and the others immediately perked up and turned toward the stage, their eyes filled with excitement.

“Is she finally revealing herself?” Dahlia mumbled eagerly.

A young and stunning lady slowly took the stage under the watchful eyes of everyone

else.

Three beams of spotlights instantly focused on her. However, everyone was dumbfounded when they saw her.

“It’s her?”

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Chapter 43

“How can it be her?” Dahlia was shocked when she saw Natasha on the stage

.

Her face was filled with astonishment. Never in her wildest dreams did she expect that the Ms. Harmon she

longed to meet was her rival!

“Mom, isn’t this that b*tch? Why is she on the stage?” James widened his eyes, unable to react otherwise.

“This can’t be? She is Ms. Harmon?” Florence was so shocked her tongue was tied and her lips quivered.

She couldn’t believe the woman she thought was a vixen was the Harmon family’s daughter!

“Why? Why is it her?” Chris looked as if he had been struck by lightning, his face was as pale as a sheet of paper, and his eyes filled with disbelief. He never imagined the woman by Dustin’s side was Swinton’s

business prodigy! Her mere existence is unparalleled to others.

Cold sweat dripped down his forehead as he thought of his actions before. What should he do? He seemed to have offended Natasha.

“Chris, have you met Ms. Harmon before?” Jeff was quick to notice something was odd.

“I’ve... met her, and we had an altercation.” Chris swallowed hard as he was obviously nervous.

“You dared to offend Ms. Harmon? You really have guts!” Jeff gave him a thumbs-up mockingly.

Natasha did not get to where she was today by being kind and forgiving.

“Jeff! I was careless before and offended Ms. Harmon. Can you put in a good word for me?” Chris suddenly became nervous and grabbed Jeff’s hand. 1

“Chris, I really can’t help you out with this. You should pray!” Jeff shook Chris off and left. He wasn’t crazy enough to get on Ms. Harmon’s bad side because of someone so insignificant.

“I’m done for.” Chris’s face turned to ash as he watched Jeff leave. It would be fine if Natasha were forgiving and let it slide. But if she were to seek revenge, she could destroy him with just a word!

At the same time, others in the crowd were shocked as well. “Mr. Lawson, didn’t you say Natasha would come begging after being poisoned? Why does she look fine?”

Edwin’s face darkened as he watched the slim figure on the stage.

“That’s weird. She should not be able to fight it. Could it be that someone had given her the antidote?” Fletcher narrowed his eyes in surprise.

“Huh! Is this the allegedly cureless poison?” Edwin was very dissatisfied. He knew something was wrong from the moment he received the invitation. Now that he had seen Natasha in excellent health, he knew his plan

had failed.

“Sir Hummer, accidents happen. No mere doctor is able to cure my poison unless she had someone special by her side.” Fletcher said, deep in thought.

“Someone special? Who?” Edwin furrowed his eyebrows.

1/2

CS CamScanner

Chapter 43

“Sir Hummer, did you notice the young man standing next to her before?” Fletcher pointed toward Dustin.

“Do you mean there’s something particular about that guy?” Edwin followed his gaze.

“That’s right. This man has a steady hand and good control of his breath. He looks like he practices medicine,” Fletcher said, nodding his head.

“Is he difficult to deal with?” Edwin took a closer look. He didn’t notice anything out of the ordinary. He’s

nothing but a gold digger.

“He’s a small fry not even worth mentioning.” Fletcher was very confident.

Today’s Bonus Offer

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Chapter 44

“**Okay.** Deal with him quickly. I don’t want any further accidents!” Edwin’s expression **softened.**

“Don’t worry, Sir Hummer. My two boys will take care of it without a hitch!” Fletcher smiled faintly. He took out his phone and sent a text message.

In contrast to the commotion offstage, Natasha remained very calm. “Welcome to our company’s grand

opening ceremony.”

Natasha held the microphone, her eyes sweeping across the room. Her dominating aura, along with her cold and sharp eyes, were all fitting for her position as a beautiful business prodigy.

“Everyone knows the Harmon family has made a new partner. From today onward, a portion of the Harmon **family** business will be handed over to said partner.” She looked around and continued, “I believe everyone is

curious as to who this partner is. Don’t worry, I’ll reveal the answer soon! Now, let us give a round of applause and invite Ms. Nicholson onto the stage!”

As she finished, Natasha started to clap. Soon after, thunderous applause followed.

“Dahlia! You’re up!” Florence quickly nudged the woman next to her.

Dahlia immediately came back to her senses. Although **she** was shocked about who Natasha was, she did not have a choice but to proceed now. She took in a deep breath and pretended as if nothing had happened **as** she walked up the stage.

“Wow! It’s another stunning lady? We’re really blessed today!”

“Both are equally beautiful but with a different flair. I’d be willing to give up ten years of my life just to **have** both of them in my arms!”

“Shit! What man is worthy of such women?”

As Dahlia approached the stage, there was instantly a stirring in the crowd. Natasha was striking enough, but Dahlia’s presence made the crowd even more excited. It was such a rare occurrence to be graced with the presence of two beautiful ladies.

“We meet again, Ms. Nicholson.” Natasha reached out her hand with a smile.

“I didn’t expect you to be the president of the Harmon Group.” Dahlia shook her hand politely, a bewildered look in her eyes.

She should’ve known earlier.

Such a beautiful and elegant woman with the surname Harmon who had happened to appear two days before the charity ball. If she connected the dots, this woman must be none other than Natasha Harmon.

However, she did not come to this conclusion because she had been clouded with emotions.

Or rather, she never believed Dustin would be involved with such a reputable family.

"It's not too late to get to know each other." Natasha beamed. "Oh, right. We still have a bet, don't we?"

CS CamScanner

"That's right." Dahlia nodded calmly.

"Do you still think you can win?" Natasha raised her chin defiantly.

"I believe I can, if you don't intrude." Dahlia's gaze was filled with determination, and she did not back down. She had always thought of Natasha as her adversary. Now that they met, she could have a worthy challenge.

"Don't worry, I won't help him. Besides, he doesn't need my help. Truth be told, he is much more capable than us!" Natasha smiled.

"Love is blind. There's no lie in that." Dahlia smiled faintly.

"It seems like you don't believe me. If that's the case, time will tell." Natasha smiled, not wanting to explain any further. She believed that one **day** Dahlia would understand.

"But, by then, it would be all too late.

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Chapter 45

The two women were chatting eagerly on the stage as if they were old friends.

However, only a few would realize these two were locked in rivalry. Just like two beautiful roses competing. Both were beautiful yet filled with prickling thorns.

Dahlia did not feel inferior **or** dejected, although Natasha had a prestigious background. In fact, it made her more motivated to compete! She had always held herself high and did not give up easily. No matter what difficulties she faced, she would overcome them! It didn't matter that Natasha was known as Swinton's business prodigy. One day, she would be equal to her, or she might even surpass her! 1

"I believe everyone has witnessed Ms. Nicholson's charm! Next, I want to introduce another young man. Not only did he save me, but he also helped out the Harmon family a lot. He is undoubtedly the Harmon family's

savior!"

The crowd stirred again once she finished. Everyone looked at each other with awe and curiosity. Who on

earth would Natasha call a savior?

"Chris, could you be the **savior** she means?" Jeff muttered coldly. In his opinion, only an outstanding young man like Chris could fit Natasha's description.

"Chris, I didn't know you were so important to the Harmon family! Congratulations!" Florence smiled brightly, immediately thinking it **was** Chris.

Chris was speechless. The corners of his mouth twitched as he didn't know how to react. He was nothing.

How could he be the Harmon family's savior? He wouldn't need to face bankruptcy if he were so capable.

"Could it be him?" Chris suddenly thought of someone but quickly dismissed the thought.

No! It wasn't possible! How could a useless nobody be a savior to the Harmon family?

Under everyone's anticipating eyes, Natasha paused before saying, "Alright, I won't beat around the bush.

Now, let's give a warm welcome to Mr. Rhys!"

Natasha waved her hand, and a spotlight shone on Dustin. Everyone's gaze immediately turned over.

"Dustin? How could it be him?" James was at a loss for words when he recognized who it **was**. His mouth **was**

agape in shock.

"It can't be! The Harmon family's savior is that trash, Dustin?" At this moment, Florence was also in a state of shock. Her impression of Dustin was someone insignificant and weak. He wasn't capable, nor did he have a good background. How could he have become the Harmon family's savior out of the blue?

"How? How is it him?" Chris gritted his teeth, his hands balled into a fist. Rather than shock, he felt more

jealous and frustrated.

How? How had that trash catch Natasha's eye?

Was he worse than Dustin? In terms of looks, he was better looking. In terms of money, he was the richer. His

family background was also far superior to Dustin's. He was more capable and excellent in every way.

1/1

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Chapter 45

However, though that woman could recognize a gem, she had gone for some cheap guy.

Why was that so?

Chris's face was clouded with hatred and resentment.

"It really is him."

As the lights shone on Dustin, Dahlia was surprised and puzzled. She also felt an inexplicable surge of emotions.

However, Dustin wasn't happy to be the center of attention at all.

"What is this woman thinking? She didn't mention that I **had** to be on stage." Dustin furrowed his eyebrows,

unable to make sense of her actions. After a moment of hesitation, he made his way up.

Murmurs went through the crowd.

"Who is this? I've never seen him."

"I heard he's Ms. Harmon's boyfriend. She wants to take the opportunity to give him some publicity in this opening ceremony."

"Ha! So he's just a gold digger!"

The crowd started to speculate and discuss. Obviously, many looked down on a man that depended on a woman.

"I'm very grateful to Mr. Rhys. He's also the Harmon family's savior. I hope everyone will get to know him

better in the future." Natasha smiled and wrapped her arms around his shoulders. Her gaze fell on Dahlia at

the same time, as if to assert dominance.

Dahlia didn't even flinch and remained composed. She even raised her chin provocatively as if to say Natasha

could pick up after her trash.

Thus, the two women began another battle. Neither wanted to step aside, their gaze burned into each other.

At this moment, Dustin realized something **was** wrong.

When had the two of them gotten into a dispute? Weren't they partners? Why did it seem as if they were more

like rivals?

After a few seconds, they looked away at the same time—
They were evenly matched.

“Ms. Nicholson, I look forward to working with you.” Natasha reached out her hand once again.

“I look forward to working with you too,” Dahlia replied with a smile.

“Sorry, but I'll have to pass the company matters to you now. Dustin and I have something urgent to do. Please, excuse us.” Natasha smiled and led Dustin down the stage with her arms around his. Dustin never uttered a word up till this moment.

He was just an ornament.

“Ms. Harmon...” As they came down, Chris approached to say a few words.

2/3

CS CamScanner

However, Natasha didn't even look at him and spat, “Get lost!”

Chris froze when she spoke. His last strand of hope fizzled up in flames. He knew Natasha would not let this slide easily. He even started to suspect that the Harmon family was behind the investigation into his company.

“These bastards! Since you're so merciless, I won't make it easy for you either,” he thought. He glared at them and left.

“Dustin!” Dahlia tried to chase him down. Her gaze was fathomless, shining as if she wanted to say something.

“Go ahead, Mr. Rhys. I’ll wait for you in the lounge.” Natasha smiled and let go of him. This was because she was confident in herself.

“You wanted to see me?” Dustin slowly turned around.

“I wanted to ask if the Harmon family choosing me as their partner had anything to do with you,” Dahlia clarified without skipping a beat. This matter had been on her mind ever since she found out who Natasha **was**. 1

Now that she knew Dustin’s standing in Natasha’s heart, she was starting to have greater doubts.

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Chapter 41

As time passed, more guests arrived to give their congratulations. The entire venue was filled with people. A famous entertainer was also putting on a performance on the main stage. Below, the guests were talking and laughing over some wine.

“Dahlia, this is a nice place. You would be the owner in the future, right?” Florence glanced around, thrilled.

“Mom, I’m just partners with the Harmon family. I’m merely a secondary stakeholder even if we established a company together,” Dahlia explained.

“That’s good enough. Once we get on the same boat with the Harmon family, we won’t have to worry in the future!” Florence was delighted.

“Sis! Your career is booming right now. You must have made a lot of money, right? When are you getting me a nice car?” James smiled flatteringly beside her.

“I give you quite a lot of pocket money every month. Is it not enough?” Dahlia asked unhappily. She did not like giving handouts, even to her own brother.

“It used to be enough. But I’ve invested all my savings into Nolan Pharmaceuticals, so now I’m broke,” James said exasperatedly.

“Then you just sit and wait for the dividends,” Dahlia said dismissively. As she turned around, she caught sight of Dustin and Natasha out of the corner of her eye.

“You invited Dustin here? What a downer!” James followed her line of view and frowned.

“I didn’t,” Dahlia denied flatly.

“He came without any invitation? That’s **so** shameless!” James grimaced. The next gaze landed on Natasha, and he immediately perked up. “Hey, who’s that beauty next to him? She’s stunning!”

“**What** beauty? She’s **a vixen!**” Florence continued rather calmly, “She was the one causing trouble at the Jackson Group, and I nearly slapped her!”

“It was her?” James’ tone turned cold, and he spat, “**Shit!** Dustin is so heartless. How dare he bring this b*tch to such an important occasion today? He’s such an eyesore!”

“Look, Dahlia, he’s finally revealed **his** true colors. It’s a **shame**. You were so nice to **him**, yet he’s so ungrateful, and even tried to ruin this occasion. I have to teach him a lesson today!” As she spoke, Florence got ready to confront **him**.

“Mom! Today is the opening ceremony, don’t cause any trouble!” Dahlia quickly grabbed her mother. She knew once her mother started making a scene, it would not end well.

“Hmph! I’ll let him get away with it this time!” Although Florence was very upset, she tried to calm herself down. No matter what, she couldn’t embarrass her own daughter.

“Dahlia, you’re here?” Chris brought Jeff and walked over with a smile.

“Here, I want to introduce you to someone.”

“This is Mr. Anderson’s son, Jeff!” Chris stretched out his hand as if he was presenting something valuable.

“So, you’re Jeff Anderson? It’s a great pleasure to meet you!” James immediately tried to curry favor with him. This was Swinton’s most distinguished elite, and he had at much more respected status than him.

“I didn’t expect you to come, Mr. Anderson! The Nicholson family is honored!” Florence was smiling broadly.

Needless to say, Mr. Anderson’s son had to be some big shot.

“Nice to meet you, Jeff.” Dahlia smiled and greeted him warmly.

“You must be Ms. Nicholson. It seems the rumors are true, you’re really stunning!” Although he had never met Dahlia, he had heard of her. She was one of the Four Beauties in Swinton and a rising star.

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Chapter 42

His dad had also warned him never to get involved with a woman like Dahlia Nicholson.

“You’re too kind.” Dahlia smiled politely.

“Dahlia, I have good news for you.” Chris suddenly changed the topic and said, “I heard from Jeff that even the Steel Lady will be present for today’s grand opening.”

“Oh?”

Is that so? That would be perfect!” Dahlia raised an eyebrow in pleasant surprise. Previously, only the Harmons’ general manager was present to sign contracts or discuss business matters. She had never met the daughter of the Harmon family. However, she had heard of Natasha before.

Ever since Andrew retired, she took over the entire Harmon family’s business unaided. She relied entirely on herself to build and flourish the Harmon family business to greater success. In a way, they were both very similar to each other. Dahlia even regarded Natasha as her idol.

Yet, it was a shame that she had never even met Natasha up to this day.

Now that she knew Natasha would be present today, Dahlia looked forward to it greatly. She was really interested in how this business prodigy carried herself.

“Sis! I heard that Natasha Harmon is one of Swinton’s Four Beauties. She must be very beautiful. Can you set me up with her after you get to know her?” James asked with

anticipation.

“Yeah! James is no longer young. It’s time to discuss his marriage. If he can get to know Ms. Harmon, it’s fine even if he took their last name instead!” Florence immediately lit

1. up.

“Mom! What nonsense are you saying? Why would Ms. Harmon ever set her eyes on James?” Dahlia said harshly.

“Hmmm, I disagree. What’s wrong with James? He’s young, muscular, and handsome. It’s more than enough for Ms. Harmon!” Florence boasted.

“That’s **right!** Look at my muscles! Women go crazy over them!” James flexed his biceps confidently.

Dahlia was speechless **as** she watched them. She was starting to regret inviting them

here.

“Ms. Harmon is already **taken.** We can stop daydreaming about it,” Chris interjected.

Chapter 42

“Does that mean I don’t have a chance?” James continued dejectedly, “Who’s the lucky bastard to get Ms. Harmon’s attention?”

“I don’t know. We’ll find out **soon.**” Chris smiled.

“Huh! I really want to see if he’s as handsome as me!” James was quite irked.

The performance on the stage had ended. The host took the stage, and the crowd quietened down.

“Welcome, everyone! The grand opening has officially begun! Now, please give a warm welcome to Ms. Harmon!”

As the host gave the introduction, the guests gave a round of applause..

“She’s here! Ms. Harmon is here!” Chris and the others immediately perked up and turned toward the stage, their eyes filled with excitement.

“Is she finally revealing herself?” Dahlia mumbled eagerly.

A young and stunning lady slowly took the stage under the watchful eyes of everyone

else.

Three beams of spotlights instantly focused on her. However, everyone was dumbfounded when they saw her.

“It’s her?”

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Chapter 43

“How can it be her?” Dahlia was shocked when she saw Natasha on the stage

.

Her face was filled with astonishment. Never in her wildest dreams did she expect that the Ms. Harmon she

longed to meet was her rival!

“Mom, isn’t this that b*tch? Why is she on the stage?” James widened his eyes, unable to react otherwise.

“This can’t be? She is Ms. Harmon?” Florence was so shocked her tongue was tied and her lips quivered.

She couldn’t believe the woman she thought was a vixen was the Harmon family’s daughter!

“Why? Why is it her?” Chris looked as if he had been struck by lightning, his face was as pale as a sheet of paper, and his eyes filled with disbelief. He never imagined the woman by Dustin’s side was Swinton’s

business prodigy! Her mere existence is unparalleled to others.

Cold sweat dripped down his forehead as he thought of his actions before. What should he do? He seemed to have offended Natasha.

“Chris, have you met Ms. Harmon before?” Jeff was quick to notice something was odd.

“I’ve... met her, and we had an altercation.” Chris swallowed hard as he was obviously nervous.

“You dared to offend Ms. Harmon? You really have guts!” Jeff gave him a thumbs-up mockingly.

Natasha did not get to where she was today by being kind and forgiving.

“Jeff! I was careless before and offended Ms. Harmon. Can you put in a good word for me?” Chris suddenly became nervous and grabbed Jeff’s hand. 1

“Chris, I really can’t help you out with this. You should pray!” Jeff shook Chris off and left. He wasn’t crazy enough to get on Ms. Harmon’s bad side because of someone so insignificant.

“I’m done for.” Chris’s face turned to ash as he watched Jeff leave. It would be fine if Natasha were forgiving and let it slide. But if she were to seek revenge, she could destroy him with just a word!

At the same time, others in the crowd were shocked as well. “Mr. Lawson, didn’t you say Natasha would come begging after being poisoned? Why does she look fine?”

Edwin’s face darkened as he watched the slim figure on the stage.

“That’s weird. She should not be able to fight it. Could it be that someone had given her the antidote?” Fletcher narrowed his eyes in surprise.

“Huh! Is this the allegedly cureless poison?” Edwin was very dissatisfied. He knew something was wrong from the moment he received the invitation. Now that he had seen Natasha in excellent health, he knew his plan

had failed.

“Sir Hummer, accidents happen. No mere doctor is able to cure my poison unless she had someone special by her side.” Fletcher said, deep in thought.

“Someone special? Who?” Edwin furrowed his eyebrows.

1/2

CS CamScanner

Chapter 43

“Sir Hummer, did you notice the young man standing next to her before?” Fletcher pointed toward Dustin.

“Do you mean there’s something particular about that guy?” Edwin followed his gaze.

“That’s right. This man has a steady hand and good control of his breath. He looks like he practices medicine,” Fletcher said, nodding his head.

“Is he difficult to deal with?” Edwin took a closer look. He didn’t notice anything out of the ordinary. He’s

nothing but a gold digger.

“He’s a small fry not even worth mentioning.” Fletcher was very confident.

Today’s Bonus Offer

GET IT NOW

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 44 -

Chapter 44

“**Okay.** Deal with him quickly. I don’t want any further accidents!” Edwin’s expression **softened.**

“Don’t worry, Sir Hummer. My two boys will take care of it without a hitch!” Fletcher smiled faintly. He took out his phone and sent a text message.

In contrast

to the commotion offstage, Natasha remained very calm. “Welcome to our company’s grand

opening ceremony.”

Natasha held the microphone, her eyes sweeping across the room. Her dominating aura, along with her cold and sharp eyes, were all fitting for her position as a beautiful business prodigy.

“Everyone knows the Harmon family has made a new partner. From today onward, a portion of the Harmon **family** business will be handed over to said partner.” She looked around and continued, “I believe everyone is

curious as to who this partner is. Don’t worry, I’ll reveal the answer soon! Now, let us give a round of applause and invite Ms. Nicholson onto the stage!”

As she finished, Natasha started to clap. Soon after, thunderous applause followed.

“Dahlia! You’re up!” Florence quickly nudged the woman next to her.

Dahlia immediately came back to her senses. Although **she** was shocked about who Natasha was, she did not have a choice but to proceed now. She took in a deep breath and pretended as if nothing had happened **as** she walked up the stage.

“Wow! It’s another stunning lady? We’re really blessed today!”

“Both are equally beautiful but with a different flair. I’d be willing to give up ten years of my life just to **have** both of them in my arms!”

“Shit! What man is worthy of such women?”

As Dahlia approached the stage, there was instantly a stirring in the crowd. Natasha was striking enough, but Dahlia’s presence made the crowd even more excited. It was such a rare occurrence to be graced with the presence of two beautiful ladies.

“We meet again, Ms. Nicholson.” Natasha reached out her hand with a smile.

“I didn’t expect you to be the president of the Harmon Group.” Dahlia shook her hand politely, a bewildered look in her eyes.

She should’ve known earlier.

Such a beautiful and elegant woman with the surname Harmon who had happened to appear two days before the charity ball. If she connected the dots, this woman must be none other than Natasha Harmon.

However, she did not come to this conclusion because she had been clouded with emotions.

Or rather, she never believed Dustin would be involved with such a reputable family.

"It's not too late to get to know each other." Natasha beamed. "Oh, right. We still have a bet, don't we?"

CS CamScanner

"That's right." Dahlia nodded calmly.

"Do you still think you can win?" Natasha raised her chin defiantly.

"I believe I can, if you don't intrude." Dahlia's gaze was filled with determination, and she did not back down. She had always thought of Natasha as her adversary. Now that they met, she could have a worthy challenge.

"Don't worry, I won't help him. Besides, he doesn't need my help. Truth be told, he is much more capable than us!" Natasha smiled.

"Love is blind. There's no lie in that." Dahlia smiled faintly.

"It seems like you don't believe me. If that's the case, time will tell." Natasha smiled, not wanting to explain any further. She believed that one **day** Dahlia would understand.

"But, by then, it would be all too late.

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Chapter 45

The two women were chatting eagerly on the stage as if they were old friends.

However, only a few would realize these two were locked in rivalry. Just like two beautiful roses competing. Both were beautiful yet filled with prickling thorns.

Dahlia did not feel inferior **or** dejected, although Natasha had a prestigious background. In fact, it made her more motivated to compete! She had always held herself high and did not give up easily. No matter what difficulties she faced, she would overcome them! It didn't matter that Natasha was known as Swinton's business prodigy. One day, she would be equal to her, or she might even surpass her! 1

"I believe everyone has witnessed Ms. Nicholson's charm! Next, I want to introduce another young man. Not only did he save me, but he also helped out the Harmon family a lot. He is undoubtedly the Harmon family's

savior!"

The crowd stirred again once she finished. Everyone looked at each other with awe and curiosity. Who on

earth would Natasha call a savior?

"Chris, could you be the **savior** she means?" Jeff muttered coldly. In his opinion, only an outstanding young man like Chris could fit Natasha's description.

"Chris, I didn't know you were so important to the Harmon family! Congratulations!" Florence smiled brightly, immediately thinking it **was** Chris.

Chris was speechless. The corners of his mouth twitched as he didn't know how to react. He was nothing.

How could he be the Harmon family's savior? He wouldn't need to face bankruptcy if he were so capable.

"Could it be him?" Chris suddenly thought of someone but quickly dismissed the thought.

No! It wasn't possible! How could a useless nobody be a savior to the Harmon family?

Under everyone's anticipating eyes, Natasha paused before saying, "Alright, I won't beat around the bush.

Now, let's give a warm welcome to Mr. Rhys!"

Natasha waved her hand, and a spotlight shone on Dustin. Everyone's gaze immediately turned over.

"Dustin? How could it be him?" James was at a loss for words when he recognized who it **was**. His mouth **was**

agape in shock.

"It can't be! The Harmon family's savior is that trash, Dustin?" At this moment, Florence was also in a state of shock. Her impression of Dustin was someone insignificant and weak. He wasn't capable, nor did he have a good background. How could he have become the Harmon family's savior out of the blue?

"How? How is it him?" Chris gritted his teeth, his hands balled into a fist. Rather than shock, he felt more

jealous and frustrated.

How? How had that trash catch Natasha's eye?

Was he worse than Dustin? In terms of looks, he was better looking. In terms of money, he was the richer. His

family background was also far superior to Dustin's. He was more capable and excellent in every way.

1/1

CS CamScanner

Chapter 45

However, though that woman could recognize a gem, she had gone for some cheap guy.

Why was that so?

Chris's face was clouded with hatred and resentment.

"It really is him."

As the lights shone on Dustin, Dahlia was surprised and puzzled. She also felt an inexplicable surge of emotions.

However, Dustin wasn't happy to be the center of attention at all.

"What is this woman thinking? She didn't mention that I **had** to be on stage." Dustin furrowed his eyebrows,

unable to make sense of her actions. After a moment of hesitation, he made his way up.

Murmurs went through the crowd.

"Who is this? I've never seen him."

"I heard he's Ms. Harmon's boyfriend. She wants to take the opportunity to give him some publicity in this opening ceremony."

"Ha! So he's just a gold digger!"

The crowd started to speculate and discuss. Obviously, many looked down on a man that depended on a woman.

"I'm very grateful to Mr. Rhys. He's also the Harmon family's savior. I hope everyone will get to know him

better in the future." Natasha smiled and wrapped her arms around his shoulders. Her gaze fell on Dahlia at

the same time, as if to assert dominance.

Dahlia didn't even flinch and remained composed. She even raised her chin provocatively as if to say Natasha

could pick up after her trash.

Thus, the two women began another battle. Neither wanted to step aside, their gaze burned into each other.

At this moment, Dustin realized something **was** wrong.

When had the two of them gotten into a dispute? Weren't they partners? Why did it seem as if they were more

like rivals?

After a few seconds, they looked away at the same time—
They were evenly matched.

“Ms. Nicholson, I look forward to working with you.” Natasha reached out her hand once again.

“I look forward to working with you too,” Dahlia replied with a smile.

“Sorry, but I'll have to pass the company matters to you now. Dustin and I have something urgent to do. Please, excuse us.” Natasha smiled and led Dustin down the stage with her arms around his. Dustin never uttered a word up till this moment.

He was just an ornament.

“Ms. Harmon...” As they came down, Chris approached to say a few words.

2/3

CS CamScanner

However, Natasha didn't even look at him and spat, “Get lost!”

Chris froze when she spoke. His last strand of hope fizzled up in flames. He knew Natasha would not let this slide easily. He even started to suspect that the Harmon family was behind the investigation into his company.

“These bastards! Since you're so merciless, I won't make it easy for you either,” he thought. He glared at them and left.

“Dustin!” Dahlia tried to chase him down. Her gaze was fathomless, shining as if she wanted to say something.

“Go ahead, Mr. Rhys. I’ll wait for you in the lounge.” Natasha smiled and let go of him. This was because she was confident in herself.

“You wanted to see me?” Dustin slowly turned around.

“I wanted to ask if the Harmon family choosing me as their partner had anything to do with you,” Dahlia clarified without skipping a beat. This matter had been on her mind ever since she found out who Natasha **was**. 1

Now that she knew Dustin’s standing in Natasha’s heart, she was starting to have greater doubts.

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Chapter 46

"I don't understand what you mean." Dustin kept a straight face and played dumb. He was not one to claim credit or recognition for what he had done. Since things had ended between them, he hoped they wouldn't be involved with each other in any way.

"It **really** wasn't you?" Dahlia still had some doubts.

"Ms. Nicholson, I think there's some misunderstanding. How can someone as useless as me help you?" Dustin replied coldly.

"Maybe I was wrong." There was a hint of disappointment in her **eyes** as she added, "That's right. Why would you help me? After all, we're no longer together. Besides, you're not capable of doing so."

"As you said, I have no money or power. I'm nothing compared to Chris. Is there anything else?" Dustin's face remained blank. 1

"No. You can go back to Ms. Harmon," Dahlia said scornfully.

"Alright, please excuse me." Dustin did not say much more and quickly caught up with Natasha, who deliberately walked slower.

"Mr. Rhys, it seems Ms. Nicholson still has some feelings for you," Natasha teased.

"Feelings?" Dustin laughed mockingly, "It's good enough that we haven't turned against each other."

"You can **never** read a woman's heart. There may be things even she has yet to figure out." Natasha smiled

and tried to change the topic. "Oh, you mentioned you still need some rare herbs?"

"Why? Have you **found them**?" Dustin immediately perked up.

“Not yet. But I know someone who can help you. He was born into a family of doctors, and he collects many valuable herbs. Maybe he has what you need,” Natasha explained.

“Oh? Who is it?” Dustin inquired.

“Follow me and you’ll find out.”

Natasha didn’t give more details. She took Dustin’s hand and went to the lounge on the second floor. There

were two men in the lounge room. One of them was Natasha’s grandfather, Andrew Harmon. The other **was** a

burly man who **looked** about a couple of decades older than Dustin.

The man was wearing **a** suit that made his muscles bulge. He had **a** calm expression on his face. It was

apparent he was no ordinary person.

“Mr. Rhys, you’re here! Have a seat!” Andrew immediately gestured for him to sit once Dustin entered the room.

“How are you feeling, Old Mr. Harmon?” Dustin asked politely.

“Much better. It’s all thanks to you. If not, I would have lost my life.” Andrew smiled.

“It’s nothing.” Dustin said modestly.

“Mr. Rhys, I would like to introduce someone to you.”

1/

CS CamScanner

Chapter 46

Natasha pointed at the other man. “This is Duane Welch, an expert in medicine. He’s from Millsburg and has a lot of experience. You can ask him if you need anything concerning medicine.”

"I've met you before." Dustin nodded.

"I didn't

know you were going to introduce someone so young to me. I don't know if he has what it takes." Duane sized him up disdainfully. He had personally come because he heard there was a famous doctor in Swinton. He hadn't expect it to be this unremarkable boy.

What a waste of his time!

"Mr. Welch, you can't judge a book by its cover. I've personally witnessed Mr. Rhys' skill. He's on par with other experienced doctors!" Natasha reassured him.

"Is that so? If that's the case, he should evaluate me and see if he could diagnose anything." Duane started to get ready for an evaluation. It was obvious he was trying to make things difficult for Dustin.

"There's no need. I can recognize what disease you have in a glance," Dustin responded.

"In a glance?" Duane was slightly startled. "Are you joking? You can diagnose me by just looking? Even the

senior doctors in Millsburg can't do that!"

"I don't know if others can do it. But I can indeed see what disease you have." Dustin was very certain.

"Alright! Then I would really like to know what you have diagnosed!" Duane joked lightly.

"You have a weak pulse, and you often become breathless. Your chest area especially is infected, and in addition to the internal injuries you suffered before, you are now terminally ill!" Dustin explained in a breath.

"Terminally ill? Ha! What nonsense!"

Duane chuckled coldly. "Young man, don't you know that I've led an active life style since I was young? My body is very strong. Besides, I take a lot of supplements. I'm basically invincible to any disease! How dare you say I'm terminally ill? What a joke!"

“You’re only healthy physically. The real disease is internal. Also, you should stop taking those supplements **as** they would only make your condition worse. Once it breaks out, there will be no turning back!” Dustin

warned.

“What a load of bullshit! I’ve been taking those supplements since I was young and nothing has happened in 40 years. Now you’re telling me they don’t work?” Duane was very unhappy about this.

“I’m just warning you. If you continue, you will have a thyroid infection in three days!” Dustin advised.

“You’re not fooling me! I’ve encountered a lot of scammers like you!” Duane said disdainfully.

“Mr. Welch, Dustin is a skilled doctor. You better not take his words lightly.” Natasha reminded him gently.

“Natasha, I think you have been scammed. I know my body well. I’m not sick at all. He’s just trying to scare

us!”

“Since you don’t believe it, why don’t we make a bet?”

“What is at stake?”

2/3

CS CamScanner

Chapter 45

“It’s simple. If your disease breaks out within **three days**, you have to let Dustin pick anything from your

collection **of** valuable herbs!”

“Alright! But what if I’m fine?”

“If you’re fine, you can come to the Harmon family’s treasury and pick any three items!” Natasha offered boldly.

“You stated the rules. Since you’re being so generous, I won’t hold back!” Duane chuckled.

Everything in the Harmon family’s treasury was an extraordinary item. Any three would be a rare collector’s item.

“Mr. Welch, a word of advice, it’s best if you don’t **leave** Swinton in these three **days**. If anything happens, I can still save you in time,” Dustin advised.

“What a joke! Who am I? Do I need you to save me? Even if I were sick, I would never ask you to treat me!”

Duane said contemptuously. He wouldn’t even bother talking with this scammer if it weren’t for the Harmon family.

“There’s no point in saying more. The truth will prevail” Dustin smiled faintly without saying another word. He just hoped Duane’s rare herbs collection would have what he needed.

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Chapter 47

“Mr. Harmon, I have to attend something else. Please, excuse me.”

After a few exchanges, Duane got ready to leave. He had come because of a renowned doctor. He wouldn’t stay long since it was just a sham.

“Mr. Welch, I suggest **you** listen to Mr. Rhys’ advice and stay around Swinton for these few days to avoid anything.” Natasha kindly reminded him.

“Natasha, you don’t have to worry about me. You should worry about yourself,” Duane piped up thoughtfully. “I remember your engagement to Tyler Grant is imminent. I don’t think a man like him would like it if you were too close to other men.”

Natasha couldn’t help but frown at these words. He had touched on a sensitive topic.

“It’s just an engagement. We’re not even married yet. At worst, I can break off the engagement,” Natasha answered casually.

“Break off the engagement? That’s the Grant family you’re talking about. Have you thought of the consequences of your actions?” Duane was slightly bewildered.

“What consequences would there be? They can’t do anything to me,” Natasha replied calmly.

“The Grant family might not do anything to you, but I’m **not** sure about the one next to you. You’re well aware of the Grant family’s ways. The closer you get to him, the more danger **he’s** in.”

Duane gazed toward Dustin. His implications were clear.

“Hmph! I don’t believe Tyler would cause any trouble!” Natasha maintained an impassive face.

“I’m just reminding you. What you do is up to you.” Duane didn’t say more and left with a smile.

“What Duane says is true. You’d better deal with the matter between you and the Grant family.” Andrew warned.

“Grandfather, I know what to do.” Natasha nodded.

Although they had been engaged since young, she had never fallen for him. How could she marry someone she **doesn’t** have feelings for? Besides, she despised arranged marriages the most!

"Ms. Harmon, Sir Hummer is requestign to see you," a bodyguard informed her after entering.

"Edwin Hummer?" Natasha raised an eyebrow. "I **was** just about to see him. I didn't expect him to **come** first. Bring him to the lounge, I'll be there in a second."

"Yes, Ms. Nicholson," the bodyguard replied promptly and left.

"Mr. Rhys, I'm going to see what I can find out from Edwin. You can pretend to be my bodyguard and Improvise." Natasha glanced at the man beside her.

"Okay," Dustin agreed and nodded his head.

Today's ceremony was bait for the prey. Now that the prey **was** here, he could not pass on this opportunity.

1/7

CS CamScanner

Three minutes later, Dustin and Natasha arrived at another lounge.

Edwin and Fletcher were leisurely enjoying some tea inside. Behind **them** were a pair of twins.

"Ms. Harmon, congratulations on your grand opening!" Edwin immediately congratulated her.

He seemed like **a** wolf in sheep's clothing.

they were

"Welcome. Sir Hummer. It's a pleasure to have you here!" Natasha greeted cheerily. Although they enemies, they had to put on a cordial act.

"I see a few new faces around you. Aren't you going to introduce them?" Natasha looked toward Fletcher and

the other two men.

“Oh! This is an old friend of mine, Mr. Lawson. He helps me with my personal affairs. As for these two young “men, they’re his apprentices,” Edwin introduced them without hesitation.

“So you’re Mr. Lawson. It’s a pleasure to meet you.” Natasha smiled.

“Mr. Lawson, I have something to discuss with Ms. Harmon. You can leave the room.” Edwin gave them a look, hinting for them to leave.

“Yes, sir.”

Today’s Bonus Offer

X

GET IT NOW

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Chapter 48

Fletcher threw a glance at Dustin and went out with his apprentices.

“You should go out too.” Natasha gestured for him to exit the room.

Dustin nodded and went out.

They had a tacit understanding with each other, or in other words, they had ulterior motives.

“So, you’re Natasha’s personal bodyguard? You don’t look like much!” The twins sized Dustin up like he was their prey.

“Is that so? You’ll find out soon.” Dustin went down the stairs without another word.

“Liam and Noah, follow him and get rid of him,” Fletcher ordered coldly. 1

In his opinion, he didn’t need to deal with an insignificant person like Dustin. His two apprentices could easily

finish him off.

“No problem!” Liam and Noah grinned and followed him quietly.

Once Dustin went downstairs, he strolled through the garden and entered the underground parking lot. The

company had just launched, and the parking lot was still closed, so it was quiet and empty.

“Boy! You really know how to dig your own grave!” 1

At that moment, Liam and Noah finally revealed themselves. There was nobody here, so they could make a

move.

“Don’t you know the prey may sometimes become the predator?” Dustin turned around slowly, **as** if it was all a

part of his plan.

“I don’t know what you **mean**, but the prey is definitely you!” The two grinned grimly.

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“Dustin! Your time has **come!**” Chris yelled and walked out of the crowd.

“It’s you! Are you here to join the fun too?” Dustin narrowed his eyes in surprise.

“Join the fun? I’m going to break you today!” Chris said viciously.

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"You may not, but I do!" Chris cried with resentment. "Who are you to deserve Ms. Harmon's attention? How

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Chapter 48

Chris's mind worked. **What** was this, jealousy turned into wrath?

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He may just be some gold digger, but he would become a threat if he stayed by Natasha's side and stirred up trouble. Thus, he wanted to act first and destroy Dustin.

He refused to **believe** Natasha would fall for a useless piece of **trash!**

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 49 -

Chapter 49

"I'd advise you not to do that, or you will regret it." Dustin remained calm and unbothered. Chris had always been nothing but a joke to him.

"Ha! I know you practice some martial arts, but it's not enough to defeat the men I hired. They're all experts in

martial arts. Besides, even if you can fight, you'd only get chopped up by my men!" Chris smiled coldly.

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fearless as you in **some** time. Come, let us see what you and your men can do."

They made some taunting gestures toward the men.

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armed with knives and steel poles immediately stormed forward.

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What happened next shook Chris to the core.

The twins waved their bare fists around and began to attack his men viciously.

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Every strike took one man down. Any unlucky fighters would

die right on the spot!

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These people weren't human. These two were clearly monsters!

In just a few minutes, Liam and Noah managed to defeat all the thugs. Not a single one of them remained.

Their strength was astonishingly overpowering!

"How is this possible?" Chris was so frightened his lips quivered. He never expected these two ordinary men

to be so powerful.

"What a bunch of trash! I haven't even finished warming up!" Both Liam and Noah felt unsatisfied with their battle.

As they spoke, they turned to look at Chris, and he stumbled backward out of fear.

"Coward!" Both of them couldn't be bothered with Chris and turned around to focus on Dustin. "Now it's your

turn. I hope you can surprise us. Otherwise, this would be too easy."

1/2

CS CamScanner

Chapter 49

"Bring it on." Dustin waved his hand with an unwavering expression.

"Liam, let me **have** at it first!" Noah chuckled and leaped forward.

Chris, who had been frightened earlier, immediately got excited as he watched this unfold. He could **see** that their target was Dustin. Although his men were all defeated, he would be glad as long as Dustin got beaten up too. He couldn't help but look forward to it at the thought of the twins' performance just now.

"Dustin Rhys, aren't you good at fighting? I would like to see how you escape these two monsters!" Chris laughed gleefully.

At this moment, Noah made a move. His body arched up slightly, and there was a sudden force. In an instant, his body sprung forward like a preying cheeta

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As Chris was gloating at the thought, Dustin suddenly moved. He reached out his hand at lightning speed, grabbed Noah's neck, and threw him against the wall.

There was a loud explosion as Noah's body made a hole in the wall.

Noah groaned. He felt **dizzy** after being hit and had lost all his strength. All his bones felt as if they had shattered, and he couldn't even move.

Noah had lost all fight in just one move.

Dustin glared at him coldly. He grabbed Noah with one hand like he was nothing.

"Stop it!" Liam cried out in utter shock. He shot up and aimed a punch at Dustin's back.

A muffled thud followed his punch.

Dustin, who had been hit, stood as firm as a mountain. On the contrary, it was Liam who was sent flying miles away by the burst of energy. He landed harshly on a concrete wall and spat a mouthful of blood before he landed on the ground.

Liam was horrified as he looked down and realized the arm he used to punch Dustin had completely shattered. His internal organs had suffered severe damage. However, he still had surging energy in his body flowing out uncontrollably, like a wildfire that couldn't be contained. Liam could not bear it anymore and spat out another mouthful of blood.

Chris was dumbfounded by what he saw. It was as if he had seen a ghost. He never imagined that the pair of twins who seemed so invincible Just now would **be** defeated by Dustin in a blink of an eye. They hadn't **even** made any significant moves.

How could this be? This was impossible!

Chris was so shocked his face turned to ash, and cold sweat dripped down his back.

He had been so sure of the twins' ability. Liam and Noah were able to easily take down 20 people before. He had never seen such dauntless fighters! Logically speaking. It would be easy for them to deal with Dustin.

How did they fail right at the beginning?

If these two were monsters, then wasn't Dustin a beast amongst monsters?

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 50 -

Chapter 50

"Who on earth are you?" Liam trembled as he dragged himself over. His laidback expression had been replaced by shock and fear. Never did he imagine that at his full strength could not even scratch his opponent. Instead, he had injured himself gravely.

Was this man even human?

Fletcher had clearly told them he was just an ordinary martial artist. Why was he so powerful?

"Liam! Run away! Quickly!" Noah, who was pressed against the wall, yelled out at the top of his lungs.

The moment he crossed paths with Dustin, he realized that Dustin was much stronger than they had imagined. He had been able to render him completely useless with one move.

"Ah!" Liam cried out begrudgingly. Reluctantly, he abandoned his brother and ran away. He knew he couldn't save him. He didn't even have the power to fight Dustin to his death.

If Dustin was a mountain, they were nothing but ants. His punch just now had completely crushed his will to fight!

"I have to tell Fletcher! This man is too frightening. He shouldn't be taken lightly, otherwise Fletcher will surely

die!"

Liam's desire to survive pushed him to rush out of the **parking** lot. He was only focused on one thought. He had to tell his master to leave Swinton and never return!

This man was someone they could never afford to offend!

Dustin didn't bother to chase after Liam because he knew Liam's internal organs had suffered fatal damage.

"Who on earth are you? Why are you in Swinton?" Noah was filled with fear, as if he had seen a ghost. If he knew someone so powerful existed by Natasha's side, he wouldn't dare to approach her even if he had the courage of a lion.

"That doesn't matter. I'll give you a chance. Tell me everything about Fletcher, and I'll spare your life," Dustin

said coldly.

"You want me to betray him? In your dreams!" Noah glared at him and used his last remaining strength to tap

on his amulet.

There was a crisp sound, and Noah bled to death **in** an instant.

Dustin raised an eyebrow. He didn't expect Noah to be so determined as to opt for suicide to prevent himself

from spilling anything.

Chris cowered in a corner, shivering after witnessing everything.

He quickly ran away without another word. He wouldn't **have** provoked Dustin if he knew he **was** so powerful. Now he had brought trouble onto himself. He was speechless!

At the same time, In the lounge of the Emerald building. Edwin and Natasha were still conversing.

Chapter 50

“Ms. Harmon, I have some business at home. Please, excuse me.” Edwin got ready to leave after the chat.

“Goodbye, Sir Hummer.” Natasha did not intend to stop them and watched as they left.

“Mr. Lawson, do you have any news from your apprentices?” **Edwin** immediately asked once they got in the car.

“Maybe they wanted to have a bit more fun. Don’t worry, Sir Hummer. They will return after they deal with the matter.” Fletcher smiled calmly.

He was very confident in the apprentices he trained personally. They were twins, so they had a deep emotional connection. Their strength doubles once united. They were undoubtedly invincible in Swinton!

“That would be **best**.” Edwin nodded without another word **and** ordered the driver to get going.

Soon, they arrived at the Hummer Villa. However, before they could settle down, a bodyguard rushed in and

cried, “Sir Hummer! Mr. Lawson! Liam has sustained fatal injuries. I don’t think he will make it!”

“What?” Edwin and Fletcher’s faces immediately fell when they heard this.

“What nonsense **are** you saying? Liam is invincibly strong. Who could hurt him?” Fletcher was very distressed,

and he grabbed the bodyguard by the collar.

“It’s true! Liam is at the door right now. You have to see him now or it will be too late!” the bodyguard pleaded.

Fletcher did not waste any time. He pushed the bodyguard aside and left quickly. However, he lost his cool

when he saw the dying Liam when he arrived at the door.

“Liam! What happened to you? Where’s Noah?” Fletcher’s eyes widened in disbelief.

“Noah... is **dead**. We were mistaken! You Leave!”

Before Liam could finish his sentence, there was a splutter, and he spat a mouthful of blood on Fletcher’s face.

His head slumped and he died on the spot!

“Liam!” Fletcher exclaimed, overcome with sorrow. He had carefully trained both apprentices to pass on the

mantle. He didn’t expect them to die so suddenly.

“Why? Why did this happen? Who did this?” Fletcher held on to the body and cried.

“I don’t know. Liam **was** already in this state when we found him.” The bodyguard shook his head.

“Mr. Lawson, Liam was very capable. How did he end up this way?” Edwin walked toward them at this

moment.

Fletcher did not respond. He knelt down and inspected the body carefully.

“Broken bones and blood vessels, major organ damage. He must’ve met a powerful opponent!” After the inspection, Fletcher’s expression darkened.

“Are you saying that fellow by Natasha’s side is very powerful?” Edwin frowned.

“His strength must not be taken lightly if he could destroy my apprentices. I made a wrong judgment!” Fletcher **said** in disappointment.

“Can you defeat him?” Edwin implored.

717

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Chapter 50

“Although this man is very strong, he’s still young. He can’t be more powerful than my 40 years of experience. I will kill him and take revenge for my apprentices!” Fletcher swore with determination.

“Mr. Lawson, since you’re proficient in the mystic arts. You should use what you’re confident in,” Edwin reminded him. He didn’t want any more accidents to occur.

“Hmph! This man killed my apprentices by beating them to death! I would return an eye for an eye and kill him myself!” Fletcher gritted his teeth.

If he knew his apprentice died because of his attempt to punch Dustin, he would no longer have had this thought.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 46 -

Chapter 46

"I don't understand what you mean." Dustin kept a straight face and played dumb. He was not one to claim credit or recognition for what he had done. Since things had ended between them, he hoped they wouldn't be involved with each other in any way.

"It **really** wasn't you?" Dahlia still had some doubts.

"Ms. Nicholson, I think there's some misunderstanding. How can someone as useless as me help you?" Dustin replied coldly.

"Maybe I was wrong." There was a hint of disappointment in her **eyes** as she added, "That's right. Why would you help me? After all, we're no longer together. Besides, you're not capable of doing so."

"As you said, I have no money or power. I'm nothing compared to Chris. Is there anything else?" Dustin's face remained blank. 1

"No. You can go back to Ms. Harmon," Dahlia said scornfully.

"Alright, please excuse me." Dustin did not say much more and quickly caught up with Natasha, who deliberately walked slower.

"Mr. Rhys, it seems Ms. Nicholson still has some feelings for you," Natasha teased.

"Feelings?" Dustin laughed mockingly, "It's good enough that we haven't turned against each other."

"You can **never** read a woman's heart. There may be things even she has yet to figure out." Natasha smiled

and tried to change the topic. "Oh, you mentioned you still need some rare herbs?"

"Why? Have you **found them**?" Dustin immediately perked up.

“Not yet. But I know someone who can help you. He was born into a family of doctors, and he collects many valuable herbs. Maybe he has what you need,” Natasha explained.

“Oh? Who is it?” Dustin inquired.

“Follow me and you’ll find out.”

Natasha didn’t give more details. She took Dustin’s hand and went to the lounge on the second floor. There

were two men in the lounge room. One of them was Natasha’s grandfather, Andrew Harmon. The other **was** a

burly man who **looked** about a couple of decades older than Dustin.

The man was wearing **a** suit that made his muscles bulge. He had **a** calm expression on his face. It was

apparent he was no ordinary person.

“Mr. Rhys, you’re here! Have a seat!” Andrew immediately gestured for him to sit once Dustin entered the room.

“How are you feeling, Old Mr. Harmon?” Dustin asked politely.

“Much better. It’s all thanks to you. If not, I would have lost my life.” Andrew smiled.

“It’s nothing.” Dustin said modestly.

“Mr. Rhys, I would like to introduce someone to you.”

1/

CS CamScanner

Chapter 46

Natasha pointed at the other man. “This is Duane Welch, an expert in medicine. He’s from Millsburg and has a lot of experience. You can ask him if you need anything concerning medicine.”

“I’ve met you before.” Dustin nodded.

“I didn’t

know you were going to introduce someone so young to me. I don’t know if he has what it takes.” Duane sized him up disdainfully. He had personally come because he heard there was a famous doctor in Swinton. He hadn’t expect it to be this unremarkable boy.

What a waste of his time!

“Mr. Welch, you can’t judge a book by its cover. I’ve personally witnessed Mr. Rhys’ skill. He’s on par with other experienced doctors!” Natasha reassured him.

“Is that so? If that’s the case, he should evaluate me and see if he could diagnose anything.” Duane started to get ready for an evaluation. It was obvious he was trying to make things difficult for Dustin.

“There’s no need. I can recognize what disease you have in a glance,” Dustin responded.

“In a glance?” Duane was slightly startled. “Are you joking? You can diagnose me by just looking? Even the

senior doctors in Millsburg can’t do that!”

“I don’t know if others can do it. But I can indeed see what disease you have.” Dustin was very certain.

“Alright! Then I would really like to know what you have diagnosed!” Duane joked lightly.

“You have a weak pulse, and you often become breathless. Your chest area especially is infected, and in addition to the internal injuries you suffered before, you are now terminally ill!” Dustin explained in a breath.

“Terminally ill? Ha! What nonsense!”

Duane chuckled coldly. “Young man, don’t you know that I’ve led an active life style since I was young? My body is very strong. Besides, I take a lot of supplements. I’m basically invincible to any disease! How dare you say I’m terminally ill? What a joke!”

“You’re only healthy physically. The real disease is internal. Also, you should stop taking those supplements **as** they would only make your condition worse. Once it breaks out, there will be no turning back!” Dustin

warned.

“What a load of bullshit! I’ve been taking those supplements since I was young and nothing has happened in 40 years. Now you’re telling me they don’t work?” Duane was very unhappy about this.

“I’m just warning you. If you continue, you will have a thyroid infection in three days!” Dustin advised.

“You’re not fooling me! I’ve encountered a lot of scammers like you!” Duane said disdainfully.

“Mr. Welch, Dustin is a skilled doctor. You better not take his words lightly.” Natasha reminded him gently.

“Natasha, I think you have been scammed. I know my body well. I’m not sick at all. He’s just trying to scare

us!”

“Since you don’t believe it, why don’t we make a bet?”

“What is at stake?”

2/3

CS CamScanner

Chapter 45

“It’s simple. If your disease breaks out within **three days**, you have to let Dustin pick anything from your

collection **of** valuable herbs!”

“Alright! But what if I’m fine?”

“If you’re fine, you can come to the Harmon family’s treasury and pick any three items!” Natasha offered boldly.

“You stated the rules. Since you’re being so generous, I won’t hold back!” Duane chuckled.

Everything in the Harmon family’s treasury was an extraordinary item. Any three would be a rare collector’s item.

“Mr. Welch, a word of advice, it’s best if you don’t **leave** Swinton in these three **days**. If anything happens, I can still save you in time,” Dustin advised.

“What a joke! Who am I? Do I need you to save me? Even if I were sick, I would never ask you to treat me!”

Duane said contemptuously. He wouldn’t even bother talking with this scammer if it weren’t for the Harmon family.

“There’s no point in saying more. The truth will prevail” Dustin smiled faintly without saying another word. He just hoped Duane’s rare herbs collection would have what he needed.

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Chapter 47

“Mr. Harmon, I have to attend something else. Please, excuse me.”

After a few exchanges, Duane got ready to leave. He had come because of a renowned doctor. He wouldn’t stay long since it was just a sham.

“Mr. Welch, I suggest **you** listen to Mr. Rhys’ advice and stay around Swinton for these few days to avoid anything.” Natasha kindly reminded him.

“Natasha, you don’t have to worry about me. You should worry about yourself,” Duane piped up thoughtfully. “I remember your engagement to Tyler Grant is imminent. I don’t think a man like him would like it if you were too close to other men.”

Natasha couldn’t help but frown at these words. He had touched on a sensitive topic.

“It’s just an engagement. We’re not even married yet. At worst, I can break off the engagement,” Natasha answered casually.

“Break off the engagement? That’s the Grant family you’re talking about. Have you thought of the consequences of your actions?” Duane was slightly bewildered.

“What consequences would there be? They can’t do anything to me,” Natasha replied calmly.

“The Grant family might not do anything to you, but I’m **not** sure about the one next to you. You’re well aware of the Grant family’s ways. The closer you get to him, the more danger **he’s** in.”

Duane gazed toward Dustin. His implications were clear.

“Hmph! I don’t believe Tyler would cause any trouble!” Natasha maintained an impassive face.

“I’m just reminding you. What you do is up to you.” Duane didn’t say more and left with a smile.

“What Duane says is true. You’d better deal with the matter between you and the Grant family.” Andrew warned.

“Grandfather, I know what to do.” Natasha nodded.

Although they had been engaged since young, she had never fallen for him. How could she marry someone she **doesn’t** have feelings for? Besides, she despised arranged marriages the most!

“Ms. Harmon, Sir Hummer is requestign to see you,” a bodyguard informed her after entering.

“Edwin Hummer?” Natasha raised an eyebrow. “I **was** just about to see him. I didn’t expect him to **come** first. Bring him to the lounge, I’ll be there in a second.”

“Yes, Ms. Nicholson,” the bodyguard replied promptly and left.

“Mr. Rhys, I’m going to see what I can find out from Edwin. You can pretend to be my bodyguard and Improvise.” Natasha glanced at the man beside her.

“Okay,” Dustin agreed and nodded his head.

Today’s ceremony was bait for the prey. Now that the prey **was** here, he could not pass on this opportunity.

1/7

CS CamScanner

Three minutes later, Dustin and Natasha arrived at another lounge.

Edwin and Fletcher were leisurely enjoying some tea inside. Behind **them** were a pair of twins.

“Ms. Harmon, congratulations on your grand opening!” Edwin immediately congratulated her.

He seemed like **a** wolf in sheep’s clothing.

they were

“Welcome. Sir Hummer. It’s a pleasure to have you here!” Natasha greeted cheerily. Although they enemies, they had to put on a cordial act.

“I see a few new faces around you. Aren’t you going to introduce them?” Natasha looked toward Fletcher and

the other two men.

“Oh! This is an old friend of mine, Mr. Lawson. He helps me with my personal affairs. As for these two young “men, they’re his apprentices,” Edwin introduced them without hesitation.

“So you’re Mr. Lawson. It’s a pleasure to meet you.” Natasha smiled.

“Mr. Lawson, I have something to discuss with Ms. Harmon. You can leave the room.” Edwin gave them a look, hinting for them to leave.

“Yes, sir.”

Today’s Bonus Offer

X

GET IT NOW

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 48 -

Chapter 48

Fletcher threw a glance at Dustin and went out with his apprentices.

“You should go out too.” Natasha gestured for him to exit the room.

Dustin nodded and went out.

They had a tacit understanding with each other, or in other words, they had ulterior motives.

“So, you’re Natasha’s personal bodyguard? You don’t look like much!” The twins sized Dustin up like he was their prey.

“Is that so? You’ll find out soon.” Dustin went down the stairs without another word.

“Liam and Noah, follow him and get rid of him,” Fletcher ordered coldly. 1

In his opinion, he didn’t need to deal with an insignificant person like Dustin. His two apprentices could easily

finish him off.

“No problem!” Liam and Noah grinned and followed him quietly.

Once Dustin went downstairs, he strolled through the garden and entered the underground parking lot. The

company had just launched, and the parking lot was still closed, so it was quiet and empty.

“Boy! You really know how to dig your own grave!” 1

At that moment, Liam and Noah finally revealed themselves. There was nobody here, so they could make a

move.

“Don’t you know the prey may sometimes become the predator?” Dustin turned around slowly, **as** if it was all a

part of his plan.

“I don’t know what you **mean**, but the prey is definitely you!” The two grinned grimly.

However, before they could make a move, there was a thunderous sound of footsteps. A group of thugs armed with machetes and steel pipes rushed in.

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“It’s you! Are you here to join the fun too?” Dustin narrowed his eyes in surprise.

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Chapter 48

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Chapter 49

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As they spoke, they turned to look at Chris, and he stumbled backward out of fear.

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1/2

CS CamScanner

Chapter 49

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Dustin, who had been hit, stood as firm as a mountain. On the contrary, it was Liam who was sent flying miles away by the burst of energy. He landed harshly on a concrete wall and spat a mouthful of blood before he landed on the ground.

Liam was horrified as he looked down and realized the arm he used to punch Dustin had completely shattered. His internal organs had suffered severe damage. However, he still had surging energy in his body flowing out uncontrollably, like a wildfire that couldn't be contained. Liam could not bear it anymore and spat out another mouthful of blood.

Chris was dumbfounded by what he saw. It was as if he had seen a ghost. He never imagined that the pair of twins who seemed so invincible Just now would **be** defeated by Dustin in a blink of an eye. They hadn't **even** made any significant moves.

How could this be? This was impossible!

Chris was so shocked his face turned to ash, and cold sweat dripped down his back.

He had been so sure of the twins' ability. Liam and Noah were able to easily take down 20 people before. He had never seen such dauntless fighters! Logically speaking. It would be easy for them to deal with Dustin.

How did they fail right at the beginning?

If these two were monsters, then wasn't Dustin a beast amongst monsters?

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"Who on earth are you?" Liam trembled as he dragged himself over. His laidback expression had been replaced by shock and fear. Never did he imagine that at his full strength could not even scratch his opponent. Instead, he had injured himself gravely.

Was this man even human?

Fletcher had clearly told them he was just an ordinary martial artist. Why was he so powerful?

"Liam! Run away! Quickly!" Noah, who was pressed against the wall, yelled out at the top of his lungs.

The moment he crossed paths with Dustin, he realized that Dustin was much stronger than they had imagined. He had been able to render him completely useless with one move.

"Ah!" Liam cried out begrudgingly. Reluctantly, he abandoned his brother and ran away. He knew he couldn't save him. He didn't even have the power to fight Dustin to his death.

If Dustin was a mountain, they were nothing but ants. His punch just now had completely crushed his will to fight!

"I have to tell Fletcher! This man is too frightening. He shouldn't be taken lightly, otherwise Fletcher will surely

die!"

Liam's desire to survive pushed him to rush out of the **parking** lot. He was only focused on one thought. He had to tell his master to leave Swinton and never return!

This man was someone they could never afford to offend!

Dustin didn't bother to chase after Liam because he knew Liam's internal organs had suffered fatal damage.

"Who on earth are you? Why are you in Swinton?" Noah was filled with fear, as if he had seen a ghost. If he knew someone so powerful existed by Natasha's side, he wouldn't dare to approach her even if he had the courage of a lion.

"That doesn't matter. I'll give you a chance. Tell me everything about Fletcher, and I'll spare your life," Dustin

said coldly.

"You want me to betray him? In your dreams!" Noah glared at him and used his last remaining strength to tap

on his amulet.

There was a crisp sound, and Noah bled to death **in** an instant.

Dustin raised an eyebrow. He didn't expect Noah to be so determined as to opt for suicide to prevent himself

from spilling anything.

Chris cowered in a corner, shivering after witnessing everything.

He quickly ran away without another word. He wouldn't **have** provoked Dustin if he knew he **was** so powerful. Now he had brought trouble onto himself. He was speechless!

At the same time, In the lounge of the Emerald building. Edwin and Natasha were still conversing.

Chapter 50

“Ms. Harmon, I have some business at home. Please, excuse me.” Edwin got ready to leave after the chat.

“Goodbye, Sir Hummer.” Natasha did not intend to stop them and watched as they left.

“Mr. Lawson, do you have any news from your apprentices?” **Edwin** immediately asked once they got in the car.

“Maybe they wanted to have a bit more fun. Don’t worry, Sir Hummer. They will return after they deal with the matter.” Fletcher smiled calmly.

He was very confident in the apprentices he trained personally. They were twins, so they had a deep emotional connection. Their strength doubles once united. They were undoubtedly invincible in Swinton!

“That would be **best**.” Edwin nodded without another word **and** ordered the driver to get going.

Soon, they arrived at the Hummer Villa. However, before they could settle down, a bodyguard rushed in and

cried, “Sir Hummer! Mr. Lawson! Liam has sustained fatal injuries. I don’t think he will make it!”

“What?” Edwin and Fletcher’s faces immediately fell when they heard this.

“What nonsense **are** you saying? Liam is invincibly strong. Who could hurt him?” Fletcher was very distressed,

and he grabbed the bodyguard by the collar.

“It’s true! Liam is at the door right now. You have to see him now or it will be too late!” the bodyguard pleaded.

Fletcher did not waste any time. He pushed the bodyguard aside and left quickly. However, he lost his cool

when he saw the dying Liam when he arrived at the door.

“Liam! What happened to you? Where’s Noah?” Fletcher’s eyes widened in disbelief.

“Noah... is **dead**. We were mistaken! You Leave!”

Before Liam could finish his sentence, there was a splutter, and he spat a mouthful of blood on Fletcher’s face.

His head slumped and he died on the spot!

“Liam!” Fletcher exclaimed, overcome with sorrow. He had carefully trained both apprentices to pass on the

mantle. He didn’t expect them to die so suddenly.

“Why? Why did this happen? Who did this?” Fletcher held on to the body and cried.

“I don’t know. Liam **was** already in this state when we found him.” The bodyguard shook his head.

“Mr. Lawson, Liam was very capable. How did he end up this way?” Edwin walked toward them at this

moment.

Fletcher did not respond. He knelt down and inspected the body carefully.

“Broken bones and blood vessels, major organ damage. He must’ve met a powerful opponent!” After the inspection, Fletcher’s expression darkened.

“Are you saying that fellow by Natasha’s side is very powerful?” Edwin frowned.

“His strength must not be taken lightly if he could destroy my apprentices. I made a wrong judgment!” Fletcher **said** in disappointment.

“Can you defeat him?” Edwin implored.

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“Although this man is very strong, he’s still young. He can’t be more powerful than my 40 years of experience. I will kill him and take revenge for my apprentices!” Fletcher swore with determination.

“Mr. Lawson, since you’re proficient in the mystic arts. You should use what you’re confident in,” Edwin reminded him. He didn’t want any more accidents to occur.

“Hmph! This man killed my apprentices by beating them to death! I would return an eye for an eye and kill him myself!” Fletcher gritted his teeth.

If he knew his apprentice died because of his attempt to punch Dustin, he would no longer have had this thought.

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In a lounge at the Emerald building. Natasha **greeted** Dustin. "Mr. Rhys, you're not hurt, are you?" Her **eyes** scanned him over in worry.

"I'm fine." Dustin shook his head and continued, "I've dealt with the twins. What do you plan on doing next?"

"Those two were some of Edwin's most useful men. I think he will be very alarmed now that they are dead. We should take things slow lest we scare them a way," Natasha said. She did not want to burn the bridge between her and Edwin. She just wanted to teach him a lesson so he would back down. This was the best option.

"Alright. It's up to you." Dustin didn't say more.

"Oh, yes, you should take cover for the time being. I received news that Trevor's brother, Travis, is back, and

he's hunting for the murderer." Natasha's tone and expression turned grave. She would not pick battles with

the military. Travis was a general in the warzone. Even she had to think twice before getting on the wrong side

of him.

"Thanks for the advice. I know what to do." Dustin nodded.

The position of general was a very powerful one. To someone ordinary, he held the power of life and death.

However, Dustin was not so afraid.

Meanwhile, in the Spanner Villa.

Travis stood by the coffin's side with his eyes closed. Outside the living room, members of the Spanner family knelt on the g

round. Everyone had their heads down. Not a word **was** spoken, and the atmosphere was very

tense.

Trevor **had** died out of the blue, the traitor Mason had disappeared, and the murderer was nowhere to be found. The entire Spanner family was reeling from the loss.

“General! We’ve got something!” At this moment, an adjutant walked in.

“Who is the murderer?” Travis opened his eyes with a bloodthirsty look.

“We’re not sure who the murderer is. But, we’ve found someone related to him,” the adjutant explained.

“Be more specific.”

“According to our Investigation, two people went to the Drey Group before Trevor’s demise. One was the Quine Group’s president, Dahlia Nicholson. The other was Hunter Anderson, the president of Swinton’s Business

Commerce!”

“You mean they are associated with the murderer?”

“Yes! Dahlia, especially, is the key to everything. Edward was crippled because of her. She must know the murderer’s identity!” the adjutant deduced.

“That’s right! That b*tch ruined me! She has someone good at fighting on her side. They must have killed my

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father!” Edward immediately became agitated.

“Gather the troops! Arrest her immediately!” Travis stood up and said coldly after ordering. “I don’t care who

the murderer is. I will destroy his whole family for killing someone from the Sp
anner family!”

That evening, the Nicholson family were celebrating **Dahlia's** newly launched
company in a restaurant.

“Sis, I'd like to raise a toast to you. I wish you success in the future!” James gri
nned and raised his glass.

The rest of them cheered and raised their glasses.

“Dahlia, you must be hiring since the company is newly established. I have a n
iece who's a fresh graduate. Can you arrange a job for her?”

“Huh! I almost forgot. I also have a cousin that's recently unemployed. He has
eight years of experience **in**

business management. Dahlia, you should hire him into management. He's su
re to help you out!”

After a few drinks, some women started to chatter.

“Hiring is handled by Human Resources. I usually don't interfere. Of course, if
any of you have a suitable candidate, they can
always submit their resume,” Dahlia responded professionally. The company
was very against nepotism, and she
would usually avoid matters like this. Of course, if it were unavoidable, she wo
uld arrange an idle job for them.

“Dahlia, listen
to me. I heard that Dustin and Ms. Harmon are very close. If you won't help us
, **we'll** ask

Dustin!” one of them exclaimed.

“Hmph! Dustin is nothing but a gold digger. He's not even fit to be in my sister'
s shadow!” James snorted

coldly.

“That's right! What can useless trash do for you? Do you really think he could
speak up before Ms. Harmon? Stop daydreaming!” Florence also added in spi
te.

Why would they mention that trash to dampen the **mood**?

“But I heard Dustin was invited onto the stage at today’s opening ceremony,” the person added.

“So what? He didn’t even say a single word. It **was** so humiliating!”

“That’s right! It may seem he’s living a glorious life now, but he’s nothing but a tool. Ms. Harmon will kick him aside when she gets tired of him!”

Everyone started **nodding** along. That was right. What did Ms. Harmon see in a person such as Dustin? In the end, he was nothing but a plaything. Once she got tired of him, she would throw him away. By then, Dustin would be worthless!

“Hard work requires effort. Any man who depends on a woman is useless. The real talented young man is Chris!” James finished and gave Chris a big thumbs up.

Chris’s eyes twitched, and he seemed nervous. In the past, he would definitely scoff in contempt of Dustin. However, after witnessing his power today, he felt Dustin was not someone ordinary.

“Alright, let’s stop talking about this and eat,” Dahlia said, trying to change the topic. She didn’t want to hear

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Dustin’s and Natasha’s names mentioned.

Whenever she thought of the two laughing and talking, she would feel strangely panicked.

“Quick! Surround this place. No one can leave!”

Suddenly, there was a commotion outside the door. Immediately, the door was kicked open with a loud bang.

A group of heavily armed guards stormed in aggressively. The deadly aura radiating from them made everyone's blood run cold.

"Who is Dahlia Nicholson?" The leading soldier stepped out, his eyes as sharp as a knife.

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Chapter 52

Everyone was shocked when they watched the guards swarm in. They looked at each other in confusion for

some time.

"Officer, what is the matter?" Florence braced herself and asked. She had never witnessed such an occasion as a civilian. Even if she did not do anything illegal, she still felt guilty.

"I'm asking, who is Dahlia Nicholson?" the officer spoke in a somber tone with a hostile look in his eyes.

"I am..." Dahlia slowly stood up and put on a brave face as she asked, "What can I do for you, officer?"

"According to our investigations, you are collaborating with the enemy. You are accused of being a spy planted by the west. Come with us immediately to assist in the investigation!" the officer announced.

"Collaborating with the enemy? A traitor?"

Everyone was shocked at his accusation. That didn't seem plausible. Dahlia was born and raised in Swinton, she wasn't mixed in any way. Even her ancestors were all ordinary farmers.

How could she end up being a traitor?

“Officer, is there a mistake? My daughter is a model citizen. She pays her taxes every year and even donates to charity. How is it possible that she’s a traitor?” Florence asked in shock.

“That’s right! My sister is innocent. You shouldn’t spew nonsense!” James slammed the table and stood up unhappily.

“We will find out whether this is a mistake after the investigation!” the guard answered coldly.

“Is there even a need? We can testify!”

“That’s right! Dahlia is definitely not a traitor!” everyone spoke out in support. They were very clear about

Dahlia’s conduct.

It would be more plausible that she manipulated the market, but being a traitor to the country was not

possible!

“I’m just following orders. Anyone who stops me will be deemed an accomplice!” The officer started to get

impatient.

“You wouldn’t dare!” James glared at him. “Do you know who we are? You wouldn’t live to see daylight if you dared touch a single hair on my sister!”

“Huh! There is solid evidence of Dahlia Nicholson’s collusion with the enemy country. Anyone who obstructs the arrest must be an accomplice. If that’s the case, take them all away! Anyone who resists will be shot!”

At the officer’s order, all the soldiers raised their guns one after another. The cold gun barrel aimed at the people in the room felt very menacing.

In an instant, everyone froze.

“You-you...” James wanted to say something but Dahlia quickly stopped him. “Everyone, keep calm. I believe

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there must be some misunderstanding. I'm sure they will let me go after the investigation."

The officer snorted coldly at these words. They were the ones who decided whether this was a

misunderstanding or not!

"Take them away!" the officer ordered, and everyone was taken to the car.

The car stopped at the gates of the Spanner Villa 20 minutes later.

"Officer, this doesn't look like a place for investigations," Florence asked with uncertainty.

"Stop talking nonsense! Go in!" The officer couldn't bother to say more and forced everyone inside the villa.

Everyone realized something was off once they walked into the courtyard. Two white flags were hung on each side of the door, and in the middle of the living room was a coffin.

Trevor's portrait greeted them.

"Sir Spanner?" Everyone widened their eyes in confusion.

As for Dahlia, she started to feel uneasy. She realized she must have walked into a trap.

"Is everyone here?" Just when everyone was left wondering, a burly Travis walked out imposingly. His sharp

eyes and menacing stance felt so overbearing some couldn't breathe.

"Sir, everyone related is here," the officer replied.

"Okay." Travis nodded, his gaze swept through the crowd, and he continued, "My name is Travis Spanner. I'm

from the western war zone with the position of a general. I believe some of you may have heard of me.” 2

“Travis Spanner? General?”

Everyone’s face fell at these words.

Chris was especially fearful. Others might not know it, but he knew very well how scary the western warzone was. Only one who was experienced in battle and had strong military control could obtain this position. Even the Mighty Three had to show their respect in the face of this man. In this world, money and status were far

inferior to power!

Rich people did not necessarily have power, but people with power must have money!

This man before him was the prime example of someone with money and power. The point was his power

came from the military. He could convict anyone of any crime in just a word!

For example, treason!

“I don’t want to waste time, so I’ll just ask one question. You’ll survive if you answer honestly. Otherwise, you’ll be convicted for the crime of treason!” Travis threatened without beating around the bush.

“General, we will fully cooperate with the investigation!” Florence nodded, her legs trembling with fear. She had no choice. This man’s demeanor was too domineering!

“Alright. Let me ask you, did my brother’s death have anything to do with you?” Travis asked.

The crowd got anxious as soon as he said those words.

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“No! It has nothing to do with us! We don’t know anything!”

“Yes! We’re all innocent!”

“General! You must be mistaken! We have nothing to do with Sir Spanner’s death!”

Everyone shook their heads in fright. They would definitely lose their lives if they admitted to such a thing.

“Is that so?” Travis snickered coldly. He waved his hand without another word and ordered, “Edward, take a

look at these people.”

“I’m coming!” Edward slowly limped out of the room. As his gaze fixed on Dahlia, he immediately took on a lustful expression. However, his lust quickly turned to resentment. Now that he had become crippled, he

wouldn’t feel anything even before this exquisite woman.

‘Since he couldn’t get her, he would rather destroy her!

At this thought, Edward’s face contorted into a nasty look.

“Uncle! It’s her, Dahlia! My dad’s death must have something to do with her!” Edward pointed at Dahlia, then turned around and pointed at Chris, shouting, “And him! He also has a grudge against me! He might be

suspicious too!”

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Chapter 53

Chris was completely dumbfounded to be pointed out by Edward. Never in his wildest dreams had he expected Edward to do so. He didn’t do anything, but somehow he got involved.

“Tell me honestly, did you have anything to do with my dad’s death?” Edward glared and shouted.

“No! It had nothing to do with me! I don’t know anything!” Chris shook his head in fear, cold sweat dripping

down his forehead.

“You don’t know, or you don’t **want** to tell?” **Edward** narrowed his eyes menacingly.

“Mr. Spanner, I really have no idea! This is all a misunderstanding!” Chris started to plead, every inch of his

body was begging for mercy. Although he knew Edward was taking the opportunity to settle their personal

grudge, he couldn’t say a word.

“Huh! It seems like you won’t spill without some pressure. Come, beat him up!” Edward ordered, and two

officers immediately took action.

“Wait!” James suddenly stopped them. “Do you know who he is? He’s Chris Nolan of Nolan Pharmaceuticals!

He’s also very close with Mr. Anderson! If you dared touch a hair on him, Mr. Anderson would not let it slide!”

“There! Uncle Travis, you heard it. This guy is related to Hunter Anderson! He must be one of the murderers!”

Edward suddenly became excited, as if he had caught Chris admitting to the crime.

“So you’re Hunter’s accomplice that killed my brother?” Travis glared at him.

There were two main suspects in this case. One was Hunter Anderson, **and** the other was Dahlia Nicholson.

This man was connected to both of these people, so he was obviously involved.

“No! It wasn’t me!” Chris was slightly startled, and he quickly shook his head. “I have nothing to do with Mr. Anderson! I don’t know anything at all. This whole thing was a misunderstanding from start to finish!”

“Chris, why do you have to be afraid of them? You have Mr. Anderson to help you. They wouldn’t dare to touch

you!” James proclaimed proudly.

“Shut the f*ck up!” Chris was so terrified he threw his arms around and landed a slap on James’ face.

Mr. Anderson was nothing! This guy was a general commanding thousands of troops!

Who could stop someone like him if he goes mad?

“Chris... Why did you hit me?”

James held onto his face in pain. “Didn’t you give Mr. Anderson a phone call to save my sister when Sir Spanner was messing with her? Did I say something wrong?”

“Fuck you! How dare you speak nonsense! Shut up!”

Chris was about to cry. Beads of sweat were forming on his forehead. Was this guy an idiot? Couldn’t he read the room?

“We have a witness and physical evidence! I’d like to see you explain yourself!” Edward gloated. He just

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wanted to take advantage of the situation. He didn’t expect to actually get results.

“Edward, this guy is bullshitting! I didn’t do anything. It was a complete coincidence that Mr. Anderson showed up that day! They were the ones giving me all the credit willingly!” Chris had no choice but to tell the truth as the situation started to get out of hand.

“Huh? Didn’t you help my sister?” James was very confused.

“In your dreams!” Chris berated angrily. “Who am I to request for Mr. Anderson? You should really use your brains! If I had that power, I wouldn’t go bankrupt!”

“What? Bankrupt?” The entire Nicholson family was shocked by his words. They couldn’t react for a moment.

“At this point, I won’t bother to hide anymore. Dustin was right. Nolan Pharmaceuticals is under investigation, and we’re going bankrupt. Now, it’s just an empty shell!”

Chris could no longer be bothered. He would do anything to be set apart from the Nicholson family.

“You’re not joking, are you? You said the company was going public. How could it go bankrupt?” Florence was dumbfounded.

“Going public? That’s bullshit! I just said that to fool all of you! There’s no such thing on earth! I wouldn’t even think of you if the dividends existed! Stop dreaming!” Chris had a grim expression on his face. He was blabbing about everything at this moment. He would do anything to draw a line between himself and the Nicholson family to save his life.

“You mean you’ve been lying to us?” Florence was shocked and in disbelief.

“That’s right! I just wanted to snag some money and run away. Who knew you’d be dumb enough to believe it!” Chris sneered.

“You monster! How could you cheat us of our money? Pay us back!” Florence shrieked and jumped at Chris. That was her retirement money. She had invested everything to get the bonus.

Who knew it would all be in vain? It was as if her whole world had collapsed!

“You sly wolf! We trusted you! How could you cheat us of our money? You’re an animal! Give **us** back the money!” The others were also agitated **and** started to protest, but they were quickly forced back by the armed

guards. Only Florence was quick enough to leave a scratch mark on Chris’s face.

“The money is gone! Truth be told, I’ve transferred all the funds overseas. You should just give up!” Chris

came completely clean. His words were like a knife, stabbed through their chests. They had never felt more

regret! If they had known this, they wouldn’t have been greedy and believed in Chris’s nonsense.

“Why would you do this?” Dahlia frowned in confusion. She never expected Chris’s capital increase would be a scam.

Moreover, Dustin was being kind when he tried to tell her the Nolan family was going bankrupt. However, no one believed him.

This was really a big slap in the face!

“Why? Of course, it was for money! I’ll have women when I have money. You should all know this!” Chris

snickered.

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Chapter 53

“So the partnership with the Harmon family had nothing to do with you either?” Dahlia asked tentatively.

“That’s right!” Chris admitted to it plainly. “My **dad** never called the Harmon family. They made the decision themselves. I just took advantage of the situation! The funny thing **was** you all believed me without a doubt!”

Dahlia was completely dumbfounded. Everything turned out to be a misunderstanding. Chris never helped her in any way and even cheated her of her money. The worst part was that he had taken credit for everything and kept her in the dark.

He had such wild ambitions!

The question was, who had helped her behind her back if it wasn't Chris?

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Chapter 54

"Could it be Dustin?" Dahlia wondered. She then immediately dismissed this thought.

That was impossible!

They were already divorced. Besides, they were now like water and oil. Why would he help her? Moreover, he wasn't capable of it.

"Chris Nolan! You're such a vile and despicable human being! I must've been blind to believe in someone like you!"

"Bastard! I even thought of you as family! You're even worse than that trash, Dustin!" Florence and James cursed at him after knowing the truth. They had put their whole trust in Chris. They didn't expect him to be a fraud.

"We all have to look out for ourselves! You only have yourself to blame for being so dumb!" Chris mocked scornfully.

"Shut the f*ck up! My ears are sore from listening to your bickering!" Edward roared, and everyone fell silent at

once.

"What I'm trying to say is, I have nothing to do with the Nicholson family. I don't know Hunter Anderson either. The Nicholson family was behind Sir Spanner's death! I had nothing to do with it!" Chris knelt on the floor with a thud and started to beg.

"Uncle Travis, how should we deal with him?" Edward asked.

Travis didn't say a word. He took two steps forward and declared to Chris, "I don't care about what you have to do with the Nicholson family. I just want to know who the murderer is! Tell me, and I'll spare you, or else you face the same fate as them!"

"I'll tell you everything!" Chris suddenly had an idea and said in a hurry. "I figured it out! It must be Dustin! He must've murdered Mr. Spanner!"

"Dustin? What a familiar name." Edward pinched his chin in deep thought.

"Edward, did you forget? He's the one who beat you up!" Chris started to blabber.

"It was him!" Edward immediately remembered and added resentfully, "Uncle Travis, Dustin is the most suspicious of all!"

"Where is he?" Travis asked coldly..

"I saw him at the Emerald building this morning. I don't know where he went after that. Oh, Dahlia is in charge of the Emerald building. She's also Dustin's wife. She must know where he is!" Chris pointed at Dahlia and pushed all the blame onto her.

"Bullshit! Dustin and my sister are divorced!" James immediately refuted.

"That's right! We have nothing to do with Dustin. His mess has nothing to do with us!"

"Yeah! You should look for Dustin. We're all innocent!"

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Everyone started to protest, afraid of being involved in this matter.

"I'll decide if you're innocent or not. Everyone is guilty before we find the murderer!" Travis scoffed coldly.

"That damned Dustin! He's going to kill us all!"

"This is so unfair! We've obeyed the law our whole lives. Why did we meet such a troublemaker?"

The Nicholson family lamented together.

"Leave Dahlia and lock up the rest of the Nicholson family!" Travis gave the order.

“Yes, sir!” The adjutant saluted, and armed soldiers led Florence and the others into the car.

As for Chris, he was shocked out of his wits.

“Where are you taking them?” Dahlia frowned with worry.

“You shouldn’t worry about them. You should worry about yourself.”

Travis slowly inched closer and asked coldly, “Where is Dustin? Are both of you involved in my brother’s death? You’d better be honest, and I’ll end you quickly! Otherwise, your entire family would join you!”

“Sir Spanner’s death has nothing to do with me! I don’t know anything!” Dahlia denied.

“You don’t know?” Travis snorted.

“It seems you won’t say anything without some force.”

He waved his hands, and two soldiers came forward and bound Dahlia up and hung her in from the ceiling.

“Let me go! You’re abusing your power!” Dahlia kept on struggling. However, her wrist hurt more with each struggle.

“Abusing my power?” Travis laughed at her statement. “It seems like you haven’t got a hold of the situation. Now, your life is in my hands. I decide if you die or live. I’ll ask you one more time, where is Dustin?”

“I don’t know!” Dahlia shook her head stubbornly.

“Huh! I think you would only give up after facing death! Beat her up until she spills it!” Travis commanded.

A burly underling quickly came forward dragging a barbed whip.

“What are you doing? I... Dahlia’s face paled, and as she **was** about to say something, the whip landed hard

on her back with a crack! With that crisp sound, her clothes tore, and a deep, bloody wound **was** left on her

back.

Dahlia moaned and gritted her teeth, holding in pain.

What quickly followed were multiple whips. The blows landed on her one after another. Dahlia finally couldn't

hold it in and let out a scream. Her body was in such pain it started to tremble. Her pale **and** smooth back instantly became bruised and bloody!

This whip was a specially designed torture device covered with dense spikes. Even a man couldn't endure a dozen lashes, let alone a woman.

"Spill!" Travis stood to her side and watched unfeelingly.

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Dahlia bit her lip in pain. She was sweating profusely, but her eyes were set with determination. "Don't stop! Hit harder!"

Travis was losing his temper with her and commanded his underlings to use more strength. As a result, the sounds of the whip and screams began to erupt one after another.

Chris couldn't bear to watch on. He could only lower his head in silence.

Edward, on the other hand, had a disturbing smile on his face.

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Chapter 55

After being subjected to the torture, **Dahlia** finally passed out.

Her back was bloody and horrific to look at. The fresh wounds were still bleeding profusely, her body still twitching uncontrollably even while she was passed out.

"General, she has lost consciousness!" one of his men reported.

“Wake her up and keep going.” Travis spat coldly.

“Uncle Travis, can I have a go?” Edward interjected eagerly. Ever since he was crippled, there had been a tremendous shift in his psychology. The more beautiful a woman was, the more he wanted to destroy her.

“If you want to, go ahead.” Travis nodded in approval.

“Thank you, Uncle Travis!” Edward grinned eerily.

Once Dahlia awakened, he wielded the whip in his hand and struck her.

“Tell me!”

“Just kill me!” Dahlia could no longer endure the **pain**. Her mind was at the end of its rope. Now, she could only hope they would put an end to her misery.

“Kill you? Not so fast! I haven’t even had enough!” Edward smiled sadistically and continued with the torture.

After a while, Dahlia, covered in bruises, fell into a coma again.

“General, the murderer hasn’t been revealed. If this continues, she will die soon,” the adjutant reminded.

“This woman is so stubborn!” Travis was impressed. This torture device was typically used to coerce

confessions. People usually confessed to everything after three whips. Even specially trained forces would not

be able to handle a dozen lashes.

Yet, this woman was able to withhold dozens of whips without revealing anything. Even he couldn’t help but

be impressed.

“Hang her at the entrance as bait. Call off the surrounding guards and see if Dustin will come to rescue her.” Travis commanded.

“Yes, sir!” the adjutant answered and hung the unconscious Dahlia at the **gate** **s**.

“Don’t you die on me! I’ll have my fun with you when I capture Dustin!” Edward licked **the** drops of blood at the corner of his mouth with a perverse smile.

Dustin had just finished his meal at the Peaceful Medical Center when he received a call.

It was Hunter Anderson, and he sounded like he was in a hurry.

“Mr. Rhys, I’ve received news that Ms. Nicholson has been arrested!”

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Chapter 55

“Arrested?” Dustin frowned.

“It’s Travis Spanner! He arrested Ms. Nicholson and her family for the crime of treason. They are receiving private punishment now!” Hunter explained.

Dustin’s face fell when he heard this. He knew very clearly what type of person Travis was. No ordinary person could bear the torture methods in the war zone!

“Where is Travis?” Dustin **was** very anxious.

“At the Spanner Villa. Mr. Rhys, Travis has set an ambush for you. You shouldn’t be too impulsive. Wait—

Before Hunter could finish, Dustin had already hung up the phone and rushed out.

When he arrived at Spanner Villa, he saw **a** woman hanging from the front of the villa doors.

The woman’s hair **was** disheveled, her clothes were torn, and blood trickled down her body. It was a horrible

sight to behold.

Dustin's eyes widened in shock when he realized the woman hanging there was Dahlia!

Dustin balled his hand into a fist. A murderous aura erupted from him. Suddenly, there was a gust of strong wind that sent the rocks flying. Even the surrounding temperature started to drop rapidly.

Dustin shot up and cut off the rope with one hand. He caught Dahlia, who was covered in blood, and landed

gently on the ground.

At this moment, Dahlia had already passed out, and the wounds on her back were an unsightly mess.

The sight of those whip marks and wounds pierced Dustin's heart like a sharp knife.

"Just kill me," Dahlia mumbled unconsciously. She must have suffered a lot of pain to ask for death.

"I'm sorry." Dustin's hands were trembling. Tears pricked his eyes.

He knew that Dahlia was in this mess because of him. He dragged her into this. 1

"Haha! Dustin Rhys, you're finally here!" Edward roared as he and his men walked out slowly.

"You did this?" Dustin raised his head slowly, his eyes fixed on the whip in Edward's hands.

"So what? What can you do to me at this point?" Edward was not afraid at all.

Although his uncle had withdrawn half the troops, there were more than a dozen heavily armed elites ambushed around. Each of these men could defeat a hundred people. It would be easy to deal with this one

man.

"Dustin, is it? Did you kill my brother, Trevor?" Travis asked.

"It was me." Dustin answered plainly. As he spoke, his gaze was fixed on Edward.

"I'm glad that you admit it. Now, go pay for your sins before my brother's coffin before I end your life," Travis said coldly.

"Pay for my sins?" Dustin snorted coldly, "Even your superior, Adam Spanner, would not speak to me this way.

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Chapter **55**

"You're nothing to me!"

"Hmm?" Travis raised an eyebrow.

Adam Spanner was the commanding general in the western army. He was also his superior. Only a handful of

people know about his existence.

How had Dustin heard of him?

"You know Chief General Spanner?" Travis was slightly taken aback.

"I'll give you a chance to take your own life out of respect for Adam. This **way**, your body might still be intact!"

Dustin demanded.

"Keep my body intact?"

"Before Travis could respond, Edward guffawed loudly. "Are you out of your mind? Open your eyes and

recognize your place in this world!"

As he spoke, the other hidden elites immediately revealed themselves. Each armed soldier looked very

threatening and menacing.

However, Dustin didn't even pay any attention to them. His eyes were focused on Edward **as** if he were already

a dead man.

"His body could stay intact, but you would have nothing left but bones!" Then, Dustin immediately made his move.

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Dustin took a step forward and leaped into the air. He moved as fast as lightning.

“Quick! Kill him!” Edward immediately tensed up and yelled when he noticed Dustin make a move.

However, before the armed elites could react, Dustin had already leaped forward. Dustin reached out and kicked one of the armed elites, who flew away like a piece of paper. A hole was pierced through the bulletproof vest on his chest. Even his bones were shattered!

Before he could land, Dustin swerved before another person and kicked him in the neck.

After killing two people in a row, Dustin did not stop and continued his attacks frantically. Anything he touched was destroyed in mere seconds. No one could stand in his way.

These armed elites could not even react to his speed and strength. In a short time, they were defeated one after another.

Their guns couldn't keep up with his speed. Not even a single shot had been fired.

The entire time Dustin had been holding on to Dahlia and attacking with his feet!

Edward was dumbfounded as he watched what unfolded. He looked like he had seen a ghost.

These elites were experienced in battles and each one were heavily armed. It should be effortless to defeat Dustin. How come they were the ones on the chopping board? What was happening?

“Is he a martial arts expert? No wonder he’s so full of himself!” Travis narrowed his eyes in surprise. It had not been easy for him to obtain his current position. He was also quite skilled and knowledgeable in martial arts.

All the elites in the army have to be trained in martial arts.

With the exception of intelligence agencies, proficiency in martial arts greatly affected **the** ranking of military personnel. The skills displayed by Dustin easily qualified him to be a highly ranked officer!

“General, this man is quite powerful, should we retreat?” the adjutant asked in a low voice.

“There’s no need. It’s rare to come up against such an expert. I want to personally fight **him!**” Travis loosened

his muscles. That burly body of his carried the strength of a panther.

“Your turn!” When the last person fell, Dustin’s eyes once again fixed on Edward.

“Uncle Travis! Save me!” Edward stumbled back in fear.

“Nobody would be able to save you today!” Dustin stepped forward and headed toward Edward.

“Your opponent is me!” Travis roared and leaped toward him.

He threw a punch at Dustin.

Dustin didn’t even look at him as he severed Travis’s leg without any hesitation.

As Edward was calling out for help, Travis landed his fist on Dustin’s back.

There was a loud explosion. Dustin was unmoved, but his clothes tore open, revealing his muscular body.

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Chapter 56

Travis, on the other hand, was taken aback by the impact and spat a mouthful of blood as he stumbled to the ground.

“General!” The adjutant was overcome by worry and he quickly helped Travis up.

Travis coughed violently, feeling a surge of blood rising inside. His fist, especially, was trembling uncontrollably, as if it had lost all senses.

“This is not possible!” Travis was shocked as he stared at his trembling arms. His eyes were filled with shock.

Never in his wildest dreams did he imagine Dustin’s body would be so impentable. His full strength did not even make a scratch on his opponent, yet he had sustained multiple internal injuries.

Dustin was an absolute beast! Who on earth was this man?

Travis raised his head in confusion and doubt. In an instant, he stood there dumbfounded as if struck by lightning because he realized that there was a large tattoo on Dustin’s sturdy body.

It was an animal with a dragon’s head, an ox’s tail, a tiger’s back, a bear’s waist, and a snake’s scales.

It was a black beast!

The tattoo of the beast was so realistic that, as Dustin breathed, it looked as if it was coming alive.

It looked so majestic and ferocious! It was so daunting!

“A kirin tattoo?” Travis was stunned, as if he had suddenly remembered something.

He looked terrified.

His surname was Rhys, with a tattoo of a black beast, and he knew the commanding general. Could he be the Rhys family’s Kirin?!

No! That wasn't possible!

Why was the man that stirred up the whole of Choux and disappeared for ten years here?

"Are you of Choux descent?" Travis asked tentatively, his lips quivering.

"Oh? You finally figured it out?" Dustin slowly turned around with a blank expression. There was no harm in him knowing as he was going to die anyway.

"It really is you. Why are you here?" Travis was so frightened that he broke out in cold sweat. His confidence from before completely dissipated. There was nothing but fear on his face.

No wonder he knew Adam Spanner. It turned out he was the legendary Kirin!

Travis was done for! He had angered someone that made even Sergeant Adam uneasy!

"General? What's wrong?" The adjutant was horrified. He had never seen Travis with such a terrified expression. He could remain calm even on a mountain of corpses on the battlefield. He had always been fearless in the face of danger.

What happened to him now? How could a tough guy like him be trembling from fright?

Who was this man Dustin?

"We're done for." Travis fell to the ground with a thud dejectedly. He knew he would die today. The only difference was if he would die in one place.

"General! I've called for backup. They'll be here soon! Hold on!" the adjutant tried to encourage him.

"There's no use." Travis shook his head as if he had been exhausted of all strength.

"General, what's wrong?" The adjutant started to panic.

Travis trembled as he pointed at Dustin and stammered, "He's **the** Kirin of the Rhys family, Logan Rhys!"

The adjutant froze when he heard this name. His face was as pale as ash.

They were done for! The dead had come back to life.

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Chapter 57

Who was Logan Rhys exactly? The hurricane that had stirred up the city of Stonia! The demon that had

disturbed the peace of the people!

He was also the one behind the tragedy in Osnal ten years ago.

No one had ever expected that a 15-year-old could cause so much destruction.

Thus, it was no wonder Travis was horrified to see him. Who would've guessed that the man who was

standing in front of them was the stuff of legends who had disappeared from the face of the planet ten years ago. THE Logan Rhys!

The adjutant's legs instantly gave out, causing him to crumple to the ground with a thud. His mind was

drawing a complete blank at the moment.

After Dustin gave Travis, who was behind **him**, a glance, he started walking toward Edward.

*Help me, Uncle Travis! Uncle Travis!" Cradling his broken **leg**. Edward kept screaming his head off as he wriggled on the floor like a maggot, trying his hardest to evade Dustin.

"I told you, I'll make sure you won't even have a corpse left after I kill you!" Dustin declared as he picked up a long whip covered in spikes from the ground, then delivered a swift blow to Edward's face mercilessly.

“Argh!” Edward cried out in pain. The skin of his face was torn apart down the middle, and blood started

sputtering out of the wound.

Dustin didn’t hold back and delivered another swift blow to another part of his body.

As a crunching sound rang out, Edward’s skin and flesh, along with his clothes, got torn to shreds.

“Gah!” he yelped miserably once more and resumed crying for help. “Hurry, Uncle Travis! Please save me!”

Even though he witnessed all this happening, Travis didn’t move a muscle. It was as if he didn’t hear a thing.

all while Dustin showed no mercy, delivering blow after blow onto Edward’s battered frame.

Every blow caused blood and flesh to spurt out, and the man kept screeching in excruciating pain.

“S— stop hitting me! I f*cked up! I know I really f*cked up this time!” Edward begged for mercy profusely as he

knelt on the ground.

However, his cries fell on deaf ears, and Dustin continued to whip him, his eyes devoid of mercy.

*This was for all the pain Dahlia endured up until now. I’ll make sure you pay it back ten, no, a hundred-fold!”

Dustin exclaimed to himself.

“Good, good! You’d better whip his ass to death!” Chris instigated from a corner of the room with a mischievous look.

The saying went that the wicked always got what was coming to them. This was proven true by Edward, the amateur evil mastermind, who ended up abused and beaten up by mega supervillain Dustin Rhys.

Just as Dustin was in the middle of exacting his revenge, a long procession of cars suddenly drove toward

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them and halted right in front of Spanner Villa. A large number of armed elites swarmed out of each car to **seal**

off the entire premise.

The armed elites, who were all clad in black suits and body armor, each carried with them a gun on their backs. All of them looked intimidating. Even if they were just standing there quietly, they still gave off a very menacing feeling.

Plus, this was more than a step up compared to Travis' men last time!

“So... it was Rhys who sent them!” Travis thought and immediately felt a pang of **despair** after looking at the army of elite forces.

The last trace of hope he had in his heart vanished that very second!

At that moment, the door to a Rolls-Royce suddenly opened, and Hunter Anderson got out of the car.

“Mr. Anderson?”

The moment the badly battered and bruised Edward laid his eyes on Hunter, he felt as if his savior had arrived. He immediately perked up and started clawing his limp body toward Hunter, frantically begging him for help.

“Help me, Mr. Anderson! This kid is trying to kill me! Quickly, arrest him for me! As long as you help me now,

half of the Spanner's fortune will be yours!" Edward offered without hesitation, fully intent on luring him into

saving him with his obscene riches.

After all, wasn't life more important than all the riches in the world?

The whipping he'd endured had already scared him shitless. He knew very well that if the whipping **didn't** cease, he would get beaten to death sooner or later.

"Is that you, Edward Spanner?" Hunter asked as he gazed upon the bloody figure before him. He had to

examine him for a bit before recognizing him.

"Yes, it's me! You must save me on behalf of Sir Hummer, Mr. Andersin!" Edward pleaded as he lay on the ground, clutching Hunter's pant leg with a deadly grip.

"Fuck off!" Hunter growled in response as he kicked him away and ignored his pleas.

Instead of helping him, he quickly walked over to the other side of the car, bent over slightly, and opened the

car door to reveal an old man clad in a dated suit. He got out of the car and started walking nonchalantly

using a cane.

"Sir Francis, you'd better be more careful..." Hunter cooed and reached his hand out to prop the old man up. Edward was dumbfounded after witnessing him act all respectful and humble like that.

It **was** known for a fact that the person standing in front of him was the President of the Swinton Group, one of the three major groups in the city.

He was even the type to laugh and joke around with someone of such high standing as Sir Hummer.

So, who exactly **was** this old man who managed to bring out his humble side?

What the hell was going on?!

Then again, he wasn't the only person who was surprised at this turn of events.

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Chris, who was still hiding in a corner, also had a bewildered look on his face.

In his eyes, Hunter Anderson was an influential man whose standing was at the top of Swinton.

So, who was this person able to reduce him to the demeanor of a mere servant? What was **the** identity of this man clad in such a dated suit in front of him?

"Sir! Please help me, sir!" After coming out of a daze, Edward immediately limped over to the old man in **the** suit and kept bowing his head to him, disregarding the fact that he **had** no idea who the old man was.

It was obvious to him that this man was way more influential than he thought, judging by the fact that he regarded Hunter Anderson as his grandson.

Heck, he **might** even be a government official from Stonia for all he knew!

Thus, as long as this mammoth of a **man** was willing to lend him a hand, he'd be able to reverse his fate and

even turn his life around!

Hearing Edward's plea for help, the suited old man merely shot him a glance before withdrawing his gaze. He then proceeded to tidy his hair and straighten his clothes. After making sure that he **looked** immaculate and

presentable, he started walking toward Dustin.

Then, to the utmost shock and dismay of everyone at the scene, he dropped to his knees on the floor and knelt

before Dustin.

“My sincere greetings to you, Mr. Rhys!” he proclaimed.

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Chapter 58

Silence ensued.

The atmosphere was so quiet, one could hear a pin drop. Everyone was stunned and dumbfounded the moment the elderly gentleman in the suit knelt down in front of Dustin Rhys.

No one had remotely expected that such an influential man with the power to make Hunter Anderson grovel in front of him would kneel in front of Dustin! It was almost like he was a slave who was greeting his master.

What the hell was going on here?!

“Uh-..” Chris hummed and froze on the spot, his face full of disbelief. He had thought that Dustin was only good at fighting, but who knew that this man turned out to be more powerful and influential than he thought?

Hunter Anderson was already an influential figure in his own right, wasn't he? So why did he have to grovel and act meekly in front of the older gentleman in the suit?

Surely, the older gentleman in the suit was even more powerful, right? So why on earth was this big shot kneeling in front of Dustin Rhys?!

How dare that bastard. This was simply too humiliating!

The scene in front of him clearly showed him how terrifying the man he despised, Dustin Rhys, truly was. “No... that's impossible! Absolutely impossible!” thought Edward, who was scared shitless at this point.

From the moment he witnessed the older man in the suit kneel, his spirit had been utterly shaken!

This instantly shattered his remaining hope for survival. Now, only despair and fear were left in its place.

Who would have thought that his perceived lifeline would turn out to be Dustin's servant of all people?

Shit, what kind of monster had he gotten himself tangled with this time? He was just way too different from Chris and Edward.

At this moment, Travis felt his death looming on the horizon...

He reckoned that it was his fate that he would not be able to leave this place alive today the moment he found out about Dustin's true identity.

If he put up a fight, he, along with his entire family would be eradicated!

"Dustin, it's been ten years. I can't believe I finally found you!" Sir Francis said as he knelt on the ground. Tears streamed down his face profusely, but he didn't give a shit what other people thought of him at the time.

Dustin, on the other hand, didn't even flinch at this. Instead, he looked at him indifferently, as if he was a complete stranger.

"Fuck off!" he screamed as he averted his **gaze** from Sir Francis before walking up to Edward.

His intent to kill was at its peak now!

"P_

please don't kill **me**... Please don't kill me. Just spare my life, I'll do anything!" Edward whimpered in fear, pissing himself in the process. Even so, he didn't stop bowing his head and begging for mercy.

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“If I don’t kill you now, I won’t be able to let go of this hatred in my heart!” Dustin growled maniacally as he put one foot forward to stomp on Edward’s chest, which caused the latter’s eyes to widen, and look up at him with resignation and fear.

So much for a peaceful death.

“Mr. Rhys! I’m willing to accept death as my punishment, but please spare the lives of my puny subordinates!”

When Dustin’s gaze landed on Travis, they immediately knew that their time on this earth was up. Without another word, the both of them took out their knives and slit their necks simultaneously.

No one had the privilege of negotiating with Dustin at this point.

After seeing the two corpses fall to the ground, Dustin said nothing as he left the scene immediately with Dahlia in his arms.

Sir Francis let out a long sigh, his expression conflicted. Although he’d already found him, seeing how turbulent his heart was now, he wondered if he’d ever return to normal.

“How should we go about this, Sir Francis?” Hunter asked with his head lowered.

Standing before the older man, his status and reputation were like pieces of paper that could be torn into shreds at any time.

“Don’t let the news get out. As for everyone related to this matter, dispose of them all,” Sir Francis replied Indifferently.

The cavalier manner in which he said it made Hunter’s heart quiver in fear.

Does he not know the number of people who would have to suffer because of this?

“P— please don’t kill me! I’m friends with Dustin!” hollered Chris, who had been hiding all this time. He ran out

in a panic the moment he saw that the elite forces surrounding him were preparing to burn down the house.

“You’re a friend of Dustin’s?” Sir Francis **asked as** he looked him up and down.

“That’s right, that’s right! We’re best buds! We even had dinner together before!” Chris nodded profusely, akin

to a chicken pecking rice off the ground.

At this point, he’d do anything to stay alive.

“Is that so? Then can I trouble you to ensure the he doesn’t stay out too late?” Sir Francis requested, his tone

softer now.

“Yes, of course, I’ll definitely tell him that!” Chris immediately assured him.

“Someone please drive this gentlemah.” Sir Francis gestured.

“N–no, no, it’s fine... You don’t have to! I can go back by myself!” Chris replied while waving his hands in the air frantically.

How could he still have the nerve to get in someone else’s car when he was already this scared?

Sir Francis didn’t pursue the matter further and merely waved his hands to let his team know to disperse.

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“I–

I’ll get going then...” Chris murmured before fleeing as if he’d just escaped from prison. He thanked God for his quick wits, which helped him save his skin just now. However, he reckoned that he couldn’t stay in Stonia for much longer. He decided to leave once he’d saved up enough money. 1

“Sir Francis, I’m convinced that man just now wasn’t very honest with us,” Hunter remarked respectfully.

“It doesn’t matter, he’s just an ant to us, so it doesn’t matter if we kill him or let him live.” Sir Francis said

nonchalantly.

It was evident to him that Chris was lying the whole time, but he did not dare take the risk, as he feared that

Dustin would not take too kindly if he involved himself in his matters too much.

He certainly didn’t **want** to make himself **an** enemy of the Kirin!

Half an hour later, over at the Peaceful Medical Center, Dustin felt his heart shatter as he gazed at the bloody

gash on Dahlia’s body. Although the two were divorced, it wasn’t easy to shrug off three whole years of

feelings toward one another.

Some emotions simply could not be contained, it seemed.

After taking a deep breath, he took off her clothes and began carefully cauterizing the wound for her.

Although his movements were subtle, when touching certain wounds, her unconscious body would still twitch from the pain involuntarily. This prompted him to be more careful in handling her.

Whether it was cleaning up, disinfecting, putting on ointment or bandages, he made sure to be extra cautious

every step of the **way**.

Once everything was done, he breathed a sigh of relief, not noticing that a film of sweat had formed on his

forehead.

Just as he was about to up and leave, a slender hand suddenly reached out to grab his wrist.

“Don’t go... don’t go. Don’t leave me here...” In her unconscious state, Dahlia looked as if she was experiencing a nightmare. Her tightly closed eyes kept rolling from side to side as she kept muttering inaudibly.

Dustin fought to control his rising emotions. “I’m not going anywhere, I’m right here.” He slowly moved to sit next to her, holding her hand with both of his hands.

“D— don’t go. Dustin... Seeming as if her sense of security had returned, her murmurs slowly became softer, and she started to calm down.

However, she held on to his hand for dear life and refused to let go.

“I’m sorry...” he mumbled as he felt the force behind her fingertips. He couldn’t help but feel a twinge of headache at this.

In the past, she had never shown him her soft side and always insisted on being a strong, Independent woman.

However, after today, he realized that the icy businesswoman lying in front of him was also a woman who needed someone to care for her.

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Chapter 59

Two days later, at the Peaceful Medical Center, Dahlia finally woke up.

The first thing she noticed was that she was in a very plain room that contained a table, two chairs, and a hospital bed.

She thought everything looked vaguely familiar, as if she had been here before.

“You’re up?” Dustin quipped as he appeared at the entrance of the room.

He was carrying a bowl of chicken soup in one hand. Even though it wasn’t the most flavorful dish, the soup looked tantalizing to her as she hadn’t eaten an

nothing for the past two days. So much so that her stomach began to growl non-stop at the sight of it.

"Were you the one who saved me?" she asked first to break the awkward tension between them.

"You were injured and unconscious on the roadside, so I patched you up," he answered plainly. 1

"You patched me up?" she repeated with furrowed brows. A split second later, she hastily asked, "Oh, right! How long have I been unconscious? What's the situation with the Spanners now? Are my parents in danger?"

The sudden barrage of questions made his head spin.

"You were unconscious for two days and two nights. Your family is safe and sound. As for the Spanner residence, it **has** been engulfed in flames," he answered each of her questions calmly.

Upon receiving news that her family was safe, she couldn't help but breathe a sigh of relief. However, it didn't take her long to ask another question in surprise. "Engulfed in flames? What happened?"

"I don't know the specifics, but I heard that there was a gas leak, so all 20 to 30 people inside the Spanner residence got burned alive inside," he said.

"A gas leak? Do you suppose it was a coincidence?" she asked in a confused manner.

"The wicked reap what they sow. The Spanners have done many evil deeds and always sought to harm others. Seeing them fall from grace like this, I suppose this was just karma coming for their ass in a way." Dustin said.

She nodded in response, feeling a sense of relief on the inside.

With the Spanner household destroyed, she surmised she did not have to worry about being their target anymore in the future.

"Alright, stop letting your mind wander. Have some soup first," he said as he handed her the chicken soup.

“Thanks,” she replied. Since she was hungry, she didn’t refuse his kind gesture and happily started **digging** into the soup. She managed to finish the entire bowl shortly after.

However, she still felt hungry after finishing her food and considered licking the bowl.

“I’ll get you another bowl,” he said after noticing her expression and served her another bowl of chicken soup.

Without a word, she devoured the second bowl of soup as well.

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Now that she was having the chicken soup, she soon felt a pleasant warmth in her stomach, which made her feel so content it was hard to describe in words.

Although the two bowls of soup may not look like much, he was the one who cooked them precisely because he was aware that they were very good at speeding up the recovery process.

“Still hungry?” he asked.

At that moment, she couldn’t stop herself from letting out a small burp.

She realized that she might come across as improper to him, so she tried to swallow the air back into her stomach.

“I guess you’ve already had your fill then. Be sure to get lots of rest, and I’ll come back later.”

Before he could leave, she called out to him and said, “Wait! I have something to say to you!”

“What is it?” he said, as he stopped in his tracks and looked back at her.

“It’s about Chris. I’m sorry for accusing you,” she muttered.

After hesitating for a second, she clenched her teeth and continued, “That guy wasn’t a good person to begin with. I can’t believe he managed to trick us out

of such a large sum with his silver tongue. If only we had listened to your advice in the beginning.”

“What’s wrong with you today? Did the great Ms. Nicholson just apologize to someone?” he teased.

“What do you mean? Do I seem like such an unreasonable person to you?” she shot back, clearly offended by his remark.

“I’m kidding! So what if I got accused again? It’s not like this is the first time anyway, so forget about it,” he said and shrugged his shoulders.

“Why does it sound so wrong coming from you?” she retorted while wrinkling her brows.

“Alright, let’s just forget about the past, shall we? Now, take off your clothes...” he said casually.

“Huh?” Her expression instantly changed and she subconsciously shielded her chest with her arms. “What are you planning to do to me?” she exclaimed.

“No need to get so worked up, you have injuries, so I’m just helping you change your bandages,” he answered as he lifted up a bottle of ointment in one hand.

“You want to change my bandages for me?” she repeated.

As if she had just realized something, she hurriedly quipped, “Were you the one who changed my bandages for the past two days?”

“Who else?”

“Then, I... You’ve seen everything by now?!” she cried, her eyes wide as saucers.

“So what if I’ve seen everything? It’s not like I haven’t seen them before, so what’s the big deal?” he said easily.

“You **get** your ass out of here right now!” she screamed in response, her face flushed from the shame **and**

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anger.

She couldn't believe the nerve of this man. How dare he undress and touch her body without her consent.

How despicable!

"I can still scam if you want, but I'd advise you to give it some thought. Although the injuries on your body have healed, the scars are still there. So, if not treated in due time, I'm afraid you won't be able to get rid of them in the future," he patiently explained.

She bit her lip and began to feel somewhat conflicted on the inside.

"Fine, since you obviously don't care about that, I won't help you anymore. You'd better not regret it when you see yourself covered in scars in the future," he retorted with his hands across his chest before turning around and beginning to leave.

"Wait!" she hollered, finally heeding his advice. It was simply a woman's nature to take care of her

appearance. Even she wasn't an exception. The thought of her body being covered in scars was worse than the idea of getting killed!

"What, changed your mind?" he asked as he turned back to face her with an amused **look**.

"Help me change my bandages, but with your eyes blindfolded!" she ordered, then threw a random piece of clothing that was lying next to her at him, as if to vent her frustrations. However, her whole body froze when she realized what she had thrown at him.

It turned out the item of clothing she just **threw** at him was her underwear!

"You sure have weird tastes. I refuse to use this as a blindfold, if you don't mind," he remarked as he threw the panties back to her.

"S— shut up!" she stuttered in embarrassment, her face turning pinker by the second.

Her pretty face **was** similar to a ripe peach covered in morning dew now. He was tempted to touch her.

“Fine, I’ll only apply the ointment on your back while you apply **the** rest on the front yourself,” he finally

relented, for fear **that** she would storm out of the room.

“Hmph!” She pouted.

It was only after multiple bouts of hesitation that she finally agreed to his plan.

Her injuries needed to be healed, but it wasn’t like she could take care of the scars on her back properly

without external assistance.

“I’ve already finished applying the ointment on your back evenly...” he trailed off before continuing in a cold

voice. “... Now, on to your butt—”

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Chapter 60

After struggling to get away from him, Dahlia’s face was as red as a tomato. Beads of sweat trailed down her body. Her sultry eyes looked as if they could drill a hole into Dustin’s skull.

Didn’t he just apply some ointment on her? So why was she giving him such an embarrassed look?

“Haven’t you seen enough? Get out!” she screamed as she pulled up the blanket to cover her body.

Her slender waist and upturned hips were a sight to behold indeed.

“Just apply this ointment for three to five days, then your scars will disappear,” he said bluntly. He then put down the ointment before leaving the room sheepishly.

After about ten minutes, Dahlia exited the room fully clothed.

Compared to the woman full of rage and shame a moment ago, the woman in front of him now was her usual, cold self.

She pretended as if nothing had happened between them at all

“Lend me your phone. I have a call to make,” she ordered as she rushed over to him while he was sipping on some chicken soup with her hand outstretched

.

He didn't make a peep as he handed his phone over to her without hesitation.

“What's your lock screen password?” she asked.

“Your birthday,” he answered without even lifting his head.

His answer made her stiffen and a small corner of her lips turned upwards for a short while before disappearing again.

“Hmph!” She pouted, feigning disdain.

After unlocking his phone, the first number she dialed was her family, to update them on her whereabouts.

Following that, she dialed Lyra's number.

*So good to finally hear from you again, Ms. Nicholson! Where have you been for the past two days? How come there weren't any updates at all?” Lyra asked anxiously.

“Something came up, so a few things had to be put on hold. How's the company doing now?” she asked.

“The new company just opened shop and is currently doing well. And with the Harmon family's backing, everything **is** in order. However, the Jackson Group managed to get itself into some hot water the past two days, I'm afraid.” Lyra explained.

“What kind of hot water?” she asked, feeling a little uneasy.

“We had a hard time recouping our funds as several partners have not paid back their share of the money yet, so the company **was** unable to break even. It’s a good thing that you still have that reserve fund of 80 million dollars, just enough to save the company.” Lyra chuckled.

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“Reserve funds?” she repeated while her expression twisted into a frown. “I’m afraid that the money is

gone,” she admitted.

“Gone? What do you mean gone?” Lyra spluttered.

“I trusted the wrong person. I was **fooled** by Chris,” she answered honestly, without trying to conceal the truth.

She then gave **Lyra a** quick rundown of the events that transpired.

Upon reaching the end of her story. Lyra exploded in a fit of rage. “That bastard Chris is certainly a piece of

work! How **dare** he cheat us of our money when we put all our trust in him! Let’s get him arrested right away!”

“There’s no point. He’s probably fled the country by now,” she mumbled as she let out a soft sigh.

“What should we do now, Ms. Nicholson? The company has no liquidity, so it’ll be hard to run operations

normally.”

“I’ll think of something...” she trailed off in reply.

“Oh right, don’t we still have the Harmons? Since we’re their partner, the Harmons can definitely help us if only you give them a call,” Lyra suggested hurriedly.

“The Harmons?” she asked with wrinkled brows.

She would’ve thought of doing that had she not learned about Natasha before this, but it was impossible to

ask her for help now.

Dahlia had her pride as a woman too, so she absolutely refused to bow down to Natasha Harmon!

“I’ll take care of this, so you go busy yourself with other matters now,” she directed. After exchanging a few more words with her secretary, she hung up the phone.

“What’s this about the company being in hot water?” Dustin looked up and asked.

“Drive me to Eastern River Bank. I have something to do there,” she ordered without giving him an explanation.

my command,” he said with a nod before finishing his soup in one gulp.

“Your wish is my

He then drove the both of them in his car to Eastern River Bank.

Upon her arrival at the bank, Dahlia was quickly ushered into a private office.

As for Dustin, he **was** instructed to wait outside.

“Oh? Isn’t this Ms. Nicholson from the Jackson Group? What brings you here to my office today?”

Sitting inside the office was a balding man with a fat **head** and big ears. He peered up the moment he laid his

beady eyes on her.

“Mr. Chansey, my company has encountered some problems with our capital turnover, so we need a loan from you with the same interest rate as before,” she explained concisely.

“A loan? How much?” he asked while stroking his chin. His lecherous **eyes** looked her up and down.

“80 million **dollars**,” she answered without flinching.

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“Heh, you are aware that this isn’t a small sum of money, right?” he shot back with a pained expression.

“This isn’t the first time we’ve worked together, Mr. Chansey. You should know where my company stands by

now,” she retorted.

“I’m afraid it’s no longer a matter of credibility, but my mood, Ms. Nicholson,” he said slowly.

“What do you mean by that?” she asked, puzzled.

“We’re both smart, so I’ll say it outright. I’ve taken a liking to you for quite some time now, Ms. Nicholson, so

I’m proposing that if you sleep with me for one night, be it 80 million or 300 million dollars, I’ll make sure to

lend all of it to you!” he said, leering.

“Do you have any idea what you just proposed, Mr. Chansey?” she shot back, her brows furrowed.

“I said what I said. I’m well aware that your company is in a crisis right now and that you need money fast. So, I **don’t** suppose your company could get through these tough times without my funds, right?” he said amusedly.

“Are you threatening me right now?” she asked as her expression darkened.

“No need to phrase it like that, think of it as a mutual exchange. You want my money, and I want you for one night. If you manage to satisfy me, I’ll lend you the money. Isn’t this a mutually beneficial situation for

everyone?” **he** explained while stretching his hands outward. 1

“You’re absolutely shameless!” she snapped. She didn’t want to give him any more of her time, so she got up

to leave.

“You’d better stay right where you are!” he bellowed before continuing. “The minute you step out of my office, I’ll make sure to blacklist you! Then, good luck finding another bank in Stonia that’s willing to lend you your funds! Thus, you’d better listen to me if you know what’s good for you!”

“I refuse to make such a dirty deal with you even though I’m short on cash! Furthermore—just the sight of your

pig face **makes** me want to vomit!” she spat coldly.

“What the f*ck did you just say to me?!”

As though she managed to hit a nerve, he instantly got out of his seat and started yelling. “For a married woman, you sure are great at acting like a virgin! You should be glad that I laid eyes on you! So, how dare **you** turn **me** down like that! Believe it or not, I can make you go bankrupt with one call!”

“You? Bankrupt me? I’d like to see you try,” she snorted.

She was not in the least bit afraid.

“Fine! Since you’re so f*cking sure of yourself, don’t blame me if I use a few tricks up **my** sleeves! **When** the

time comes, I’ll have you sucking on my toes!” he bellowed.

“Go to hell!” she yelled.

She **was** so pissed she flung a cup of hot coffee directly onto his stupid face.

It was so hot it made him screech like a b*tch and his **face** soon turned bright red.

Now he really looked like an actual pig roasting on a stick.

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Chapter 61

“Bitch, I’ll f*cking kill you!” Mr. Chansey screamed as he touched his scalded face. He **was** so furious he

started pouncing on Dahlia.

Her quick reflexes allowed her to deliver a swift but deadly kick to Mr. Chansey’s crotch.

“Argh!” he cried out in pain immediately and started rolling on the floor with his hands over his bruised member, his face turning a darker shade of purple by the second.

“You disgust me!” she spat before turning around to leave the room.

This caused her to bump into Dustin, who had been eavesdropping by the door the whole time. “What are you doing here?” she asked angrily.

“Nothing, I was just making sure you were doing okay in there,” he replied while shrugging his shoulders.

His **eyes** instantly perked up at **the** sight of Mr. Chansey, who was writhing in pain on the floor.

It **was** a good thing that she’d managed to mess him up, because if he’d stepped in, he’d surely make sure that Mr. Chansey won’t be using his hands ever again for the remainder of his life.

“We’re done here. Let’s go,” she snapped without any explanation, then started strutting out of the room in her high heels.

She was in a sour mood.

“You f*cking stop right where you are now!” Mr. Chansey suddenly bellowed with a fierce expression before continuing. “Running away like a coward after beating someone up? What do you take me for?!”

Under his orders, several security guards immediately started forming a human barricade in front of the main

door to prevent the two of them from leaving.

“You b*tch! How dare you kick me? I’ll make sure you never see the light of day again!” he yelled as he stormed

up to her with a hand **raised**, ready to strike her.

Dustin intercepted his blow without much effort.

“Who do you think you are? How dare you meddle in my affairs? You’d better get away from me if you know what’s **good** for you!” Mr. Chansey hissed.

“You’d better apologize to her now before I rip your mouth open!” Dustin threatened with **an** icy expression.

“Like hell I will!” Mr. Chansey spat, his rage growing by the second. He swung his fist at Dustin, but Dustin

managed to dodge it and delivered a heavy slap to his face instead.

This caused Mr. Chansey’s humongous frame to stumble several feet.

The blow had disfigured his face, and when he opened his mouth, some of his teeth fell out.

Everyone at the scene was dumbfounded that Mr. **Chansey** was sent flying. No one had expected Dustin to be

So vicious.

To think that he had slapped Mr. Chansey in front of everyone. Did he have no idea that this man was the

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manager of Eastern River Bank?

An influential man with power, money, and a vast network!

To offend such a person was simply asking for trouble!

“H—how...dare you hit **me?**”

Upon noticing the few loose teeth in his palm, Mr. Chansey’s face twisted into a scowl.

“So what if I just beat you up? Do I have to make an appointment first?” Dustin said indifferently.

“Do you even f*cking know who my backers are, you little shit? It’s the Spanners! The nerve of you to even lay

a finger on me, do you want to die so badly?!” Mr. Chansey screeched before pulling out his phone to call for

backup.

“Hmm?” Dahlia frowned slightly before making a call herself.

15 minutes later, Florence brought a team of security personnel and made her entrance in the flashiest fashion imaginable.

Standing beside her was a handsome man in a clean suit. The man seemed graceful and elegant and had an

aristocratic air to him.

“Matt Laney?” Dahlia **gasp**ed, her eyes wide as she stared at him in shock.

He **used** to be her upperclassman in school and had even tried to court her for a short while in the past. But

when he’d left the country, the two stopped seeing each other for a long time. She hadn’t expected him to

return so soon, much less with her mother.

“Dahlia! How are you? You’re not hurt, right?” Florence asked worriedly the moment she entered through the door. She was scared that her daughter had gotten hurt.

"I'm fine, Mom. There's no need to worry," Dahlia replied as she shook her head slightly.

"**Long** time no see, Dahlia," Matt greeted first, as polite as ever.

"Yeah, long time no see," Dahlia responded with a small nod.

Although she was still somewhat taken aback by his sudden appearance, she decided to regard him as a school friend for now.

"I heard that you came across some trouble lately, so that's why I rushed all the way here with your mom. So if

there's anything you need our help with, just let me know," he said with a grin. His words were calm but full of

confidence.

"I know, right? Nothing is impossible with Matt around!"

"I don't suppose you caught wind of the incident where our family got arrested. Thanks to Matt, we managed

to get out safe and sound,"

"Not only that, but he also caught that bastard Chris and recovered all the money we were cheated out of!"

"Just look at him. He should be the first person that comes to mind when you think of a capable man!" Florence yammered on, praising him every other sentence.

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Dahlia could only muster a strained smile upon hearing all of that. "Thanks," she mumbled.

"It's no biggie. No need to make me sound so **great**," **Matt** grinned.

"What are you doing here, Rhys?" Florence quizzed as she shifted her gaze to see Dustin standing next to her. She looked somewhat disgusted upon seeing him.

“Mom, it was Dustin who saved me,” Dahlia explained.

“He was the one who saved you? Hmph, it was more likely that he hurt you instead!” Florence’s expression and gaze turned cold **as** she said, “If it wasn’t for this man who offended Mr. Woods, our family could’ve avoided all that undeserved misfortune in the first place!”

“Mom, this whole thing started because of me. It has nothing to do with Dustin,” Dahlia corrected.

“I can’t believe you’re still taking his side even now. You will regret it sooner or later!” Florence exclaimed,

almost losing her cool.

If not for Matt standing beside her, she would have flung all sorts of expletives at her already.

“Hey, hey, hey... Where did you guys come from again? Do I look like I’m invisible to you all?”

At this time, Mr. Chansey, who **was** standing in a corner, finally lost his **cool**.

“Who are you?” Matt asked while glancing at him from the corner of his eye.

“I’m the manager of this bank!” Mr. Chansey barked as he shot him a glare. “I demand that these two people

pay the price for offending me today!”

“Do you know who I f*cking am? How dare you speak to me like that?” Matt spat in response as his expression grew cold.

“I don’t care who the hell you are! As long as your nose is in my business, I’ll make sure you never see the **light of day** too!” Mr. Chansey threatened viciously.

As soon as he finished saying that, two black cars drove up to the entrance of Eastern River Bank.

Immediately after, an army of buff thugs rushed into the building, their leader being an intimidating man who

wore a trench coat and held a cigar in his hand.

The way he walked made him look mighty imposing.

“Heh... My backer has finally arrived. None of you will be able to escape today!” Mr. Chansey **guffawed**

wickedly.

It wasn't like he had any connections or a good background, so how **dare** he act so cocky?

“Holy shit! Isn't that Sir **Zims**? What is he **doing** here?” someone whispered.

“Sir Zims? The new chairman of the Drey Group?” another piped up.

“It's him! I heard that he was the one who was ruthless enough to kill Sir Spanner in order to climb to the top!”

one exclaimed.

“That guy's dead meat. I can't believe he got involved with Sir Zims,” another gossiped.

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Chapter 61

Whispers erupted from the crowd after everyone got a look at the man in the trench coat. Some even gave Dustin a few sympathetic looks afterward.

Sir Zims' infamous name could be heard everywhere these days, up to the point where the mere mention of his name was enough to make anyone turn pale.

“Hmm?” Dustin hummed. He couldn't help but get an odd feeling in his stomach upon looking at the imposing

man in front of him.

And that was because he just realized that Mr. Chansey's supposed backer was his own newly acquired

follower, Mason Zims.

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Chapter 62

“Who dares to stir up trouble on my turf? Do they have a death wish?” Mason Zims bellowed as he strutted with a cigar in his mouth.

Everywhere he went, the crowd dispersed as they were all afraid of provoking him.

Even Dahlia’s expression turned grave upon laying eyes on him.

Although Trevor Spanner was dead, Mason Zims managed to inherit all of his power and was glowing in his element. With Edwin Hummer behind his back too, not many had the privilege of offending him.

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“You escape through the side door. I’ll cover for you!” Dahlia ordered as she stepped forward to shield Dustin. She was an influential figure herself, so even if Mason was batshit crazy, she knew he didn’t have the balls to do anything to her. It was a different story for Dustin though, for he wasn’t an influential figure or anything. So, if he were unfortunate enough to fall into Zim’s clutches, he would end up dead or disabled, at the very least! “You want him to escape? Where to? As long as Sir Zims is here, even if Jesus came down from Heaven today. He won’t be able to save you! Your death is imminent!” Mr. Chansey huffed before cockily strutting up to Mason. “You’ve finally arrived, Sir Zims! Just take a look at my face. Look how it got beat up!” Mr. Chansey lamented.

“What happened here?” Mason asked with an eyebrow raised.

“The story is, this woman approached me for a loan just now. But when I noticed that she had bad credit, I refused to lend her any money. Who knew she’d be so shameless as to start seducing me on top of toying with other men? And just because I didn’t want to give in to her mind games, she beat me up! Can you believe this?” Mr. Chansey lied through his teeth, spewing out bullshit the whole **time**.

“Oh, she’s a wild one, I see? Did you mention my name?” Mason snapped. He didn’t look like he came here to make friends.

“Of course I did! But they didn’t bat an eye at the mention of your name and even boldly proclaimed that they’d just fight you if you showed up!” Mr. Chansey instigated.

“Good—no, excellent! If I don’t flex my muscles once in a while, people will start thinking I’ve lost my touch!” Mason guffawed wickedly. He had just taken control of the Drey Group and was worried he’d have no opportunity to push his weight around.

It was about time a few people who weren’t afraid of death came up to him today!

“What a load of crap!” Dahlia exploded after holding herself back for so long. She took a few steps forward and started explaining. “Sir Zims, I was the one who approached him to take out a loan, but not only did he deny me a loan, he even tried to make things difficult for me! All those accusations about seducing him and toying with other men were totally made up and untrue, to say the least. He was lying the whole ti-

But before she could finish her sentence, she was interrupted by **a wave** from Mason’s hand. “What makes you think that I care about the truth? I don’t give a shit about who was right or wrong. The fact of the matter was that you picked a fight with someone on my turf, which meant that you were indirectly disrespecting me as well! So, for everyone who disrespects me, whether it be Tom, Dick, or Harry, I’ll have them kneel in front of me to beg for forgiveness.”

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Dahlia couldn’t help but frown upon hearing that. She didn’t expect him to be so unreasonable.

“Heh, didn’t you hear what he just said? Hurry up and kneel on the ground and beg for your life to be spared!” Mr. Chansey snickered. He was well aware of Mason’s character, which was why he dared to act so cocky and

reckless now.

“Tell me...Who was the man who hit you just now? Let’s see if he can escape with his hands intact today!” Mason twirled a knife in his hand. He vowed to make an example of someone today, no matter what!

“Sir Zims, he was the little shit who beat me up!” Mr. Chansey stretched out a finger and pointed.

As Mason chewed on a cigar hanging from his mouth, he raised his chin and turned his head around to **see** who it was. However, the moment his gaze met Dustin’s, it was as if his whole body **was** struck by lightning

and he became frozen on the spot!

The steel knife in his hand also fell to the ground and clattered on the floor.

“Oh, my God, why him of all people?!” Mason thought nervously. His body stiffened upon gazing at Dustin’s familiar face. Cold sweat immediately broke out on his face. He was so scared his legs started to buckle.

Even after all this time, that image of Dustin wiping out an entire building by himself was still as fresh in his mind as ever. It still gave him nightmares to this day. He became even more frightened after hearing about

Travis Spanner’s disappearance and the destruction of Spanner Villa two **days** ago.

That was because he knew very well that it was all Dustin’s doing. Somehow, Dustin **had** managed to make

Travis Spanner, a general of the western warzone, disappear without a trace in just one night.

That just solidified how terrifying the man standing in front of him was!

“Fucking pig! Why’d he have to get me in this mess!” he grumbled to himself.

“Weren’t you barking like a rabid dog just now, you little shit? Why aren’t you saying anything now that Sir Zims is here?” Mr. Chansey, who still didn’t get the memo, continued taunting Dustin as if he had nine lives.” Let’s see if you dare slap me again. I’ll see to it that you die a horrible death today!” The m

oment he finished speaking, Mason saw a chance to redeem himself and rushed forward to slap the living daylights out of

Chansey!

The sound of a crunch came, followed by a staggering Mr. Chansey, who looked like he was about to collapse any second. A red handmark could clearly be seen on his face.

“Sir Zims? A— aren’t you beating up the wrong person right now?” Mr. Chansey mumbled as he used his hands to cover his somewhat shocked expression.

“Me, beating up the wrong guy? But you’re the guy I’m supposed to beat up!” Mason roared furiously, and without skipping a beat, he lifted a hand to slap Chansey a few more times before throwing him onto the

ground.

As if that did not quell his rage, he started to punch and kick Chansey again, cuffing him out as he went.

“You fat pig! I feel like throwing up whenever I see you! Why would such a stunning woman like Ms. Nicholson seduce you? Do you even know what you look like?! How f*cking dare you spread my name so casually like that! How dare you make a fool out of me, I’ll see to it that you stay dead!”

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Chapter 62

The more he cursed, the fiercer he became and the more blows he delivered.

At this point, Mr. Chansey had **been** beaten up to the extent of crying like a little b*tch, screaming for his parents, while he cradled his head and **begged** for mercy at the same time.

“What the hell is going on here?” someone whispered from the crowd.

The sudden turn of events left the crowd stunned. No one had expected the tables to turn so drastically. Wasn't Mason, who arrived like a hurricane minutes before, supposed to be on Mr. Chansey's side? So why was he beating up his own teammate instead?

Who was on whose side now actually?

"Um..." Dahlia trailed off as her eyes widened. She was speechless at Mason's sudden shift in attitude.

"Just a second ago, he paraded around like a cocky motherf*cker, acting so domineering and unreasonable but

now he was pretending as if he had a halo on his head, and was putting on a righteous front.

More importantly, she could obviously make out that there was a trace of fear on his face.

However, that was the part that got her stumped. Could one still be fearful of anything or anyone after assassinating someone so powerful as Sir Spanner?

Looking around the room, her gaze eventually landed on Dustin.

Come to think of it, Mason's sudden shift in attitude seemed to have something to do with his encounter with

Dustin.

Was it possible that Mason was terrified of Dustin?

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"No! That's impossible!" Dahlia thought.

She denied the notion as soon as it emerged. Apart from his good looks, Dustin was just an average man. There was nothing special about him.

Mason, on the other hand, had not only taken over Sir Spanner's position and had authority over the Drey Group, but he also had hundreds of henchmen at his beck and call. Why would he be intimidated by a small fry like Dustin?

She must be delusional.

Mason's kicks and punches rained down on Mr. Chansey unceasingly, causing him to spit blood.

He saw no other way to it than to give Mr. Chansey a good beating for fear that Dustin would do him in out of wrath.

"I'm sorry, Sir Zims, I was wrong! Please stop, I'm begging you, please stop!" Mr. Chansey cried out between wails.

Mason only stopped after he sneaked a glance at Dustin and saw that his countenance was much calmer than before. He counted himself lucky that there was a scapegoat. He would have been in a bad spot otherwise.

"A fat lot of use apologizing to me! If Ms. Nicholson does not forgive you, you will not see tomorrow!" Mason scolded harshly.

"I'm terribly sorry, Ms. Nicholson! I was wrong, it was all my fault. This will never happen again. Please forgive me!" Mr. Chansey was on his knees as he begged for forgiveness. Long gone was his unbridled arrogance.

"That's enough. Don't ever let **me** see you **again!**" Dahlia uttered frostily.

"Yes, I'll get lost right this instant!" He nodded incessantly **and** dashed for the exit. He did not even stop to

retrieve his shoe that fell off on his way out.

"My apologies, Ms. Nicholson. The blame is on me. He offended you because I have not disciplined him well. I will reflect on my mistakes." Mason smiled apologetically. He was a smart cookie. Knowing that Dustin

always maintained a low profile, he did not blow his cover.

"How fair and just you are, Sir Zims. I'm impressed." Dahlia **gave** a slight smile.

“Oh no, I’m only doing what’s right,” Mason replied with a guilty conscience.

“Hmph, at least you know where you stand!” Matt announced haughtily. “Had Dahlia been harmed in the slightest today, I would not have let you off the hook!”

“No, I wouldn’t dare,” Mason continued with the **same** apologetic smile. He had no idea who Matt was, but

seeing that he was with Mr. Rhys, Mason was sure he wasn’t someone to be trifled with.

“Take your men with you and scram. Such eyesores!” Matt said condescendingly.

Mason dared not retort. He peeked at Dustin for a brief moment before taking his leave. In no time, all his

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lackeys dispersed.

“Once **again**, Matt **saves** the day!” Florence’s eyes lit up as she smiled excitedly. “Dahlia, did you see that? Wasn’t Sir Zims cocky earlier on? But once he saw Matt, he got so **scared** that he was just short of peeing his pants! And that’s how powerful the Laneys are!”

As soon as she said that, the realization dawned on the crowd.

“No wonder Sir Zims was terrified. We have a big shot here!”

“I wonder who that attractive man is. It’s amazing how he scared Sir Zims off like that!”

“He’s handsome and he’s powerful. How does one even resist a man like that?”

A few ladies in the crowd fawned over how charming Matt was.

“The Laneys are, after all, a powerful family of the nobility. I think we have a say on what goes on around here.

Dealing with a mere thug is no big deal.” Matt smiled, feigning modesty.

“It’s no big **deal** to you, but it would definitely not be an **easy feat** for some people.” Florence then looked at

Dustin out of the corner of her eye and said cynically. “Hey Rhys, Matt here just saved your life. Are you not

going to thank him?”

“Why should I thank him?” Dustin could not seem to fathom it.

“Why? Well, had Matt not dealt with Sir Zims, do you think you could get out of this unscathed?” Florence

asked as she crossed her arms.

“First things first, I did not need his help. Secondly, he had nothing to do with me getting away,” Dustin said.

“Hmph! How stubborn!” Florence then continued, full of disdain, “Matt just saved you, and not only are you unappreciative, but you’re also boasting so shamelessly. Have you no conscience?”

“Precisely! What’s wrong with him? That is so rude of him!”

“He’s not even thanking the person who saved him! Should have left him to fend for himself!”

A few girls crowded around were outraged by the injustice toward Matt. From the way they saw it, Dustin was

plain ungrateful.

“Forget it, it’s just a small matter. Let’s not make a fuss.” Matt said with a wave of his hand, trying to look

magnanimous.

“Oh, Matt, you’re just too kind! Ungrateful bastards like this one here deserve to suffer!” Florence was

indignant.

"I simply saved him for Dahlia's sake," Matt smiled slightly and turned to look at Dustin. "Speaking of which, I should be the one thanking you. Thank you for taking care of Dahlia in my stead for the past three years."

Matt appeared to be thanking Dustin, but his words seemed to carry a different meaning. From what he **said**,

he had staked his claim on Dahlia, making her his.

"Well, if you're thanking me, why don't you kneel before me? That's not too much to ask for, is it?" Dustin

challenged.

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Matt was at a loss for words. His eyes narrowed ever so slightly. "I was just playing nice. Does he really think I'm easy?" he thought to himself.

"Hey Rhys, I'm warning you, you better watch your mouth!" Florence **was** furious.

Dahlia remained silent, but her brows furrowed too. She thought that Dustin had crossed the line too. After all, Matt had helped him out of a dire situation. Even if he wasn't grateful, he should at least be polite.

"Dustin, you were able to win her hand back then because I went abroad. But now that I'm back, you will not

have the chance anymore." Matt lowered his voice as he approached Dustin.

"Is that so? I beg to differ." Dustin shrugged.

"You should know where you stand. You and I, we're in totally different leagues." Matt straightened out **his** suit and looked down his nose at Dustin with scorn. "Can you even begin to comprehend how vastly different we are in social standing? Everything that you dare not even dream of having is within my grasp. And that is

the difference between us!"

He spoke in such low tones that his words **were** only audible to the both of them.

“I do not know where you got your inflated ego from, but if there’s one thing you should know, it’s that you do

not mess with me.” There was no trace of emotion on Dustin’s face.

Matt sniggered meanly. “Very well, we shall see then.” He reached out to pat Dustin on the shoulder when he paused midway, reconsidering his decision and retracting his hand slowly as though the act would soil his hand. The simple gesture itself was packed with a ton of humiliation.

“Alright, alright. Let’s not waste time conversing with the likes of him. How about I treat you to a good meal at Hillview Hotel to celebrate your return?” Florence suggested with a smile.

“I would be honored.” Matt turned around and his innocent facade was back in place again, a smile plastered

on his face.

“Come on, let’s go then.” Without another word, Florence led Dahlia away. Dahlia turned to speak to Dustin but failed to find the right words to say.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 64 -

Chapter 64

Natasha was enjoying her coffee with Duane at Java Joys.

“Do you still remember our bet, Natasha? Three days are up, and I’m still fit as a fiddle. Isn’t it time for you to

make good on your promise?” Duane asked with a smile as he sipped on his coffee.

“Why are

you so impatient, Uncle Duane? We’ve got half a day left before time is up.” Natasha said collectedly.

“Hah! You can’t really be buying what that little swindler said, can you?” Duane found it ridiculous. “I’ve been

practicing martial arts for years. How would I not know my own physical condition? Look at me! Does it look like there's anything wrong with me?" 1

"I don't know if you look like anything, but I trust Dustin's judgment." Natasha smiled.

"Hmph! I wonder how that little swindler brainwashed you. Why do you trust him so much?" Duane wondered aloud.

"Who knows? Maybe this is just how things were meant to be." The corners of Natasha's lips tugged upward as she thought of Dustin. "Anyway, half a day is left before time is up. If you're still fine before the sun sets, I'll make good on my promise!" 1

"Fine! Half a day it is, then! When the time is up, I'll show you what a liar that little swindler truly is!" With that, Duane left with his bodyguards in tow.

Once they were out the door and got into their car, one of Duane's trusted bodyguards couldn't resist asking, "I

don't get it, sir. Ms. Harmon is such an exceptional lady. Why would she fall for that little swindler?"

"She never plays by the book. When you find an opportunity, look into Rhys' background." Duane instructed.

"Yes, sir!"

The bodyguard started the car after answering him. As the car drove on, Duane leaned back to relax. Not a moment later, he felt a sharp pain in his chest. He dismissed it initially, but as time went on, the pain became increasingly acute and unbearable.

It felt like a knife was stabbed into his chest and twisted around continuously. As tough as he was, the pain

caused him to gasp.

"It can't be! Could it be that the little swindler was telling the truth all along?" he wondered. Duane clutched at

his chest as he broke out in perspiration.

“What’s wrong, sir?” His bodyguard was quick to notice his discomfort.

“Quick! Send me back to Java Joys immediately!” Finally, Duane could bear it no longer. He ordered his bodyguard to turn back.

Flooring it the entire way, they were back at Java Joys in a flash.

“Uncle Duane, what’s wrong? Do you need to use the washroom?” Natasha raised her brows at the sight of

Duane, who was drenched in sweat.

“Who said anything about using the washroom? Can’t you see that he’s in pain?” His bodyguard huffed.

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“Hmm? And who are you to run your mouth here?”

The bodyguard immediately lowered his head as Natasha shot a glare in his direction. In a split second, his blood ran cold.

“Natasha! My chest hurts! Get that little swindler here to help me, pronto!” Duane said with agony written all over his face.

“Uncle Duane, it seems to me that Dustin was right. He said you’d get an attack within three days, and he

wasn’t lying. Doesn’t seem appropriate that you’re still addressing him as a little swindler, does it?” Natasha

remarked impassively.

“Fine, fine! He isn’t a swindler, I was wrong to call him that. Now can you get him here?” Duane gritted his

teeth.

“Uncle Duane, you’re the one asking him for a favor. It’s not nice to make him come here, don’t you think?” Natasha commented with a vague smile.

“You!” Duane was on the verge of rage, but in the end he chose to restrain himself. “Where is Dustin? I’ll go to

him

“Hang on, let me give him a call to see where he is.” Natasha smiled as she dug around for her phone to make

the call. Once she got Dustin’s location, she announced, “Peaceful Medical Centre.”

“Move it! Get to Peaceful Medical Centre right away!” Duane dared not dally any longer. He rushed to the

medical center. What should have been a 30–minute journey took them only 15. They ran multiple red lights

along the way.

“So you are here, you rascal!” Duane made his way in covered in sweat. He spotted Dustin, who was reading, the moment he entered. “Damn it! I’m suffering in such agony, and here you are, happily reading?” Duane

cursed internally.

“Uncle Duane, why are you here?” Dustin was taken aback for a brief moment, but he quickly came around.

From the looks of it, he must have suffered an attack.

“Tell me! I’ve been well all along. Why am I suddenly experiencing pain in my chest? Have you got something to do with this, you brat?” Duane questioned through clenched jaws. He had little faith in Dustin to begin with. And now, he was really suffering within three days, just as Dustin had predicted. It was only natural that he would suspect that Dustin was behind everything.

“Uncle Duane, what are you implying? Are you saying that I did this to you?” Dustin’s brows knitted together, showing his displeasure.

“Forget it! I don’t care who did it! Just get over here and treat me!” Duane said impatiently. The pain in his chest was getting unbearable. Every second that passed was pure torture to him. His priority was to get relief.

“Why the hell are you still standing there? Get your ass here right this instant! If my boss’ condition gets any worse, I’ll make you regret the day you were born!” Duane’s bodyguard, who was by his side, threatened.

Dustin’s expression froze over when he heard those words. They were the ones who needed his help, but this was the kind of attitude they came with? Who did they think they were?

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“If this is the attitude I’m getting, then you’d better find someone else to help you. I’m not the person to help you,” Dustin declared flatly.

“What did you just say?” Duane stopped for a moment before his expression turned malicious. “You bastard! I only came here because of Natasha! Don’t be so full of yourself!”

“Is that so?” Dustin scoffed. “Truth be told, I’m only addressing you as Uncle Duane out of respect toward Ms. Harmon. If not for her, you are nothing to me. Also, it would do you good to figure out how things stand right now. You are the one who came to me, asking for help. Not the other way around! Now, please get the hell out of here!”

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Chapter 65

Dustin’s words took everyone by surprise. No one had expected him to be so audacious as to disregard them.

“You brat! Are you even hearing yourself?” Duane’s jaws were tightly clenched and his expression was slightly distorted from the anguish. He was a person of prestige in South City, much less a small place like Swinton. And now, this little scoundrel dared speak to him like that?

How impudent!

"I know very well what I'm saying. You, however, do not seem to fathom the severity of the situation at hand. I

am the only one who can help with your condition," Dustin spelled out coldly.

"You rascal! Don't go around thinking that you're some miracle worker just because you've got some medical

tricks up your sleeves! You better know what's best for you before I lose my temper!" Duane bellowed.

"That's right! I'll break your face if you don't cure my boss!" Duane's bodyguard threatened.

"You'll break my face? I'd like to see you try." Dustin sneered.

"I guess this one wouldn't be afraid until death stares him in the face!" The bodyguard was angered. He took a

step forward and threw a punch at Dustin's face. His fist was on the target, and it came on fast. It was evident

that he was a skilled fighter.

Before the punch made contact with his face, Dustin grunted and gave the bodyguard such a strong slap that

it sent him sprawling backward.

The bodyguard did not even have the chance to make a sound as he passed out on the spot, face disfigured.

Duane's face fell. It never occurred to him that Dustin was proficient in martial arts too.

"What's the matter?" Natasha came strolling in at her own pace, looking haughty and carrying an air of

authority. Even without knowing what was going on, she instinctively stood by Dustin.

“Natasha! This insolent rascal not only refused to heal me, he even beat my man up! Tell me, how do you think this should be handled?” Duane asked with hostility.

“Uncle Duane, I believe Dustin would not have attacked your man without being provoked. That being the case, your man brought it upon himself!” Natasha responded firmly.

Duane’s brows furrowed. “So, you’re adamant about taking his side?”

“Of course!” Natasha lifted her chin. “Dustin is my friend. If you have any problem with him, you may come to me.”

“Hmph! You’re turning against me for an outsider? Have you considered how you’re going to tell your parents about this?” Duane roared.

“That’s not something you should worry about, Uncle Duane. I’ll deal with them myself.” Natasha then continued stonily, “But you, Uncle Duane, look like you’re in serious pain. I think you’d better seek help. Don’t wait till it gets any worse.”

“You! Very well! Let’s go!” After giving them a spiteful glare, Duane left in a huff. Natasha’s reaction was not

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Chapter 65

what he expected. But considering her status, he had no intention of crossing her, so he had no choice but to

walk away.

“Will you be in any sort of trouble for helping me out?” Dustin asked. Though he was not intimidated by Duane, he was still grateful to Natasha.

“Trouble?” Natasha chuckled. “Well, they used to call me Black Widow. Venomous and deadly, apparently.

What’s this trivial matter got on me?”

“Well, isn’t that phenomenal?” Dustin raised a brow.

“But of course! Are you interested in finding out?”

“Finding out? How?” Natasha chuckled yet again. With a sultry grin, she leaned into Dustin and whispered into

his ear. “Come over to my room tonight. I’ll show you.”

And then, she pulled away, biting her lower lip. That was no mistaking it for anything but seduction.

Dustin kept quiet and pretended not to hear her. His eyelid twitched. This woman was really something.

seducing him in broad daylight.

Meanwhile, Duane’s chest was hurting so much that he rushed to the hospital as quickly as he could.

“Quick! Get a doctor!”

Following Duane’s bodyguard’s rude barks, a group of doctors rushed to the emergency ward to tend to him. However, after going through a series of tests, the doctors came to the astonishing conclusion that there was absolutely nothing wrong with Duane. He was perfectly fine.

“Sir, are you sure that you are experiencing pain in your chest?” a doctor asked.

“Why the f*ck would I be lying about it?” Duane replied none too kindly. “Fuck it! I’m so close to spasming from the damned pain! Why would I be lying?” he thought.

“Well, the thing is, we are unable to diagnose the issue. Why don’t you get a consultation from another hospital?”

“You bunch of worthless morons!” Duane left after spewing profanities. Without a moment to waste, he hurried to two other renowned hospitals. Still, their conclusions were the same: He was perfectly healthy and nothing

was wrong with him.

“How could this be?” Duane grabbed at his chest, pale-faced with sweat running down his face. The worst part was that the pain was intensifying as time went on. It was as though he would never see the end of it. He had been practicing martial arts for many, many years, and he believed himself to be tough and resilient. But the excruciating pain he was going through was simply intolerable. He thought that he might lose his mind if it carried on any longer.

“Sir, even the hospitals can’t help. What do we do now?” Seeing Duane in so much pain, his bodyguards were

at a loss.

“Could it be possible that the rascal is the only one who can help me?” Recalling Dustin’s words, Duane gritted his teeth. Ultimately, he had no choice but to give in. “Head to Peaceful Medical Centre. Get that rascal to help.”

2/3

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Duane’s men dared not question his decision. They immediately sent him back to Peaceful Medical Centre. This time around, they lost all the contempt and arrogance they had before.

“Well, if it isn’t Uncle Duane? What’s got you coming back so soon?” Natasha, who had been biding her time, rose to greet him with a smile.

“Natasha, I acted rashly and said some rubbish earlier on. Please don’t take it to heart. Can you please get

Dustin to help me?” Duane tried to put on a smile.

“Uncle Duane, there’s no use telling me that. It’d be better for you to say it to Dustin.” Natasha gestured at Dustin behind her. He was reading leisurely, taking no heed of the few men who had just entered.

Duane cleared his throat before starting, "Hey, Rhys, I'm really sorry. I was in such agony that I was rash with my words and offended you. Please do not mind me. I'm really sorry, I apologize."

Duane chose to yield to him. Seeing that Dustin was ignoring him, he offered, "Hey, if you help me, you can have your pick out of my collection of treasured herbs."

Dustin finally lifted his head when he heard that.

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Chapter 66

Dustin had no interest in wealth or riches. But at the moment, he had a pressing need for rare herbs. The old drunkard's condition had gotten worse day by day. He might not even make it through the year. He needed to gather five types of rare herbs to be able to treat him.

"I am extremely fussy when it comes to herbs. Your collection might not necessarily be useful to me," Dustin voiced out.

"I can get you whatever herb you need!" Duane guaranteed immediately.

"Do you have the Gozoraberry?" Dustin queried.

"Uh... no." Duane shook his head.

"Flower of Crimson Gem?"

"I don't have that either."

"What about Cherusia?"

"Rhys, I've never even heard of these herbs you are naming." Duane's expression turned bitter.

"How about aged Panax root and ancient Heliotrope? I'm sure you've heard of those." Dustin's eyes narrowed.

"Yes, I've heard of those! I know those herbs!" Duane nodded. Those two herbs cost a king's ransom, but at least he's heard of them.

"And do you have them?" Dustin asked.

"I'm not sure about the ancient Heliotrope, but I can get you the aged Panax root. But it'll take a few days." Duane answered.

"Fine, then come back when you have them." Dustin said with a wave of his hand.

“Oh, come on, Rhys! My chest is aching so badly! I can’t stand it anymore! Please help me first! I promise I’ll

send the Panax root in a few days!” Duane lost his cool.

Dustin kept quiet and turned to look at Natasha beside him. He did not trust Duane. What if he went back on

his word once Dustin cured him?

“Natasha, please, persuade him. You know I never go back on my word. I always make good on my promises!”

Duane begged.

“Of course, Uncle Duane. I know that you never go back on a promise. But I think we can do better than just at Panax root,” Natasha bargained.

“What else do you need? I’ll try my best to get it.” Duane quickly got the picture. It was obvious that Natasha

was trying to raise the price now that they were in control. But he was in no position to haggle.

“Uncle Duane, I heard that you’ve got quite a number of properties in Swinton. Hillview Hotel, especially, is doing exceptionally well. Why don’t you give it to Dustin as a gift?” A vague smile crept up on Natasha’s face.

“What?” Duane’s lips twitched. Damn it! Hillview Hotel was his golden goose! If he were to sell it, he could

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easily get up to a billion dollars for it! This woman was demanding quite a lot!

“Are you unwilling to part with it?” Natasha raised a brow.

“Of course not! As long as Rhys will save me, a hotel means nothing to me!” Duane forced a smile. He had no other alternative than to comply with their demands.

“Dustin, seeing how Uncle Duane is being so nice, why don’t you help him this time?” Natasha turned to him

and winked.

“Alright, then.” Dustin nodded. He then pulled out a black pill and tossed it to Duane. “You’ll be fine after eating this.”

“What’s this?”

The pill looked too much like a turd. A frown formed on Duane’s face. Did he lose close to a billion dollars just

for this?

“If you do not believe me, you can opt not to eat it.” Dustin did not pressure him to consume the pill.

“Of course I do!” Steeling himself, Duane swallowed the pill. He had to try it to know if it worked.

The pill dissolved very quickly, and soon Duane felt a warm feeling spreading over his body. As the warmth spread out, the pain in his chest began to dissipate. In mere minutes, the sharp, agonizing pain miraculously disappeared altogether.

“It actually worked?” Duane was pleasantly surprised.

He patted himself all over to make sure that he was really alright. Finally, he heaved a long breath of relief.

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Chapter 67

“So, Uncle Duane, what do you think of Dustin’s medical skills? Are you impressed?” Natasha asked with a smirk, evidently proud. After all, this was the man she had taken a liking to.

“Who knew that a single pill could work such wonders?” Duane’s eyes lit up as he said. “Rhys, may I know what this pill is? Can I have a few more? I’ll pay for it. Just name your price!”

I

*This is Gemiphen. It’s a confidential prescription. And because the ingredients are too valuable, the pill that you just had was my only one,” Dustin replied, aloof.

“That’s okay, just sell me the prescription then.” Duane was not one to give up easily. He was a tycoon in the medical industry. He knew how immensely precious such miraculous medicines are. If he could manufacture them in bulk, he would have struck gold!

“I told you, the prescription is confidential. There’s no way I’m selling it.” Dustin stopped himself before he continued, “Of course, if you could find me another rare herb, I can give you the prescription for the Gemiphen. No charges.”

“Well...” Duane appeared reluctant. It was hard enough to get him the aged Panax root. How much harder would it be to get the ancient Heliotrope? As for the Gozoraberry, the flower of Crimson Gem, and the Cherusia, he had never even heard of them, much less know where to get them.

“There’s no rush, Uncle Duane. We can continue discussing this after we get the Panax root.” Natasha smiled

as

she rubbed her stomach. “I’m suddenly feeling quite hungry, Uncle Duane. Why don’t we go for a meal at

Hillview Restaurant? You can also transfer the ownership of the hotel to Dustin while we’re there.”

Duane’s eyelid twitched. This was one impatient lady! Though it pained him to do so, there was nothing else

Duane could do other than agree. After all, he had made a promise, and he couldn’t very well go back on it. So, after some small talk, they made their way to Hillview Hotel.

Hillview Hotel was situated in an excellent location, right by Lake Vestine. It was famous for its rooftop restaurant, which was Hillview Restaurant. Because of its geographical advantage, it had an extraordinary view overlooking half of Swinton. The night view was particularly breathtaking. With exemplary service and exquisite food, it was no wonder that Hillview Restaurant was patronized by many of the rich and famous.

Furthermore, they only served VIPs, so regular folk were not allowed to set foot there.

Once they reached Hillview Restaurant, the three got a private room to themselves and ordered some of the signature dishes. They soon began to dig in.

Meanwhile, a Mercedes-Benz SUV stopped in front of the main entrance to Hillview Hotel. The car door

opened and Florence stepped out of the car.

“Matt, Hillview Restaurant is a wonderful place. Since you’ve helped us out so much, I’ll treat you to a nice dinner today. Dahlia will be here soon. She’s on her way. Let’s head in without her.” Florence led Matt and James into the hotel, but when they reached the highest floor, they were stopped by a waiter.

“I’m sorry, I’m afraid you can’t come in.”

“What? We’re not allowed to enter?” James glared at the waiter, displeased. “Do you know who we are? How

dare you stop me?”

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“You’re running a business here! Aren’t you supposed to serve guests? What do you mean we can’t go in? Who are you to look down on us?” Florence asked mastily.

They had anticipated having a good meal there, but they ended up being denied entry. Peeved was an understatement.

“My apologies, but we only serve VIPs,” the waiter answered respectfully.

“What’s so great about a VIP? We’ll just apply to be a VIP then!” Florence scoffed.

“May I please know if you’re applying for a regular VIP or a Deluxe VIP?” the waiter asked with a smile.

“Of course we’re going for the Deluxe VIP! Do we look like we can’t afford it?” James asked arrogantly as he lifted his chin.

“Yes, we only go for the best!” Florence whipped out her card.

Matt was watching them. She couldn’t afford to embarrass herself in his presence.

“Sure. You’ll have to put in a deposit of five million dollars for the Deluxe VIP.” The waiter was still smiling.

“What? Five million?”

Both Florence and James were bewildered when they heard what the waiter said. Florence, who had her card in her hand, immediately withdrew her hand.

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Chapter 68

“Are you kidding me? Five million dollars for Deluxe VIP?” Astonishment was written all over James’ face.

“Exactly! This is daylight robbery!” Florence flew into a rage to cover up her embarrassment. She was lucky she drew her card back in time, or she would have maxed out on her card.

“These are rules set by our proprietor. If that’s too much for you, you can opt for the regular VIP.”

“And— how much would the regular VIP cost?” Florence probed.

“A deposit of one million dollars will make you a regular VIP.” the waiter informed them.

“One million? That’s not much better!” Florence frowned. “We’re just here for a meal. It won’t cost so much. Can’t you just let us in? I’ll make sure you get handsomely tipped!” Had she known that Hillview Restaurant charged such exorbitant prices, she would never have chosen to go there in the first place!

“I’m sorry, but we only serve VIPs.” The waiter put on a professional smile.

“Hey! Why are you so inflexible? Get me your manager! I’ll talk to him personally!” Florence could no longer hold in her temper.

“I’m sorry, but our manager is currently serving three other distinguished guests. I’m afraid he doesn’t have the time.” The waiter’s smile was slowly fading away.

“You!” Florence was exasperated.

“Mom, forget it. Why don’t we just go somewhere else?” James prompted. As lovely as Hillview Restaurant

was, it was way too pricey.

“We’re already here! We’ll make a joke of ourselves if we leave now!” Florence glared at him.

“Allow me, Mrs. Nicholson.”

Matt smiled as he stepped forward, gracefully producing a gold card and handing it to the waiter. “I am a Gold

VIP, so I get 20% off on all my spending here.”

“Gold VIP?” That gave Florence quite a shock. “How much did that cost you?”

“Not too much, just ten million dollars.” Matt smiled.

“Ten million?”

Florence and James’ eyes widened. Was he joking? Ten million dollars, not too much? They had thought that

they were pretty well off, but it seemed like they were nothing compared to Matt!

“Please step inside, honored guests!” In a flash, the waiter’s attitude changed and became exceedingly

welcoming after verifying that the card was valid.

“Shall we?” Matt gestured courteously for them to go first.

“Hmph! Bootlicker! My friend Matt here is a Gold VIP! See that?” James strutted in pompously after giving the

waiter a dirty look.

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Chapter 68

Feeling very pleased, Florence sashayed in with her chest puffed up and head held high.

Just then, Dustin emerged from one of the private rooms. He had been on his way to the men’s room when he bumped into them.

“Rhys? What are you doing here?” James scowled at the sight of him. He was still very much hung up on being slapped a while back.

“If you can be here, then so can I,” Dustin answered coldly.

“Hah! What makes you think we’re on the same level? We are Gold VIPs here,” James declared snobbishly.

“That’s right! This place is exclusively for VIPS, requiring a deposit of one million dollars for even the most basic VIP. Can you afford that?” Florence remarked condescendingly.

“Indeed, I do not have a million dollars,” Dustin admitted. It was true that he did not have much. But it would

not be hard for him to get the money.

“Then what are you doing here if you do not have the money? Get out! Do not lower the standards here!” James’ expression was one of contempt.

“Exactly! Go look at yourself in the mirror! Who are you to appear in such a posh restaurant?” Florence

sniggered.

“Oi! You there! Come here and get this guy out! He’s ruining our appetite!” James waved a waiter over to kick Dustin out of the restaurant.

“I’m sorry, he is one of our guests too.” The waiter smiled apologetically.

“So what? We are Gold VIPs! Is he more distinguished than us? I am telling you to get rid of this person! This is an order!” James barked.

“Um...” The waiter looked uneasy.

“What? Are you going to disregard a Gold VIP? With such service, you better watch out. I have quite a mind to lodge a complaint against you!” Florence threatened.

“My apologies, but we do not have such rules here.” The waiter had his hands tied.

“Hmph! If you can’t make the call, get your manager here!”

“That’s right! Get the manager here! I’d like to see if he prioritizes this miserable man over his Gold VIPs!” Florence and James pressed unforgivably. They were making a big show out of having a Gold VIP card. Even the other diners were throwing them dirty looks.

Under their persistent demands, the waiter dared not say more and rushed off to get the manager.

“Mom, what are the both of you doing?” Dahlia called out as she arrived. She was surprised to see Dustin. Why are you here?”

“I’m here for a meal, of course. Why else?” Dustin shrugged.

“This is quite a pricey place for a meal,” Dahlia reminded him.

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“Oh, so you think I can’t afford to have a meal here too?” Dustin raised a brow

“I didn’t mean that...”

Just as

Dahlia was about to explain herself, the waiter rushed back with the manager.

“I’m the manager here. Is anything the matter?”

“So you’re the manager? Great! There’s a man who sneaked in. I’m ordering you to get him out of here immediately!” James was swollen with arrogance.

“Sir, you must be mistaken. We have very strict security here. No one is able to sneak in,” the manager explained.

“And I’m telling you, there is! I’m warning you, we are Gold VIPs! If you do not want trouble, you best do as I “say!”

“That’s right! He’s affecting me and seriously ruining my appetite. I don’t care what you say, just get him out of here!”

Florence and James were throwing their weight around, not bothering to play nice. 1

“Could you please let me know who you are referring to?” the manager inquired.

“It’s him!” James pointed at Dustin.

The manager’s expression clouded over when he saw that. “Excuse me, sir, please do not try to play the fool!”

“What? You’re defying me? We are Gold VIPs!” James glowered. He sounded like a broken tape recorder.

The manager simply scoffed at that. “It doesn’t matter if you’re a Gold VIP. Even if you were the President of Stonia himself, it wouldn’t matter. Because this man here is the owner of Hillview Restaurant!”

The whole room fell into a breathless silence.

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“What? He’s the owner?!” James was stunned by the twist in events. He could n’t believe his ears.

“You must be joking! How could he be the owner of this restaurant?” Florence exclaimed in disbelief.

“Why would it be impossible? I have never seen such arrogant and snobbish patrons as the two of you. How dare you try to make a scene here?” The restaurant manager replied in disgust.

Earlier, he had seen Duane, the preceding owner, handing over ownership of Hillview Hotel to Dustin in the private booth.

“This can’t be! Dustin is as poor as a church mouse. Where did he get the money to buy a restaurant?” Astonishment was written all over James’s face.

“That’s none of your business. The only thing you need to know now is that the restaurant belongs to me. I have the authority to kick you out instead,” Dustin answered calmly.

At this, the expressions on both their faces turned black with anger and humiliation. They had planned on upstaging Dustin by shoving their privilege as a Gold VIP into his face. Who would have thought that he was the owner of Hillview Hotel? What a disgrace!

“Mr. Rhys, should we remove these troublemakers from the restaurant?” The manager spoke up.

“No need for that. We should provide good service to our customers. Furthermore, they are still our privileged customers. Send them a bottle of red wine on the house,” Dustin replied.

“Very well, sir.” The manager nodded.

“What a showoff. Frankly, he only knows how to leech off women!”

“That’s right! He thinks that he is such a big shot when in fact, he is just a freeloader!”

Florence and James grumbled, cursing under their breath. They were not happy about how things turned out.

“Thanks for the offer. However, I would have to decline your gift,” Matt cut in suddenly. With a winsome smile on his face, he caught the attention of the other women around with his charm and attractive features.

Florence took this opportunity to boast. “Dustin! For your information, Matt is an overseas graduate. Not only is he from an elite family, but he is also extremely talented. He is better than you by leaps and bounds!”

“Precisely! With your measly net worth, you don’t even deserve to be his slave!” James chimed in.

The humiliation they faced just now was instantly forgotten with the support of Matt. What was the big deal? Dustin was only the owner of a restaurant. Moreover, it was not from his labor. In comparison to Matt’s noble

background, he was nothing!

“Florence, you are too kind. I was just lucky.” Matt brushed her praises off lightly. However, there was a cocky smile on his face.

“Look at that! See how courteous and gentlemanly he is. Between you and him, it’s like night and day!” Florence declared, gushing over Matt.

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By now, Dustin was done. Turning to leave, he replied calmly, “Please enjoy your time here. Excuse me as I have other obligations.”

“Wait a minute!” Dahlia caught up to him. “Is this restaurant really yours? Where did you get so much money

from?”

“I don’t have any money. The restaurant’s a gift from a friend,” Dustin answered.

“A friend? Don’t tell me it’s Natasha?” Dahlia continued with a frown on her face.

“You don’t need to know who it is. Instead, spend that energy on catching up with Matt over some wine. Isn’t

he your beloved senior?” Dustin huffed before striding away.

“You...” Dahlia clicked her tongue in annoyance. She was only treating Matt to a meal. Furthermore, her

brother and mother were present. Why was he being such a prick? Where was his gentlemanliness?

Returning to the private booth, Dustin seemed a little down. He couldn’t help but feel frustrated when he saw Dahlia and Matt standing side by side. Matt had the looks and the background. To top it off, they almost got together as a couple before this. It was easy to be suspicious of their relationship. Above all, Dahlia was being

extremely guarded. He couldn’t guess what was going through her mind at all.

“Mr. Rhys, what’s wrong? Your face has been downcast since you returned. Is something on your mind?” Natasha said, lightly teasing him.

“It’s nothing. I met up with some acquaintances outside.” Dustin forced a smile ..

“Acquaintance? Is it Dahlia?” Natasha’s ears pricked up.

“You’re right. It is her. Besides, there’s another guy named Matt Laney,” Dustin replied honestly.

“Matt Laney?” Natasha shot him a mischievous smile. “Mr. Rhys, you should stay away from this person!”

“Do you know him?” Dustin was a little surprised.

“Not personally, but I’ve heard of him.” Natasha took a sip of red wine and laughed. “Matt is notorious among the rich ladies. He is famous for being a real playboy. Not only does he have the looks and the personality, but he is also extremely generous with his money. Who wouldn’t like him?”

“What, are you also interested in him?” Dustin asked hesitantly.

“Of course not! He is not my type and is only good at leeching off women. Besides, with you around, who else

would I be interested in anyway?” Natasha winked at him playfully.

Seeing that Dustin was ignoring her advances, she continued with a charming smile. “To be fair, Matt is from

a family of aristocrats. However, his family’s Influence went down the drain recently, making him a broke aristocrat. Being brought up with a golden spoon, he had to find unscrupulous ways to maintain his lifestyle. Thus, he is now making a living off the support of rich older women. Many women have been blinded by his lies and lost all their wealth. His modus operandi is to use the wealth of his previous victim to gain the trust of his current target, and the cycle continues. Furthermore, he is meticulous in his deception. Many of his victims are still being strung along by his charms. If he has his sights set on your ex-wife, you must be very careful. In the end, she may not only lose her wealth, but her life may even be in danger!”

When Dustin heard about this, he frowned. “Who would have known that he is just a swindler!”

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“Anyway, you should have your guard up when dealing with people like him,” Natasha concluded.

“Thanks for the tip.” Dustin nodded thoughtfully.

“Mr. Rhys, you seem to be concerned about Dahlia. Could it be that you still have feelings for her?” The expression on Natasha’s face was a little dejected.

“No. Even though she is my ex-wife, I don’t wish for her to be hurt in any way.” Dustin shook his head.

“I hope that is true!” With a smirk, Natasha declared in a bossy tone, “Regardless, even if you still have feelings for Dahlia, I don’t mind having a fair fight with her. Once I have my eyes set on you, no one else can

come between us!”

With that, she pompously stuck her nose in the air.

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Chapter 70

Seated by the window, Florence and James were still cursing Dustin.

“Who would have guessed that an incompetent oaf like Dustin could be the owner! What has our world come to?” James complained loudly.

“He is nothing but a leech! If it weren’t for Ms. Harmon’s recommendation, he would never have this opportunity!” Florence snarled.

James had a look of pure jealousy on his face. “That’s right! Once she loses interest in him, Dustin will be discarded like rubbish. Let’s see how arrogant he can be!”

“Nothing will come out of being a freeloader like Dustin. Conversely, Matt is the epitome of a real man. Not only is he young and talented, he is also an intellectual!” Florence praised Matt effusively.

“What a pity. Matt, if you hadn’t gone overseas for your studies, you would have been my brother-in-law by now!” James tried to butter Matt up.

“Absolutely! Just so you know, after you left for your studies, Dahlia has been pining after you for a long time!” Florence chimed in as well.

“Mom! Where did you get this idea?” Dahlia frowned in annoyance.

“I’m telling the truth! If it weren’t for Matt going overseas, you would never have married Dustin!” Florence said stubbornly.

Before Dahlia could retort, Matt cut in, “Alright, alright. Let bygones be bygones. We should have our meal before it gets cold. The food here is delicious.”

Florence and James shut up and tucked in voraciously.

“James and I are going down to get some groceries. The both of you can take your time.” In the middle of the meal, Florence stopped eating and gave James a knowing look.

“Oh, yes! I’ll accompany Mom.” James understood his assignment, and they left the table quickly.

Clearly, they were trying to give Dahlia and Matt some private time.

After Florence and James left, Matt spoke up, “Dahlia, I am very sorry for leaving you without any warning. It’s all my fault. Please give me a chance to redeem myself.”

“It’s all in the past now. You don’t have to be concerned,” Dahlia answered nonchalantly.

She had moved on from Matt long ago, so she couldn’t care less.

“That’s great. You have grown more mature since the last time we met.” Matt shot her a charming smile.

“Please excuse me, I need to go to the washroom.” Dahlia patted her lips gently and left the table as well.

Staring at her shapely figure, Matt gave an evil smirk. He took out a small packet of white powder, poured it into Dahlia’s wine, and swirled the glass.

Coincidentally, the restaurant’s manager witnessed everything Matt had done. Without further delay, he

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quickly went to Dustin’s booth and divulged Matt’s evil plan.

“He spiked her drink? Are you sure?” Dustin’s brows furrowed together when he heard this.

“Yes, I’m positive. I personally witnessed it!” the manager affirmed.

“Who would have expected that he revealed his true colors so quickly?” Natas ha narrowed her eyes.

Duane spoke up. "Dustin, you should not let this slide. Do you need me to teach him a lesson?"

"No, I will handle this myself." Dustin got up and left the booth immediately.

At that moment, Dahlia had returned from the washroom. Matt passed her the glass of wine. "Dahlia, this is a

token of my apology. Cheers!" Matt lifted his glass with a smile.

"Alright. After this drink, I need to go home as tomorrow will be a busy day at the office," Dahlia said with

"resignation.

"Sure, let's make a move after this." Matt did not pressure her further and downed his drink.

Just as Dahlia was about to take a sip, Dustin's voice stopped her.

"I would not drink that if I were you."

"What?"

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Chapter 71

Dahlia looked over her shoulder and saw Dustin walking toward her. "What do you mean?"

"Your drink has been drugged. You would be in danger if you had drunk it because it renders you defenseless," Dustin warned.

"Drugged?" Dahlia frowned and turned to Matt, whose expression stiffened for a split second. However, he composed himself immediately.

"Dustin, you must be sorely mistaken," Matt said coolly.

"You would know best whether I am mistaken," Dustin retorted coldly.

"Dahlia, do you really think that I'm such a malicious person?" Matt asked with a disarming smile.

Dahlia was taken aback by the sudden question. After some deliberation, she asked, "Dustin, do you have any evidence to support your claim?"

"The restaurant's manager saw what happened. He could be my witness," Dustin answered.

"That's right! It was clear as day. He spiked your wine with some powder!" the manager pointed an accusing finger at Matt.

"Everyone knows that both of you are in cahoots with each other. It would be impossible for me to deny it." Matt shook his head, acting aggrieved.

"Dustin, do you have stronger evidence for your claims? Do not judge someone based on unfounded

accusations!" Dahlia had a serious look on her face. Based on her knowledge of Matt, he wasn't someone who

would do such a thing.

"I already have a witness backing me up. What evidence do you need? Would you rather believe him over me?"

Dustin frowned, anger building up within him.

"I..." Dahlia didn't know what to say. Matt was from the noble Laney family. As an aristocrat, it was

unthinkable that he would carry out such a vile act. However, Dustin seemed so sure of himself. He wouldn't

lie either.

At that moment, she didn't know who to side with.

"Dahlia, Dustin seems to have some prejudice against me. That's fine, I can prove my innocence. Didn't he claim that I drugged your drink? Let's exchange drinks," Matt said. He took Dahlia's wine glass and downed

the contents.

This simple action wiped away every doubt from Dahlia's mind. If he did drug her drink, he wouldn't have

drunk it himself.

"Dustin, I don't remember doing anything to offend you. Why are you hellbent on insulting me like this? If you have a grudge against me, I sincerely apologize," Matt said personably, tilting his head.

With his charm and courteous words, Dahlia was convinced that Matt was every inch a gentleman.

"Dustin, what do you have to say for yourself?" Dahlia turned to Dustin, her eyes boring into him.

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"If I'm not mistaken, he must have taken the antidote prior to this." Dustin was adamant.

“Nonsense!” Dahlia’s expression was dark. “Dustin, you are going too far! Matt has proven his innocence. Why are you still being so difficult?”

“I’m telling the truth.”

“Well, I just think that you are making up stories!” There was a hint of anger in Dahlia’s voice.

Evidently, Dustin felt hostility toward Matt. However, that was no reason to drag Matt’s name through the mud. It would be wrong to do so!

“If you still don’t believe me, then check his pockets. There must be some evidence of white powder on him!” Dustin tried turning Matt’s pockets inside out to prove his point, but this was the last straw for Dahlia.

“That’s enough!” Dahlia splashed the rest of the wine on Dustin’s face. “Have you not done enough damage for one day? Why are you as stubborn as a mule? Being a gentleman, can you not be so petty? If you are jealous of Matt, upgrade yourself and compete on the same level. Don’t use despicable tricks or baseless arguments to ruin his reputation. Your actions will only make me think that you are pathetic!” Dustin was dumbstruck by Dahlia’s words.

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Chapter 72

Dustin was stunned by Dahlia’s hurtful words and furious outburst. Drops of wine rolled down his cheeks and to the ground. He was in a miserable state. Apparently, it was wishful thinking that their relationship had

improved. In actual fact, there was nothing left between them.

“What? So you thought that I was falsely accusing him?” Dustin’s brows were deeply furrowed as he stared at Dahlia. “Am I that despicable of a person in your eyes?”

“Yes!” Dahlia blurted out. She felt a tinge of regret immediately. Yet, she could not take her words back now.

She had too much pride for that.

“Finally!

You have spoken what you truly thought of me.” Dustin had a disappointed look on his face as he put

“on a wry smile.

“I have overstepped my boundaries. Who knew that after so many years, you still have feelings for Matt.”

“What nonsense are you spouting?” Dahlia frowned as well.

“Am I wrong? You said that you would not contact him anymore. Having said that, here you are having wine with Matt. Aren’t you being too hypocritical?”

“...” Dahlia was about to explain herself when Dustin interrupted her.

“Maybe you aren’t even worried about Matt drugging your drink. In actuality, you hoped that he would do so as

this would give both of you a legitimate excuse to get together again. Am I correct?”

It was Dahlia’s turn to be stunned by Dustin’s words. Her face was a mix of disbelief, disappointment, and

regret. Never would she have thought that Dustin would say such words. Did he genuinely think so lowly of her? Regardless of the past three years of marriage, there wasn’t a shred of trust left between them.

“Dustin! I’m utterly disappointed in you!” Dahlia gritted her teeth. As she walked away, she struggled to control

her emotions.

Dustin stood rooted to the ground. He could feel the anger and hurt washing over him.

At this moment, Matt came over. The charming smile that had been on his face just now was replaced by a

smirk.

“Dustin, everything you said was correct. I spiked Dahlia’s drink and drank her wine to get rid of the evidence. I already took the antidote in advance,” Matt whispered into his ear coldly.

“Nevertheless, it doesn’t matter anyway. Who would believe you now? Dahlia’s smitten with me, and she will support me. There’s nothing you say that would change the outcome. What? Are you burning with anger and frustration right now? Sadly, your hands are tied. Besides, I have to thank you for strengthening our relationship with this incident. I believe that she will fall in love with me before long and willingly go to bed with me. However, don’t worry. Once I’m tired of her, I’ll return her to you soon enough.” With this, Matt threw his head back and cackled maliciously.

His true colors were finally revealed. Compared to his gentlemanly disposition earlier, this side of him was

cruel and sinister like a venomous snake!

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Chapter 72

Burning with anger, Dustin cracked his knuckles to prevent himself from punching Matt in the face as he left. Dahlia was obviously still in love with Matt. Even if his intentions were good, Dahlia had no need for his help. Since his actions would only be seen as a hindrance, there was nothing he could do. Although Dustin could convince himself logically, he couldn’t help but be aggravated by their relationship.

“Mr. Rhys, what’s happened?” At that moment, Natasha and Duane walked out of their booth.

“Forget it. I was just poking my nose where it didn’t belong.” Dustin said mockingly.

“Matt is notorious for sowing discord and stirring up trouble. Don’t be affected by him,” Duane continued.

“The main problem is not with Matt but with Dahlia.” Dustin shook his head. It would be useless to change her mind if she continued to be obstinate.

“Dustin, don’t be hung up over a woman! It’s no big deal, women are easy to find,” Duane said confidently. “As long as you are rich, women will flock to you. So, shall we get down to business?”

“What business?” Dustin asked with a tilt of his head.

“Of course it’s about the Gemiphen!” Duane smirked. “I’ve personally tried the miracle pill. A single pill could be worth a fortune! Since you are in need of herbs, why don’t we work together? I’ll deal with the rest of the business if you give me the prescription. Once I make a profit, we will split it evenly. What do you think?”

“I’m not changing my mind. I don’t mind helping you out, but you have to give me some rare herbs in exchange for the prescription. Otherwise, it’s a no.” Dustin shook his head again.

“Dustin, it will be some time before I get my hands on the herbs you want. Can’t you be more flexible?” Duane pleaded.

“Let’s talk about this after you have them in your possession.” Dustin was immovable.

Duane frowned when he heard the resolve in Dustin’s tone. This young man was as stubborn as a mule.

Initially, he wanted to start a mutual partnership with Dustin. However, it wasn’t going as smoothly as he thought. It seemed like he needed to pull out some of the tricks up his sleeve.

“Ms. Harmon! There’s bad news!” A bodyguard dressed in a suit ran into the restaurant hurriedly.

“Yes? What is it?” Natasha asked, surprised.

“It’s Ms. Ruth! She has been kidnapped!” the bodyguard reported.

“What did you say?” Natasha’s expression turned dark. “Didn’t I instruct you to protect her at all costs? How could this happen?”

“We were keeping an eye on her in secret. However, Ms. Ruth managed to escape and went to a private party. By the time we arrived, she was nowhere to be found!”

“Do you know who is behind this?” Natasha frowned.

“It could be Sir Hummer. The kidnappers left a ransom note instructing Mr. Rhys and you to meet at Hummer

Villa.”

“Edwin?” Natasha gritted her teeth in anger. How dare he endanger a member of her family? He had gone too far with the repeated provocations and needed to be taught a lesson!

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Contact the Harmon family. I need some strong fighters as backup! Since Edwin seeks a light, I shall give it to him!”

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Chapter 73

The next morning, they met at Java Joys.

When Dustin entered the cafe, he noticed a burly man standing beside Natasha. His bulky muscles rippled

under his clothes, and his knuckles were covered with calluses. This man was obviously an experienced

fighter.

“Mr. Rhys, sorry to bother you. I owe you one.” Natasha walked up to Dustin.

“It’s all right, I don’t mind helping out a friend in need. Besides, they had even specified my name in the note. I have no other choice.” Dustin smiled wryly.

Edwin's men had left a ransom note which had his name on it. He was to go with Natasha to save Ruth.

"Mr. Rhys, let me introduce you to Stephan Chapman, one of the best fighters from the Harmon family." Natasha pointed toward the man standing in silence.

"Mr. Chapman, a pleasure to meet you." Dustin nodded in acknowledgement.

"You're Dustin?" Stephan sized him up. "Was it you who took Liam and Noah Asher down?"

"In a way, yes." Dustin nodded again.

"What do you mean, in a way? Don't give such a vague answer. Did you use some shady tricks to win against them?" Stephan stared at him suspiciously.

"Well, as long as it gets the job done." Dustin said nonchalantly.

"As martial artists, we should win fair and square. What's the use of winning when you have to resort to

despicable tricks?" Stephan scoffed. He deemed people like Dustin, who don't belong to any martial arts group, as inferior to him.

"That makes sense." Dustin had no interest in arguing further.

"To be honest, I have defeated Liam and Noah in a match before this!" Stephan boasted. "Don't be too proud

of yourself even if you win against them! They are weaklings compared to me. Once we have a match, you will

know that many martial artists are stronger than you!"

Hearing Stephan's speech, Dustin was lost for words. They were practically strangers. Why was he lecturing

him like a child? Who was the one looking down on the other anyway?

"Alright, now that you have made each other's acquaintance, we will be working together after this. Once we

arrive at Hummer Villa, we may need each other's help," Natasha cut in. 1

"I'm sure we won't need to. With me around, it would be easy to take Edwin down," Stephan said confidently.

"Mr. Chapman, it's good to be optimistic, but it's better not to underestimate the enemy. When will Tilda

arrive?" Natasha changed the topic.

Tilda Snider was one of her aunts and was famous for her deadly strikes. She was currently the head of

security for the Harmon family. Compared to Stephan, she was on a different level. In this fight against Edwin, she was the key to victory.

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"Tilda is on her way. She will be arriving shortly," Stephan answered.

"Great. Since she is on her way, let's make a move as well"

On her command, Natasha's car led the way as the group drove in a file toward Hummer Villa.

Hummer Villa

was situated at the top of a hill which was part of the Hummers' private land. As the cars drove

up the hill, Edwin's men kept surveillance on them in the hidden shadows of the surrounding trees.

When they arrived at the villa, everyone got down and entered the back garden.

With a pair of scissors in hand, Edwin was busy arranging a vase of flowers in a gazebo. Behind him, Fletcher

Lawson and a group of muscular men were standing guard, staring daggers at them.

“Ms. Harmon, you’ve finally arrived? Have a seat,” Edwin said with a smile, pointing to a chair. He acted as if “they were here for a chat.

“Sir Hummer, I’ve heard that you are holding my sister hostage. Is that true?” Natasha sat down and asked

with a poker face.

“To be honest, I only knew about your sister this morning. My men did it at their discretion, so I have reprimanded them,” Edwin continued with a charming smile.

“Is that so? Well, why don’t you let my sister go?” Natasha pressed further.

“Let her go? That would be impossible.” Edwin shook his head. “Ms. Harmon, your sister made a mess at my party, destroyed my antiques, and beat up some of my underlings. If I let her go without repercussions, my reputation in Swinton would be ruined!”

“Then what do you want in return?” Natasha’s eyes narrowed.

“It’s very simple. Repay me double for my loss.” Edwin’s smile was plastered on his face. “I’ve calculated the damage your sister caused and everything amounts to ten billion dollars. As compensation, I want you to hand over half of your business in Swinton.”

“Half of the business? Are you joking?” Natasha raised her voice.

“Ms. Harmon, you are only giving up a small part of your assets. Moreover, your business activities are mainly in Milling. You won’t be affected much by what I’m asking for,” Edwin advised.

“What if I refuse?” Natasha retorted.

“It’s only right to pay back what you owe. If you refuse, I can’t guarantee that your sister will be safe from harm.” Edwin gave her a chilling smile.

“Are you threatening me?” Natasha returned his gaze stonily.

“I’m just giving you a warning. Of course, we can resolve this dispute with a death match. However, the

entirety of our assets must be at stake,” Edwin said with a smirk.

“A death match?” Natasha mulled over his offer.

It was an unsaid rule in the business world. A death match was used to settle unresolved conflict between warring families in order to prevent unwanted death and bloodshed. There would be three rounds of battle

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royale in which the opposing families would send out their representatives to fight on behalf of them. There were no rules and everything was fair game.

“Challenge accepted!” Before Natasha could answer, Stephan spoke up. “Isn’t it just a fight? We will take you on! Show me some real competition!”

Edwin snickered maliciously at Stephan’s words.

This was what he had hoped would happen!

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Chapter 74

“Mr. Chapman, what are you doing? Why did you interrupt?” Natasha frowned in annoyance. She hadn’t even made her decision, but Stephan had accepted the challenge without consulting her. He was overstepping his boundaries!

“Ms. Harmon, there’s nothing to be afraid of! I’m sure I can handle anything they throw at me,” Stephan said confidently. He was utterly unaware of his mistake.

“What if we lost the death match? Have you thought about the consequences?” Natasha narrowed her eyes.

“You must be joking! It’s impossible that they will defeat me. Just watch, I’ll put on an amazing performance later!” Stephan patted his chest assuredly.

“Ms. Harmon, there are only two choices. You can either pay the ransom with half of your business, or you bet on the deathmatch with all your assets at stake.” Edwin repeated his conditions.

“I will accept the death match. However, let my sister go first,” Natasha said coldly. Even though she knew that she was walking into Edwin’s trap, there was nothing else she could do. Thankfully, she had come prepared.

“Of course.” Edwin gestured to his men, and they brought Ruth out, bound up tightly with ropes. Thankfully, despite the ordeal, she seemed none the worse for wear.

“Ruth, are you injured?” Natasha quickly cut the ropes away.

“Sis! Thank God you are here. This time, it’s not my fault. I fell into Edwin’s trap!” Ruth whined.

“It’s alright, go and have a rest. I’ll handle this.” Natasha nodded.

“Ms. Harmon, now that I have released your sister, isn’t it time to sign the agreement for our death match?” Edwin already had a document prepared, and a servant brought it to Natasha.

The document was both a signed consent and agreement stating the terms and conditions of the match. The loser had to comply with all the conditions of the bet, which everyone would witness.

“Since you insist on a death match, I’ll take up the challenge!” Natasha signed her name on the document

without hesitation.

Edwin won.

“Alright! I admire your decisiveness!” Edwin smirked triumphantly as if he had already

“I’ll be your first opponent!” Stephan stepped forward confidently. He taunted Edwin’s men on the opposing

side. "Who wants to fight me? I'll send you all to hell!"

"Wolverine, you are up." Edwin pointed toward a hulking, muscular man with tanned skin who stepped forward

as well.

"Mr. Chapman, you must be careful of the Wolverine. He is a Muay Thai fighter and notorious among the

underground fighting rings in Swinton!" One of Natasha's bodyguards whispered to Stephan.

"A Muay Thai fighter? Defeating him would be child's play!" Stephan scoffed.

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Stephan and Wolverine stood in the ring, facing each other off.

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Wolverine was obviously used to combat. He stretched his limbs, cracked his knuckles, and struck a stance. His muscles were contracted tensely as he was poised to strike.

On the other hand, Stephan folded his hands behind him and seemed to be at ease.

"I'll let you have the first move." Stephan motioned to his opponent.

Wolverine did not hold back. He leaped high into the air and threw a flying kick at Stephan. At this level, his

strength could even cause a metal pole to bend.

"Child's play!" Stephan avoided the attack easily and landed a punch to Wolverine's chest. Wolverine lost his

balance and retreated a few steps, panting heavily.

Stephan did not give him a chance to catch his breath, landing several heavy blows on Wolverine's arms,

abdomen, and legs. After a few minutes, it was clear that Stephan had the upper hand. Wolverine did all he

could to fight back, but he could not recover from his injuries. Finally, Stephan landed the final blow, and Wolverine fainted on impact.

The first round went to Stephan!

Seeing the outcome, relief appeared on the faces of Natasha's men.

"Who would have expected that Mr. Chapman was so strong? It's no wonder he is the key fighter of the

Harmon family!"

"With Mr. Chapman on our side, we will definitely be victorious!"

The audience was whispering in excitement. They were all in awe of Stephan's fighting ability. Even though he was a little brash, he did have the abilities to back it up.

"Who else wants to fight against me?" Stephan sized up the rest of Edwin's men.

"This explains why Natasha agreed to the match so quickly. She brought in outside help." Edwin scratched his

chin in surprise.

"Have you all gone dumb? Come up to fight me!" Stephan taunted.

"Mr. Lawson, you are up next to prevent any further surprises." Edwin turned to an older man, Fletcher Lawson.

"No problem." Fletcher nodded and stepped into the ring with his head held high.

"Old man! With your thin and fragile limbs, how can you ever dream of defeating me? Give up now and you shall live!" Stephan laughed scornfully.

“Don’t overestimate yourself!” Fletcher replied with a poker face and attacked Stephan immediately. His agile

movements were as quick as lightning.

“You are just asking for trouble!” Stephan sneered and rushed toward Fletcher as well.

When they met in the middle of the ring, there was a deafening explosion as both punches landed on their targets. However, after the debris settled, Fletcher was the only person still standing. Not a hair on his head was harmed.

On the other hand, Stephan was lying helplessly on the ground. His arm was obviously broken, and he was

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bleeding profusely. Fletcher’s immense power had struck Stephan’s body, incapacitating him.

Fletcher was not done yet. He went up to Stephan and landed two more blows on his chest.

Stephan gave a loud cry of pain as his body was flung against a tree. On impact, blood spurted out from his

mouth.

“How could this be?” Natasha’s men were all dismayed at the sudden turn of events. No one expected Stephan to be defeated so quickly. Fletcher had Stephan injured and bleeding within three turns. Their

difference in prowess was just too significant.

“That’s terrible! How can this old man be so strong? Even Mr. Chapman couldn’t defeat him!” Ruth exclaimed

worriedly.

Stephan was one of the Harmon family's best fighters. It was unthinkable that he couldn't even withstand three attacks from an opponent!

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Chapter 75

Who are you?" Stephan's face was frozen in terror, his body slumped on the ground. There was no hint of arrogance left in his trembling voice. He was soundly beaten after just three attacks. This proved the disparity in their abilities.

How could there be Someone with such devastating powers remaining unknown in a small place like Swinton?

"I'll be honest with you. I'm Fletcher Lawson, Liam and Noah were my apprentices!" Fletcher said coldly.

"What? You are Mr. Lawson of Klesbridge?" Stephan was dumbfounded at this revelation. His reputation as martial artist preceded him.

Fletcher was not only one of the most prominent fighters in Klesbridge, but he was also a master of poison! There were many tricks that he could use to make someone drop dead without a trace. His mere presence was enough to make one's blood run cold.

"You seem to have heard of me!" Fletcher sneered.

When Fletcher revealed his identity, Stephan's face had turned as pale as a sheet. If he knew that Fletcher was involved, he would definitely not have accepted this task. Fletcher wasn't someone you would want to have as an enemy. Crossing him would only be inviting death.

"Who will fight in the last round?" Edwin asked loudly.

Natasha's men looked at each other in silence. If Mr. Chapman couldn't even land a blow, the rest of them would be easily annihilated. No one dared to volunteer as it meant signing one's own death warrant.

“Sis, what shall we do? Are we going to lose?” Ruth was fraught with anxiety. Who could be on par and fight against such overwhelming power?

“Punk! Are you game to fight a match against me?” Fletcher directed his gaze at Dustin, his gaze was brimming with hatred and anger.

“Why not?” Dustin gave a careless smile.

As he was about to step into the ring, Ruth pulled him back. “What’s wrong with you?”

“I’m going to accept his challenge,” Dustin answered.

“Accept his challenge? Do you know how to fight?” Ruth asked suspiciously.

“A little.” Dustin nodded.

“And you dare to accept his challenge when you’re bad at fighting? Are you attempting suicide?” Ruth

exclaimed in frustration, “Do you know who that is? Fletcher Lawson is a formidable opponent. Being foolhardy will only bring about your destruction!”

“Don’t worry, I can handle it.” Dustin smiled. Although Ruth’s words were sharp, she had good intentions.

“Bullshit!” Ruth glared at him. “What’s the use of you going up to fight when Mr. Chapman couldn’t even defend himself?”

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Chapter 75

Stung by Ruth’s indirect insult, Stephan chimed in sarcastically, “Don’t overestimate yourself, punk! If you can’t even defeat me, it is impossible for you to fight against Mr. Lawson!”

“Your defeat doesn’t mean I have absolutely no chance,” Dustin said calmly.

“Youngsters like you will be the death of me! Do you think so highly of your abilities?” Stephan was annoyed

by his impudence.

“Well, just wait and see.” Dustin didn’t explain further.

“Dustin, are you really sure?” Natasha spoke up suddenly.

“I think I’ll be fine.” Dustin nodded.

“Alright, give it a go but admit defeat if you have to. Your life is of utmost importance,” Natasha smiled as she gave her permission.

“Sis, are you joking? Are you really going to send Dustin to his death?” Ruth couldn’t believe her ears.

“Ms. Harmon! The entirety of your assets are on the line. If this punk loses, you will lose everything!” Stephan

was anxious as well.

“I believe in Dustin.” Natasha said with finality. She had full confidence in him.

“Enough with the small talk! I’m going to send you to hell!” Fletcher shouted impatiently. He was dying to get

his hands on Dustin and cut him up into tiny pieces.

Dustin ignored Fletcher’s taunts and walked up to him silently. Since Edwin had specifically asked for him to be here, it was obvious that he wanted revenge. If so, Dustin had no qualms about giving him what he wanted.

“This is awful! He is going to die!” Ruth stomped her foot in frustration.

“Ms. Harmon has been taken in by this punk’s overconfidence. What a pity!” Stephan shook his head, sighing. Clearly, he did not expect Dustin to return in one piece.

“Punk! Was it you who killed my apprentices?” Fletcher glared at Dustin with hostility.

“To be accurate, both of them committed suicide,” Dustin answered carelessly.

Noah killed himself because he refused to provide Dustin with information. On the other hand, Dustin hadn’t even touched a hair

on Liam's head. Liam had been the one who attacked him. However, he died from the overpowering recoil. It was only right to say that they killed themselves.

"You still dare to deny it at this last moment of your life? Today, I am going to exact revenge for the death of my apprentices!" Fletcher's face twisted with hatred.

"Sure, this depends on your abilities.", Dustin was unaffected by Fletcher's threats.

"Arrogant punk! I'm going to wipe you from the face of the earth!" Fletcher roared. He concentrated the force in his feet and sprinted toward Dustin with a burst of sudden energy. His movements were as fast as lightning.

causing large cracks to appear on the ground.

"That's crazy!" Stephan exclaimed in awe. Fletcher had not even revealed his full strength when he was

fighting against Stephan before!

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"Go to hell!" Fletcher summoned his energy and unleashed a powerful punch in Dustin's face. The vibrations from the attack formed a torrent of energy that swirled around them and sent debris flying around! Everyone took a few steps back to avoid getting injured in the aftermath.

arm

Just when everyone thought that the outcome was decided, Dustin made his move. He stretched out his arm slowly and gave Fletcher a firm, tight slap on the cheek. The impact on Fletcher's face created a loud cracking noise.

At that moment, Fletcher seemed like he was hit by a moving train! His body was flung several yards away like a dirty rag and crashed into a wall, creating a deep crater.

There was absolute silence as everyone was dumbfounded at the extraordinary turn of events.

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Chapter 76

The crowd gaped as Fletcher hung limply on the wall. They never imagined that the mighty Fletcher Lawson, who had just t rounced Stephan Chapman, had been defeated with an effortless slap.

What the f*ck was going on?

“H—

How could this be?” Stephan’s eyes were wide with disbelief that someone as powerful as Fletcher, the strongest fighter in Klesbrige, had been defeated with a single blow.

Was this kid a monster?

“No way! Dustin actually won?” Ruth couldn’t believe it either. At first, she’d been so certain that Dustin would lose. Instead, he had won the match in a breeze. With just one slap, he sent Fletcher flying. His strength was unheard of!

“Fletcher... lost?” Edwin was shaken and astonished. He was very familiar with Fletcher’s strength. Even in Swinton, there was hardly anyone who could be his opponent. Yet somehow, someone as impregnable as him hadn’t been able to withstand a single blow from Dustin.

Unbelievable! Had Fletcher underestimated his opponent, or was it a fluke?

Or maybe... it had been Dustin’s true strength.

“It seems that I underestimated you,” said Natasha, smirking. Her face wore surprise, delight, and also a hint of pride. She knew Dustin was powerful but never expected it to be to this extent. She hit the jackpot this time!

“I think I’ve won.” Dustin dusted off his hands and nonchalantly walked off the arena.

At this moment, everyone looked at Dustin as though he was a monster. Especially so for Stephan, who gazed mockingly but now looked at Dustin in awe. It

was obvious how strong Dustin was if he could subdue Fletcher so effortlessly.

“Dustin, didn’t you say that you barely know martial arts? How are you so powerful?” Ruth asked tentatively.

“It might just be that he’s too weak,” Dustin answered.

“Really? But he was the one who defeated Mr. Chapman!” Ruth exclaimed.

“Um...” Stephan’s face twitched as they touched a sore spot.

“Sir Hummer, we’ve already won three matches out of five. What else do you have to say?” demanded Natasha, her focus on other matters. 1

“I admit defeat. I have nothing to say.” Though Edwin seemed upset, he appeared resigned.

“Well then, until we meet again!” Natasha smiled. With that, she left with a group of people trailing after her.

“Sir Hummer, are we supposed to let them go like this?” his subordinate asked unhappily.

“As if. Do you think they can leave so easily after entering my territory?” Edwin sneered. “I still have a present waiting for them.”

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Chapter 76

Sometime later, the sun began setting behind the mountains. Natasha and her convoy were traveling through

a fork in the road when a large bus came barreling toward them.

The bus driver hit the brake and drifted to a horizontal stop, blocking the entire road.

A bunch of assassins covered in black immediately swarmed out from both sides of the woods, quickly

encircling the convoy of cars.

“It’s an ambush! Protect Ms. Harmon!” The Harmon family bodyguards reacted instantly and formed a ring around Natasha’s car to protect her.

“Kill them!”

The assassins were fearless as they cut through flesh and knocked down cars .

“Edwin Hummer is such a despicable man! How dare he ambush us!” Ruth was shaken but furious.

“The corporate world is a battlefield. The moment a fight breaks out, things are bound to get messy.” Natasha

responded calmly, this not being her first rodeo.

Ruth humphed angrily. “He better pray that he never falls into my hands, or he’ll regret it!”

The sound of the battle was getting more heated outside the car as numbers from both parties dwindled.

Fortunately, despite winning in numbers, the assassins were still no match to the Harmon family’s men in

terms of skills. Soon, they began losing the bloody battle, and many who hadn’t been killed chose to flee.

The battle finally ended when the last assassin fell to the ground with a thud.

More than half of Natasha’s men had been killed, but she and her sister were unharmed.

Dustin got out of the car and studied the bodies of the assassins. He realized that each of them had a snake-

shaped tattoo on their body.

Ruth humphed furiously. "Thank God our men are strong, or we'd be dead today thanks to Edwin Hummer!" Natasha then ordered her men, "Do a quick clean-up and let's leave."

They

were still close to Edwin's territory and she couldn't be sure if he still had anything else up his sleeve, so it was best they leave as soon as possible.

As her men cleared the place, two MPVs with foreign license plates headed toward them and blocked their path.

"No way. Don't tell me there's more?" asked Ruth, annoyed. She watched intently as the car door opened and a dozen men dressed for battle got out of the car.

Leading them was a beautiful lady in her 30s. Besides her good looks, she also had a voluptuous figure that flaunted her curves as she walked, an air of authority following her wherever she went.

"Tilda?" Ruth exclaimed excitedly and rushed forward to greet her.

Everyone was relieved to see that backup had arrived.

"What happened?" Tilda Snider frowned when she saw the bodies littering the ground.

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"They're Edwin Hummer's men! They tried to ambush us!" Ruth grumbled.

"He ambushed you? There's no way this is a coincidence. No outsider knows about the route you are taking. so how could he have planted these people here in advance?"

"You're right! How did he know we were going to take this route?" Ruth was puzzled.

"Tilda, do you mean to say there's a mole among our people?" Natasha was quick to react.

“That’s right!” Tilda’s expression was grave. “I have reason to believe someone has been selling us out!”

“Tilda, everyone here are people I trust. I doubt any of them would betray me,” countered Natasha, shaking her head.

“People you trust?” Tilda studied the crowd before her gaze landed on Dustin. “I see some unfamiliar faces “that don’t belong to the Harmon family!”

“Oh, he’s my friend,” explained Natasha.

“Friend? Humph! Friends are the least trustworthy people. I reckon that he’s the spy! Someone get rid of him at once!” Tilda commanded.

Two subordinates standing behind her immediately pulled out their knives, ready to fight.

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Chapter 77

Dustin narrowed his eyes at the sight of the swinging blades. They had chosen to accuse him of being a traitor without even trying to get the full picture.

“Tilda, there must be a misunderstanding. There’s no way Dustin is the spy!” Natasha objected.

“We’ll know whether it’s a misunderstanding after doing an investigation.” Tilda shouted icily. “Tie him up! Kill him if he tries to resist!”

“Kill me?” Dustin frowned. “You’re making such extreme decisions when the investigations haven’t even

begun. Aren’t you going a bit too far?”

Tilda humphed. “For the good of the Harmon family, I can do anything!”

“How can you be sure that I’m the spy?” Dustin retorted.

"I don't need to be sure. You are the spy if I say so!" Tilda responded domineeringly.

Seeing how unreasonable Tilda was being. Dustin's expression hardened. He had been trying to reason things out peacefully the entire time, yet Tilda accused him of being the mole without any proof.

She had gone too far!

"Tilda, there's no solid evidence yet. Don't you dare mess around!" Natasha uttered, voice rising

"I'm your head of security, which makes me responsible for your safety. This man is obviously treacherous

and evil!" shouted Tilda.

"Tilda, there must be some misunderstanding. Dustin saved my life. Without him, we wouldn't have been able

to leave the Hummer Villa," explained Ruth from the side.

"Hmph! He's just acting. He's fooled all of you!" Tilda retorted.

"But-"

Tilda cut Ruth off sharply before she could say another word. "No buts! When it comes to your safety, it's

better to kill wrongly than be sorry afterward!"

"I don't understand. We have nothing against each other, so why are you being so aggressive towards me?"

Dustin questioned.

"Stop acting! You may have fooled them, but you can't fool me! You better yield if you don't want to die!" Tilda

snapped.

"And if I refuse?" questioned Dustin..

“Then I’ll have no choice but to force you!” Tilda glanced at her subordinate.

“Kneel!” Two men immediately brought their blades to Dustin’s neck.

“Don’t make me fight you,” Dustin warned hostilely.

“So what? What are you going to do about it? Get onto your knees. Now!” One of the men roared before

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sweeping a foot toward Dustin’s knee.

Dustin didn’t even budge. Instead, the man was pushed back two steps from the force.

“You f*cker...” Embarrassed, the man was about to give another blow when Dustin suddenly shot out his hand and slammed it down on the man’s crown.

With a loud noise, the man’s head burst apart, and he died on the spot.

“What?” Everyone exclaimed, their expressions changing after seeing the scene unfold before them. No one expected Dustin to be such a ruthless man, killing without a word. He didn’t give a damn about the Harmon

family.

“Fuck you!” Furious, the other man slashed his blade at Dustin.

“He is the spy! Kill him!” Tilda immediately ordered, ruthless.

At her command, the rest of the men immediately charged toward Dustin with blades in their hands.

The look in Dustin’s eyes hardened, and he charged into the awaiting mob and began wiping them out. Within seconds, all of Tilda’s subordinates were laying on the ground, motionless. With clean and decisive moves, he

managed to kill all of them with a single blow!

“You bastard! How dare you kill the Harmon family’s best men? You’re done for!” Going ballistic, Tilda pulled out a sword from her waist and lunged at Dustin with incredible speed.

With a blank expression on his face, Dustin tilted his head sideways to avoid Tilda’s attack and in a flash,

gave the woman a punch in the abdomen.

Tilda screamed in pain as her body soared through the air and landed heavily on one of the MPVs.

Instead of standing down, Dustin darted forward, grabbed Tilda by the neck, and lifted her.

The woman gasped as breathing became difficult, and she felt her strength draining away. Like a sitting duck,

she was now completely at Dustin’s mercy.

“Dustin, please let her go! She’s family!” Ruth cried.

“Mr. Rhys, You can kill anyone but Tilda, or the consequences will be dire!” Stephan was terrified as well

“I’m Natasha’s elder as well as the backbone of the Harmon family. To kill me is to make yourself the number

one enemy of the Harmon family!” Tilda taunted with a vicious humph.

As soon as she said that, Dustin put more pressure, and a crisp crack sounded as Tilda’s head went slack; the

woman was now dead.

Tilda’s countenance was frozen in a myriad of emotions. Shock, dismay, even disbelief! She never expected

Dustin to be unreasonable enough to kill her without caring about the Harmon family.

“Wha-

“Everyone stood motionless, frozen in shock as they stared at the limp body o

n the ground before exchanging looks of dismay and disbelief with one another.

This was Tilda Snider they were talking about! Natasha Harmon's elder and the most important elder in the Harmon family! And she was gone just like that?

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Chapter 77

Dustin must be mad!

"Rhys! Are you crazy? You killed Tilda? Do you have any idea what you've done?" Ruth demanded with wide eyes, dismayed.

"She was going to kill me first, so of course, I had to kill her first. Was I supposed to just stand there and let her kill me?" Dustin snorted.

"You-" Ruth was so furious that words caught in her throat.

"Mr. Rhys, you're in trouble now!" Stephan shook his head sympathetically.

"Dustin Rhys! You killed our family's pillar! Wait 'til the Harmon family hears about this!" a bald guard yelled furiously. "This bastard must be out of his mind! Killing Tilda is like launching an attack on the entire Harmon family!" he thought.

"Ms. Harmon, what do you think?" Dustin turned his attention to Natasha.

He wanted to take this opportunity to understand what Natasha was thinking about.

"Mr. Rhys was defending himself. I see nothing wrong with that." Natasha quickly regained her composure.

Dustin was relieved to hear her reply and decided that Natasha was a friend worth making.

“Ms. Harmon, I was not killing carelessly. Take a look at her body,” said Dustin, and he yanked at Tilda’s shirt.

On her wrist there was a tattoo shaped like a snake.

“Huh? Isn’t this the same symbol as the ones on those assassins? Why would Tilda have one too?” Stephan was dumbfounded.

On the other hand, Ruth had a look of horror as she cried, “No way! Tilda was the spy?”

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Chapter 78

“That can’t be. Tilda was the mole?”

Everyone was shocked at Ruth’s words. However, the crowd’s expressions hardened when the assassins’ clothing were peeled off, revealing the same tattoo on their bodies.

This was obviously not a coincidence.

“You can’t prove anything with just a tattoo, can you?” objected the bald guard.

“Maybe it would have been less persuasive if there was only one tattoo, but what if everyone had the same tattoo?” Dustin walked up to Tilda’s deceased men and yanked off all their clothing.

“Soon, everyone realized that each of the men wore the same tattoo as well. This made things so much more

apparent. It was safe to say that they’d found the traitor!

“No wonder Tilda immediately started kicking up a fuss the moment she arrived. She was the traitor all along!” Stephan was disgruntled. As one of the Harmon family’s men himself, he hated nothing more than betrayal like this.

“But why? The Harmon family has always trusted her so why did Tilda betray us?” Ruth asked, her brow furrowed in confusion.

“Nowadays, not many can resist the temptation of money and power. That’s why betrayals happen easily. Without Mr. Rhys’ keen observation, we would’ve been in danger!” Stephan shivered, thinking about what could have happened. After all, having a mole was like a ticking bomb. No one could tell when they might get stabbed in the back.

“What should we do now, sis?” asked Ruth, at a loss.

“There’s definitely more of them hiding among us. I must let Father know immediately so he can start digging into it.” Natasha announced with a grave expression. Having a traitor was no small matter. It was much more serious than being attacked by outsiders.

After all, a small leak will sink a great ship. The effects might be devastating if this matter was neglected!

“You’re right! We must get to the bottom of this! Traitors are nothing but an abomination!” Ruth nodded her head repeatedly.

“Ms. Harmon, I don’t believe Tilda would be a careless person, so there should be a couple more of them hiding among our ranks right now.” Dustin began surveying the crowd with eyes like a hawk before his gaze landed on the bald guard.

“Why are you looking at me? Do you think I’m the mole?” The guard narrowed his eyes.

“We’ll know for sure when you take off your clothes,” Dustin replied nonchalantly.

“Why should I? Who are you to order me around?” The guard began to lose his cool.

“Do as Mr. Rhys says. Take off your clothes.” Natasha commanded.

“Ms. Harmon, I’ve worked for you for so many years. Don’t tell me you’re suspecting me,” the guard said

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incredulously..

“Strip!” Natasha commanded.

“Fine! Since none of you believe me, I’ll just have to prove my innocence!” snapped the petulant guard, looking as though he had been wronged.

However, when he moved to remove his clothes, his face suddenly twisted into a sneer. He flung out his hand and two black objects flew out of his sleeve and hurled toward Dustin and Natasha.

No one around them reacted in time since everything happened so quickly.

Swiftly, Dustin reached out and effortlessly grabbed the object coming toward him with his fingers. Upon closer inspection, the object turned out to be a poisonous black snake the width of his finger.

“Ms. Harmon!” someone began shouting.

Without anyone realizing it, the second snake had bitten Natasha on the thigh.

“Grab that traitor!” Pissed, Natasha crushed the snake with a harsh stomp.

“Get him!” The rest of her men rushed toward the guard and instantly subdued him.

“I’ve always treated you well, so why did you betray me?” Natasha trudged toward him with a cold glare, a murderous aura surrounding her.

“Ms. Harmon, you must know that a man would do anything to become rich. What they offered me was too tempting to resist. You can’t blame me for accepting!” the guard sneered.

“Who instructed you to do this? Who’s the mastermind behind this?” Natasha grilled.

“Ms. Harmon, I’ll die alone if I keep my mouth shut. If I answer, my whole family will be doomed!” the guard

retorted.

Natasha was about to say something when a wave of nausea hit her. Suddenly, her body went lax, and she fell

backward, but before she hit the ground, Dustin managed to grab her waist. He pulled up her shirt and

discovered that the area where the snake had bitten her was turning purplish black.

What a venomous bite the snake had!

“Give me the antidote!” Dustin slammed his foot onto the guard’s head, scowling.

“Only if you let me go. Or else, Ms. Harmon will be going down with me!” the guard responded with a sardonic

sneer.

“Are you threatening me?” asked Dustin with narrowed eyes.

“I know you’re an incredible doctor, Rhys! But this venom was created by an expert and cannot be cured without the antidote!”

“You bastard! I’ll kill you if you don’t give us the antidote!” Furious, Ruth charged forward and began beating the guard up.

“Go ahead! Once I’m dead, Ms. Harmon will be following me, too!”

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Ruth instantly halted her attack.

“Don’t say I never warned you. She’s been poisoned by a powerful venom. She’ll be dead within half an hour.” the guard stated menacingly.

“Give me the antidote and I promise to let you live,” vowed Dustin with a cold expression.

“Why should I believe you?” The guard frowned.

“You don’t have a choice. If she dies, I’ll make your life a living hell!” Dustin growled.

The guard hesitated and pondered for a moment before suddenly asking. “If I tell you the cure, will you let me go?”

“I’m a man of my word,” answered Dustin.

“Alright. I’ll trust you this time!” The guard gritted his teeth. “Actually, there isn’t an antidote for this venom. The only way for her to live is if someone sucked out the venom using their mouth. However, the person who does it will most likely lose their life. So, it depends on whether you have the guts to do it.” The guard sniggered. 1

“Thanks for the advice,” Dustin nodded. Immediately, he slammed his foot onto the guard’s chest, crushing the man’s ribs and caused his internal organs to burst out with a splat.

Blood burst from the guard’s mouth as his eyes widened in disbelief. “Y— You said you wouldn’t kill me.”

“Sorry. I changed my mind,” Dustin answered nonchalantly.

“Y— you have no honor...” Before the guard could say anything else, he suffocated and died.

“So what?” Dustin asked the dead body.

Everyone was dumbfounded by his cavalier attitude. Suddenly, they realized that this innocuous person might

be quite the barbarian after all.

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Chapter 79

After killing the traitor, Dustin carried the weakened Natasha to the car.

The area where the snake had bitten her had turned black and purple, and as the venom spread through her

body, her entire leg turned numb.

“How troublesome.” Dustin inspected the wound, his expression turning grave. He could have treated her

easily if this was any regular snake venom. However, this venom was particularly potent. Since Dustin lacked

his medicinal herbs and acupuncture needles, he had nothing at his disposal but his skills. It would be

difficult for him to treat the wound.

It seemed the only option left was to suck the venom out.

“Ruth Harmon, give me a hand!” Dustin hollered.

“I’m Ruth! Ruth Harmon!” Ruth corrected him, quickly getting into the car. She asked, “What do you need me to do?”

“Take off your sister’s pants,” he directed.

“Hey! What are you trying to do? You better not play around!” Ruth sounded like she was speaking to a pervert.

“Your sister has been poisoned with a potent venom. I have to suck it out,” Dustin explained.

“What?” Ruth was stunned for a moment before an odd expression took over her face. “B—but the wound is on

her thigh! You aren’t trying to take advantage of her, are you?”

“What are you even thinking about right now? Her life is on the line!” Dustin snapped. “Haven’t you heard that

gender doesn’t matter when treating patients?”

“Oh, right.” Ruth stood there stunned.

“Why are you still standing there? Take off her pants!” Dustin rushed.

“Oh, right.” Ruth quickly pulled off Natasha’s pants, exposing the snake bite.

Dustin cleared his mind and got to work.

Although it went against proper etiquette, saving Natasha’s life came first. Dustin began sucking out the venom. A moment later, he spat out a mouthful of dark blood and returned his mouth to the wound without

hesitation.

Slowly, Natasha regained consciousness.

“What are you doing?” Natasha had a confused expression on her face as she gazed at him passionately.

“Sucking out the snake venom,” Dustin said, keeping his tone calm.

“Are you done?” Natasha asked softly.

“Almost,” he answered truthfully.

Natasha bit her lip as she frowned, her every gesture alluring. Dustin gulped and lowered his head again.

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Dustin finally stopped after some time when the wound had lost its dark purplish bruising.

“Is it over?” Natasha asked with a resentful look.

Dustin cleared his throat and answered awkwardly, “Um, you should be in the clear for now, but there’s still some leftover venom in your body. It’ll be safer if you visit the hospital.” He moved to get up, wanting to leave the car. As he stood up, his vision darkened as he fell into Natasha’s arms, unconscious.

“Oustin! What’s wrong? Don’t scare me!” Natasha’s expression changed.

“Sis. the traitor said that anyone who sucks out the venom will die instead! Is Dustin going to die?” Ruth cried,

astonished.

“What are you talking about, you idiot? Hurry! Let’s get him to the hospital!” Natasha ordered.

“Okay!” Ruth did not hesitate and gave the order. The convoy pulled out of the parking spot immediately.

Unbeknownst to them, shortly after they had left, several cars descended the mountain and swarmed the area where their convoy had been.

A car door opened, and Edwin Hummer stepped out. Upon seeing the corpses of Tilda and her men, his jaw crooked.

“How could this be?” Edwin exclaimed, his eyes wide with disbelief.

It was worth noting that Tilda had been planted in the Harmon family to turn the tide during crucial moments like this. But instead, she had gotten caught up in the mess herself. It was a double whammy!

“This is bad!” Edwin frowned, displeased.

Besides the mission failing, he had also lost a valuable line on his enemies. If he did not give the higher-ups a satisfactory answer soon, he could kiss his position goodbye!

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 80 -

Chapter 80

That evening. Dustin finally woke up after hours of sleeping and found that he was in a hospital room. A

shocked voice rang out the moment his eyes opened.

“Huh? You aren’t dead, Rhys?”

Dustin's gaze followed the source of the voice and landed on Ruth sitting beside him with a dazed expression

as she looked at him.

"What? Disappointed to see me alive?" Dustin snapped.

"Ahem. Um, I'm just surprised." Ruth grinned bashfully.

"Where's your sister?" Dustin asked, changing the topic.

"Oh, she went to get your medicine." Ruth examined him and said, "I heard that the venom is something called the Deadly Slither. It's extremely poisonous and can kill a person quickly! It's a miracle that you're still alive!"

"You're right. The venom is potent. It even managed to knock me out for a few hours. No wonder it's one of the

world's top ten most poisonous venoms," Dustin marveled.

"Why does that sound weird?" Ruth was puzzled.

Before Ruth could come out of her daze, two people entered the hospital room.

One was Natasha, while the other was a curvaceous lady dressed exquisitely. The two women resembled

each other. Not only were they both very well-dressed, but they both had a powerful air to them.

"Dustin, you're finally awake! How are you feeling?" Natasha's face lit up as she rushed toward him.

"I'm feeling better now that I've gotten some sleep." Dustin smiled.

"Here, take this. It's a secret medicine I got you. Take it with some water, and you'll be fine in no time."

Natasha pushed a small white bottle into his hand and poured him a glass of warm water.

"Secret medicine? What is it?" Dustin asked curiously.

“Don’t underestimate it. It’s the result of three years of dedicated research and experiments by Dr. Rowan

Cross. It can treat all kinds of venom,” Natasha urged.

“Rowan Cross?” Dustin was surprised.

“You know him?” asked Natasha, with a raised eyebrow.

“I’ve met him once.” Dustin did not deny it. He had met Rowan a few years before when Rowan’s enemies

were hunting him down and Dustin had saved the poor man. The antidote had been Dustin’s gift to him.

“It’s always been difficult getting ahold of Dr. Cross’ whereabouts and even harder to see him in person. You should take it before anything happens,” Natasha urged.

“There’s no need. My body’s already free of venom. You can take it back.” Dustin declined politely.

“It was difficult getting my hands on this baby. Why would I ever return it? Just keep it even if you’re fine now.

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CS CamScanner

“It’ll come in handy in emergencies,” Natasha insisted, stuffing the bottle into Dustin’s pocket.

Dustin accepted it. After all, she did it out of kindness.

“Oh, right. There’s something else I should mention. I think I saw Dahlia Nicholson at the hospital entrance,” Natasha said abruptly.

“Huh? What’s she doing here?” Dustin was puzzled.

“I heard her grandfather is critically ill and receiving emergency treatment.”

“Critically ill?” Dustin immediately became worried. “Are you sure?”

“Positive. Or Dahlia wouldn’t be downstairs right now,” Natasha replied.

“I’ll take a look.” Dustin got up and left the room.

Henry Nicholson had treated Dustin like his own, so there was no way he would do nothing while the old man

was ill

“Natasha, you wasted one of the Harmon family’s favors just for him?” The woman beside her finally spoke. She was Natasha’s mother, Jessica Ballard.

“I’ll pay Dr. Cross back myself. It has nothing to do with you,” Natasha replied indifferently.

“Do you like that kid?” Jessica frowned.

“So what if I do?” Natasha raised her chin defiantly.

“You should remember that the two of you will never end up together. He’s just a nobody while you’re the daughter of a wealthy family and the heiress to the Harmon family. Your statuses are worlds apart!” Jessica

reminded.

“I don’t care,” Natasha responded coolly.

“But I do!” Jessica’s tone was firm. “You can make up your mind about anything except your marriage! Don’t forget that you’re already engaged to Tyler!”

“Sorry. I’m not interested in Tyler Grant all” Natasha quipped.

“You have no say in this matter! You are the eldest daughter of the Harmon family. With wealth and power comes responsibility!” Jessica chided.

“Responsibility?” Natasha scoffed. “Do you mean using marriage to climb the ranks?”

“This is for your own good and the entire family’s! Tyler is an impressive person. He’s already a Major General despite his young age. He has a bright future ahead of him. He’s the perfect choice for marriage!” Jessica

lectured.

“If you like him so much, you marry him then! I have no intention of doing so,” Natasha retorted bluntly.

“Why are you so stubborn? If you don’t marry into his family, you will never be come the head of the Harmon family! Why don’t you understand this?”

“It doesn’t matter since I was never interested in becoming the head of the family, to begin with,” Natasha

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replied matter-of-factly.

“Is your entire future worth sacrificing just for that kid?” Jessica spat.

“Of course! I don’t think Tyler is better than him anyway!”

“You have that much faith in him?” Jessica’s expression hardened.

“That’s right!” Natasha announced proudly.

Jessica paused when she heard her daughter’s answer. Resolute, she inhaled before declaring with a cold voice. “Fine! Since you’re not going to give up, I’ll give you one chance. If that punk can pass three tests, I’ll never bring up the topic of your marriage to the Reeves family again!”

“What kind of tests?” asked Natasha with a raised brow.

“First, he must defeat Edwin Hummer to prove his strength!” Jessica demanded.

“Edwin has Boulderthorn to back him up! It’s a bit unreasonable to ask Dustin to defeat him?” Natasha frowned.

Jessica snorted. “If he can’t even defeat Edwin Hummer, why should I accept him into our family? What right does he have to fight Tyler? Well, I’m giving you both a chance. If he fails, you better return to Millsburg and get married!”

Jessica turned and left the room.

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Chapter 81

Meanwhile, in a nearby hospital room, Dahlia's grandfather lay unconscious, his face ashen.

Florence and several members of the Nicholson family gathered together as they discussed countermeasures hushedly.

"How peculiar. Old Mr. Nicholson has always been fine. Why did he suddenly fall all ill?"

"Exactly! He's always looked so strong and healthy. Who would've guessed that at this would happen if he fell ill."

Everyone sighed with pity for the old man.

"How's Granddad?" Dahlia bolted into the room on her heels. She had been in a meeting when she received the

news of her grandfather falling ill and rushed over as fast as possible.

"Dahlia, the doctors think that he might not make it," Florence mumbled, shaking her head.

"What?" Dahlia's face paled. "How could that be? Wasn't he fine yesterday?"

"I think it's weird too! But maybe this is his fate." Florence sighed.

"Where's the doctor? Doctor!" Dahlia called, distraught.

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"It's futile. All sorts of doctors have checked him. They say his symptoms are too weird. There's no way for

them to find the root cause of his condition, and the only thing left to do is wait for his death.”

“I— impossible!” shrieked Dahlia as she began to panic. She couldn’t imagine her grandfather, who loved her

so dearly, passing away.

“Dahlia, I know a fabulous doctor. He might be able to do something.” Matt, who had been standing nearby, finally spoke.

“A fabulous doctor? Who? Can they really save my grandfather?” Dahlia perked up instantly.

“His name is Dr. Ross Leister. He just arrived from Millsburg, and his medical skills are top-notch. He’s able to

cure all sorts of illnesses! He also happens to be Dr. Rowan Cross’ apprentice,” Matt replied.

“Dr. Cross’ apprentice?” Everyone’s expressions began to brighten when they heard that.

Dr. Cross was well-known. Even people in South City were familiar with his accomplishments. He was on par with Dr. Watkinds and Dr. Peay, who were both already at the top of the pyramid when it came to medicine! His skills were so good they had already reached perfection. As his apprentice, Dr. Leister’s skills must be outstanding!

“Can you really get him to examine Granddad?” Dahlia asked, her tone hopeful. This doctor was her

grandfather’s only shot now.

“He’s my friend. He’ll come if I ask him to” Matt nodded.

“That’s wonderful news! If Old Mr. Nicholson gets well, the Nicholson family will be in your debt!”

Everyone agreed.

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Chapter 81

"This is nothing. Let me ask for him." Matt smiled and left the room.

As soon as Matt had left, Dustin entered the ward but was stopped in his tracks by Florence.

"What are you doing here, Rhys?" she snapped.

"I heard that Granddad's sick. I'm here to visit him." Dustin's face was sombre.

"Visit him? Who do you think you are? You're no longer my son-in-law. We don't welcome you here!" hissed Florence as she glared at him.

"What's wrong. Mom?" Dahlia rushed over when she heard the commotion.

"This bastard is pretending to care and wants to visit your grandfather. I bet he knows your grandpa's time is almost up, so he's here to try to get a piece of the family fortune!" Florence mocked.

Everyone in the Nicholson family knew that Henry Nicholson had always treated Dustin like his own grandson. It would be no surprise if the old man left Dustin something to take over!

"You've got it all wrong. I'm just worried about Granddad's condition," Dustin explained.

Still suspicious, Florence scoffed at him, "Who knows what your true intentions are?"

"Mom, just let him in. He's just showing his love for Granddad." Dahlia quipped.

"Dahlia, this kid-

"I'll take responsibility if something happens."

Florence was about to say something else but swallowed her words and stepped aside reluctantly.

“Thank you.” Dustin gave a nod of thanks and walked straight into the ward.

The sickly old man was ashen. He looked as though he had just experienced a stroke.

Dustin reached out to touch Henry’s hand. He was shocked to discover that, although his limbs were cold, an extreme heat emanated from under the pale skin. 1

“The Flaming Frost Poison?” Dustin pondered as he narrowed his eyes, silently coming up with treatment

methods.

The Flaming Frost Poison caused the strangest symptoms. On the outside, the patient would be freezing cold while their insides were actually burning hot. Treating either symptom would be ineffective and could even

backfire

if the medication used was too strong. This explained why the doctors could not do anything to treat

Henry.

“Dahlia, bring me some hot water,” Dustin ordered.

“Whatever for?” Dahlia was puzzled.

“Granddad’s weak, and he can’t hold on for much longer. I need to treat him now,” he explained grimly.

“You?” Dahlia frowned. “What nonsense are you spouting now? Do you even know anything about medicine?”

“A little.”

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“And you dare to show off? What in the world are you thinking?” Dahlia asked, visibly annoyed.

This was a person's life they were talking about, not child's play!

"Do you even know what you're saying. Rhys? What makes you think you can cure him? Will you take responsibility if something goes wrong?" Florence chastised.

"Exactly! Old Mr. Nicholson's already suffering enough, so why are you causing more trouble? Just stay out of the way!"

Everyone was unhappy as Dustin was nothing more than a self-absorbed punk in their eyes. How could he, a mediocre white-collar worker who had been fired and had achieved nothing outstanding in the past three years, know anything about curing diseases and saving lives?

"If I'm saying it aloud, it means I have faith in myself that I can cure him. Let me try," Dustin responded in a determined voice.

"Dustin, will you stop messing around?" Dahlia snapped. "You're neither a doctor nor are you medically certified. How can you say that you can save him? I let you in to visit grandpa, not to boast!"

"Can you just trust me this once?" Dustin pleaded, upset. If he wasn't sure he could do it, there was no way he would meddle with Henry's life.

"This has nothing to do with trust. The fact is, you cannot do it. I won't let you play around with Granddad's life!" Dahlia refused bluntly.

After three years of marriage, they both knew each other like the backs of their hands. There was no way Dahlia could know whether Dustin could do it.

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Chapter 82

"Who said I can't do it? Fine. Then, who else can save Granddad if not me?" Dustin growled. He realized that it

was impossible trying to reason with women using logic!

“The only one who can save Grandpa now is the incredible Dr. Ross Leister!” Dahlia answered with a grim expression.

“That’s right! Matt’s already gone to call the doctor. If Dr. Leister agrees to help us, we can save Old Mr. Nicholson. There’ll be no need for a quack like you.”

“Dr. Ross Leister? Who’s that?” Dustin asked.

“He’s Dr. Cross’ apprentice who specializes in treating rare diseases. He’s way better than you are!” Florence stated proudly.

As soon as the words left her mouth, two people entered the room. The first was Matt. He was followed by a man in his 30s in a white coat and a pair of glasses, with a haughty and pretentious expression on his face.

“Matt! Did you manage to get Dr. Leister?” Florence rushed over.

“Of course!” With a gentle smile, Matt introduced the man, “This is Dr. Leister.”

“So you’re Dr. Leister! What an honor!”

“You’re a talented doctor indeed, Dr. Leister. You managed to become Dr. Cross’ apprentice at such a young age. How amazing!”

“That’s right! With Dr. Leister’s help, Old Mr. Nicholson will recover!”

Everyone began singing praises at Ross, especially since he was Dr. Rowan Cross’ apprentice. They had to make a good impression in case they needed his help in the future.

“Honestly, I wouldn’t have bothered coming here if it weren’t for Mr. Laney. After all, everyone who asks me to treat them is either a high-ranking official, an aristocrat, or a wealthy person,” said the man in glasses. He

raised his head, peering down at everyone else in the room.

“Of course! It’s an honor to have you here!” Florence and the others agreed, their faces showing signs of flattery.

The man in glasses soaked up the attention, pleased. “That’s enough. I’m a busy man, so let’s not dilly-dally and get this over with. Where’s the patient?”

“Over here!” Florence led the way to Henry’s bed.

“Hmm...” The doctor nodded and proceeded to take Henry’s pulse. “So it’s Havaska? Well, this might be slightly troublesome, but no big matter. A bowl of hot medicine will do the trick.”

“Really? That’s great!”

Everyone was overjoyed. As expected, they found the right man for the treatment.

“Doctor, aren’t you mistaking something?” Dustin asked.

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Chapter 82

“What?” The man in glasses frowned and gave Dustin a look over. “And who are you? How dare you question me!”

“If it was Havaska, a bowl of hot medicine would take care of it. However, what Granddad has isn’t Havaska

but the Flaming Frost Poison!” Dustin asserted.

“What do you mean Flaming Frost Poison? I’ve never even heard of it!” The man glared at Dustin and asked, “Who are you to criticize me?”

“Dr. Leister, this is a misunderstanding. This piece of trash knows nothing. Please pay him no mind.” Florence smiled at the man before turning to Dustin. “You better stop running your mouth, Rhys! You’ll be done for if you offend Dr. Leister!” she snapped.

“I’m just stating facts. If he hasn’t even heard of the poison, I have reason to question his skills,” Dustin replied, shaking his head.

“Boy, do you have any idea who I am? How dare you talk to me like that!” the man demanded furiously.

“I heard that you’re Rowan Cross’ apprentice. However, you’ve still got a long way to go. If anyone’s doing the treatment, it should be him,” Dustin said calmly.

Henry’s condition would only worsen if the man in glasses provided treatment meant for Havaska. Naturally. Dustin doubted this man’s skills.

“Hey! Are you done yet? Who do you think you are? What makes you think you’re worthy of asking for my mentor’s help, you f*cker?” the doctor roared.

“Dustin, Dr. Cross is away on a retreat and isn’t so easily invited. Even Dr. Leister doesn’t dare disturb him,”

Matt warned.

“Mr. Laney! I came because you asked me personally. Yet instead of thanking me, someone decides to

question me. If this is the thanks I get. I’m done treating this patient!” The man turned around to leave.

causing an instant frenzy in the room.

“No! Please, Dr. Leister! This idiot is speaking nonsense. Please don’t get mad!” Florence pleaded, pulling him back while she turned to curse at Dustin, “Rhys, shut the f*ck up! How dare you criticize Dr. Leister’s way of treating patients. Get out!”

“That’s right! Who the f*ck are you to point fingers at Dr. Leister?”

“Dustin Rhys! How could you be so cruel? Are you going to drive Dr. Leister a way so that Old Mr. Nicholson dies?”

Infuriated, everyone began swearing at Dustin. A man like Dustin, who only cared about showing off and had

no regard for the lives of others, was disgusting!

“Enough of this nonsense. This punk is pissing me off. Throw him out, or I’m not treating the patient any longer!” threatened the man.

“Yes, of course!” Florence apologized profusely. She turned to Dustin and spat, “Didn’t you hear what Dr. Leister said, Rhys? Get out of here!”

“Yeah! Get out! Don’t worsen Old Mr. Nicholson’s condition any further!” chimed the others.

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Chapter 82

“I’m just acting in Grandpa’s best interest. This person isn’t trustworthy.” Dustin tried to defend himself.

“Shut up!” Dahlia roared. “Dustin, it’s fine if you don’t have the skills, but please don’t make things worse. Get

out right now!”

“You don’t believe me either?” Dustin frowned.

“You’re a pathological liar, so why should I?” Pointing at the door, Dahlia commanded, “Get out this instant.

Don’t bother Dr. Leister!”

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Chapter 83

Dustin was speechless as he faced the cold look

on Dahlia's face and a rightfully angry crowd. Eventually, after a few minutes of silence, he exited the ward. He knew no one would believe him no matter what he said.

"Humph! He should've left hours ago! What a nuisance!"

"I know! He has no awareness at all!"

The crowd insulted and criticized Dustin as he left the room.

Florence smiled and said, "Dr. Leister, that ignorant bastard is gone. Please calm down."

"Ross, can you let it go this time, for my sake? Curing the patient is an urgent matter. I'll repay you greatly for "this!" Matt chimed in.

"How could I ignore your offer, Mr. Laney? But this will only happen once. I won't let it go next time!" warned the doctor with glasses.

"Of course! Most definitely!"

The crowd nodded and looked at Matt gratefully.

"How maddening! That useless bastard Dustin only knows how to make things worse. Mr. Laney is the only

person who could save the situation," thought Florence.

"Alright, go fetch me some medicine." The glasses-clad man did not waste another second. He wrote down the prescription and tossed it to Florence. Without a moment's hesitation, she rushed to follow his

instructions. Luckily, she was in a hospital, and the medicine was easy to find.

In less than an hour, the medicine was ready.

“Did someone doubt my abilities earlier? I’ll show them how it’s done!” The doctor called for the crowd’s attention before he poured the medicine into Henry’s mouth. As the treatment flowed to his stomach, his face quickly regained color. He felt his frozen limbs warm up. Even his previously weak breathing had improved.

Seeing this, the crowd praised the doctor.

“It’s working! It’s working! His face is getting better!”

“Dr. Leister, you’re incredible! You were able to cure him with just some medicine. How miraculous!”

“Now that’s Dr. Cross’ best apprentice! Those medical skills of yours are superb! You’re probably better than your master at this point!”

The crowd’s expressions brightened as they started cheering.

“Although I’m not on the same level as my master, I’ve probably gained 70% to 80% of his skills. No illness will be able to defeat me!” Ross boasted.

“That’s right! Dr. Leister’s medical skills are beyond praise!” Florence complimented, smiling at him.

“Too bad that guy isn’t here. Otherwise, I’d show him what a great doctor looks like!” The doctor smiled proudly.

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However, as he finished his sentence, there was a sudden turn of events.

Henry’s face flushed red. Beads of sweat started to form on his forehead. His skin started burning as if he had a high fever.

“Ugh!” Henry sat up and coughed up blood. He fell backward as he fainted again.

The crowd was shocked at the scene. “What happened? Wasn’t he cured? Why did he cough up blood suddenly?” thought the onlookers.

“Doctor, what... what happened?” Dahlia asked as her face turned pale with shock.

“Oh heavens! He coughed up so much blood. Could he be dead?” The color drained from Florence’s face.

“That shouldn’t happen. I followed all the procedures. How could this be?” questioned the doctor, also “puzzled. “There was no way the cure could be wrong. Why would the patient cough up blood?” he wondered.

“Please think of another way, doctor! My grandfather is dying!” Dahlia was in a panic.

Henry had lost all signs of life. Blood continued to flow from his nose. It was clear that his situation was worse than before.

“Don’t panic. Let me take a look.”

Today’s Bonus Offer

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 84 -

Chapter 84

Dr. Ross Leister examined the patient again. However, Henry’s heart was beating rapidly as his body convulsed and trembled out of his control.

At that moment, the doctor was at a loss for words.

“This does not look good.” Ross was **puzzled**. He sighed and said, “The patient was previously diagnosed with other illnesses. Now that he’s got the **Havaska virus**, it’s impossible to cure him. It looks like he won’t make it. You should start preparing for the end.”

“What?!”

Everyone froze at

bie statement.

“After treating him for so long, this is the outcome? Prepare for the aftermath?!”

“Dr. Leister! Please, you have to save my grandfather. I’m willing to spend every penny I have!” Dahlia begged.

“...” As the doctor opened his mouth to speak, the door was kicked open with a loud bang.

Dustin entered the room with a gloomy look on his face. Without a word, he swiftly pulled out a silver syringe

and stabbed Henry’s chest. The fluids in the needle rushed into the man’s veins with a whoosh.

“Hey! What are you doing?!” Ross exclaimed angrily.

“**Since** you can’t cure him, let me do it!” Dustin replied coldly.

“Who who says I can’t cure him?” With a bold look, Ross demanded, “I already thought of a **way** to cure him. I could save him immediately. But now that you’ve messed around with the patient, his condition has

worsened!”

“So you’re saying that this is my fault?” Dustin sneered.

“Of course it’s your fault! If anything goes wrong, you should take all responsibility for it!” Ross barked. He had been worried earlier but never thought this man would appear and become his scapegoat. “Thank the heavens!” he thought. He might finally be able to save his reputation.

“You’re not good at anything besides shifting blame. I don’t understand why Cross took you on as his

apprentice!” Dustin mocked.

“You bastard! What **are** you blabbering on about? I’ll kick your ass!” The doctor was losing his patience.

“Go ahead and try it if you don’t mind dying.” Dustin glared at Ross. The stern look on his face managed to

instill fear in the doctor’s heart.

“Dustin! What on **earth** are you doing? You don’t have any medical skills, so why do you insist on messing around?!” Dahlia insisted, her blood starting to boil. Everything had happened so quickly when Dustin entered the room that she had only just returned to her senses.

“Are you guys blind? This person made Granddad cough up blood! You still believe him?” Dustin demanded

coldly.

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Chapter 84

“Dr. Leister said he knows how to treat him!” Dahlia replied.

“So you just believe everything he says? Would you jump off a building if he told you to?!” Dustin insisted.

“You...” Dahlia started, but she was **at a** loss for words.

“Enough talking! Get out of my way!” Dustin said. His relentless manner made everyone freeze.

Ignoring the crowd’s shocked expression, Dustin grabbed a glass of warm water and slowly mixed in some antidote powder. He fed it to Henry slowly.

Although he could cure Henry with his equipment, it would take too much time and effort compared to giving him this antidote. After all, it had taken Dr. Cross three years of hard work.

“Are you sure this will work?” Dahlia questioned with a frown, clearly still filled with doubt.

“Are you

“Effective or not, you will see in a minute,” Dustin replied hastily.

“Humph! How ridiculous! You think you can cure Havaska poisoning with some random powder? Do you think you’re some wizard?!” the doctor chastised. How could some random guy cure an illness that he couldn’t?

“Rhys! I’m warning you! If anything happens to grandpa, I won’t let you off easily!” Dahlia snapped.

As she finished her sentence, Henry’s eyes shot open.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 85 -

Chapter 85

“He... He’s awake?!”

Everyone was stunned. No one would’ve thought that a glass of warm water was all Henry Nicholson needed to wake up. How miraculous!

“No way! Did Dustin really cure the **old man’s** illness?!”

“That’s odd. Even Dr. Leister couldn’t cure him. How did he do it?”

The crowd exchanged looks of surprise as they watched Henry’s breathing stabilize. For a moment, they looked at Dustin in a different light. They never imagined that Dustin, who had come from an unknown

background, would have been the one to cure Henry.

“Granddad, how do you feel?” Dahlia asked hurriedly.

“That’s weird. One moment everything felt cold and then hot. It seems that I’m okay now.”

Henry ran his hands over his body, looking surprised. Earlier, he thought that his life had come to an end. He never imagined that feeling would disappear so quickly!

“Dad, you... you’re really okay?” Florence could not believe it.

“Of course. I feel refreshed and full of energy!” Henry smiled.

Hearing this, everyone sighed in relief. Despite their surprise, they were still doubtful.

“Since when has Dustin known how to cure illnesses?” they wondered.

“No! No way! The patient was clearly dying. How **did** you save him?!” Ross asked in surprise as he returned to his senses. No one but him knew that Henry’s heartbeat had been palpitating as he had never seen before. It

was impossible to treat, even for him.

How had this fellow cured the patient? How could this man be more capable than he was? He was the great

Dr. Rowan Cross’ apprentice!

“You couldn’t cure him, but that doesn’t mean I can’t. You should learn more from your mentor so that you don’t keep making a fool of yourself!” Dustin remarked coldly.

“You bastard! What was that powder that you used? What did you **do**?!” the doctor roared.

A glass of warm water couldn’t have cured him, so it must have been the powder Dustin mixed in.

“How can you call yourself Dr. Cross’ apprentice if you don’t even recognise Hexanavir?” Dustin mocked.

“What? That was Hexanavir?!” The doctor’s eyes widened. He couldn’t believe it.

“Dr. Ross, what’s Hexanavir? Is it rare?” Florence asked.

“Rare? It was Dr. Cross’ life’s work. He spent years producing such an antidote! With just a small sample, you

can cure any rare disease. It is invaluable. You can’t get your hands on it no matter how rich you are!” the doctor replied.

Chapter 35

“Huh? It’s that incredible?” Florence said, surprised.

“No wonder... no wonder you could cure him instantly. You used Hexanavir!” As he spoke, Ross remembered something. He asked, “Wait a second. How did you get your hands on Hexanavir? It was my mentor’s masterpiece! Tell me. Did you steal it?!”

“Steal?” Dustin scoffed. “I’m not that despicable.”

“You still dare to argue! Hexanavir is my mentor’s invaluable life’s work. He wouldn’t even give any to his

apprentices. How would you **have** gotten your hands on it if you didn’t steal it?!” snapped the doctor.

The entire room went into an uproar. Everyone’s gaze landed on Dustin. Some were suspicious, while others looked down on him with disdain.

“Rhys! I never thought you could be so despicable. You’d steal someone’s precious medicine just to gain

attention!” **Florence** yelled.

“That’s right! For a second, I actually thought you were skilled. After all that, you were only trying to outperform Dr. Leister!”

“You really are a piece of trash. With no skills, you have to resort to stealing!”

Everyone shook their head in disdain and continued mocking him.

“Dustin! Why? Why did you steal it?” asked Dahlia with a frown. She had thought that Dustin was capable, but

now it appears he stole this Dr. Cross’ antidote! 2

“I’ll say it again. I did not steal anything. It was given to me as a gift.” Dustin explained.

“Gifted to you? Who are you? Why would my mentor give his Hexanavir to you? Why don’t you look in the

mirror and reflect on your behavior!” Ross spat with disdain.

“Believe me or don’t believe me. It’s your choice.” Dustin did not want to explain any further.

“What? Are you guilty? I’m warning you. Return the Hexanavir to me this instant. Otherwise, you’ll have to deal

with the consequences!” the doctor warned.

“Dustin! Can you have some dignity? Even if you want to be in the spotlight, you can’t do such a despicable

thing. Return it this instant!” Dahlia commanded.

“I don’t want to argue with any of you. Get Dr. Cross to take it back from me!” Dustin’s face darkened. He felt

anger rising through his body.

“Hey! You still think you’re all that after stealing? Give it back to me now!” Ross yelled as he reached out to

snatch the bottle from Dustin.

With a resounding smack, Dustin stopped the doctor with a slap across his face. The doctor almost fell from

the impact.

The crowd was stunned at the scene. They never thought that Dustin was such a wild man. After stealing

someone’s medicine, he slapped someone in the face. How arrogant!

“You... you dare hit me?” the doctor sputtered in disbelief as he held his face.

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“So what if I hit you? Do I need to make an appointment to do it?” Dustin smirked.

“Bastard! You’ve got the balls doing something like that! It looks like you don’t know what the Crosses are capable of! If you don’t want to die, you’d better kneel and beg for my forgiveness!” the doctor said fiercely.

“Apologize? Are you worthy of an apology?” Dustin sneered.

“Alright! You asked for this!” The doctor glared at him as he pulled out his phone, dialling a number.

“Dustin, if I were you, I would apologize to Dr. Leister immediately.”

Matt sneered, “You should know that the Crosses helped cure many big shots. If you dare hit Dr. Leister, you’re making yourself the enemy of Dr. Cross and the entire Cross family!”

“So what?” Dustin muttered unfazed.

“So what?!” Matt looked as if he was talking to an idiot. “Stubborn till the end. When Dr. Cross gets here, you’re done for!”

“Who’s done for?” a powerful voice bellowed through the **door**.

An older man in a doctor’s outfit appeared. His presence filled the space as he strode into the room. It was Dr. Rowan Cross!

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Chapter 86

“Sir! You’re here?!”

Upon seeing Dr. Rowan Cross, Ross was stunned. He rushed to greet the older man with respect. At that moment, he looked very humble.

“Sir?”

“Could it be... this person is the great Dr. Cross?!”

After learning the identity of the older man, the Nicholson family members were excited. They surrounded him, trying to gain his favor.

“Oh my! What an honour to meet the great Dr. Cross in person!”

“I’ve heard a lot about you, Dr. Cross. I’m so lucky to meet you!”

Everyone chimed in, praising the doctor.

One should know that this doctor was well-known across the seven seas. Not only **was** he good at curing others, but he also had a vast network of connections and was incredibly influential. Just a word from him could change one’s life.

“Dr. Cross, aren’t you resting? Why are you here?” the doctor asked curiously.

“A friend called me saying you were messing around with a patient. Did such a thing happen?” replied Rowanross. He was not happy.

Earlier that day, he had received a call from his biggest savior. He was so happy that he rushed to the hospital as fast as possible.

“A friend?”

Everyone exchanged glances before looking at Matt. In their eyes, only some noble could be considered a friend of Dr. Cross. In this room, Matt was the only person noble enough.

“Dr. Cross, I’ve heard a lot about you!” At that moment, Matt suddenly stepped forward and introduced himself. “I’m Matt Laney, from Millsburg. I believe you’ve met my father.”

“Oh...” Rowan replied softly. He scanned the room as if looking for something. He did not even spare Matt a glance.

Shot down by the doctor’s cold response, Matt fell silent awkwardly.

“Sir! Have you lost something recently?” Ross asked.

“Lost something?” Rowan raised his eyebrow. “What do you mean?”

“Earlier, someone here stole your antidote. Luckily I noticed in time and stopped him so that you won’t suffer any losses!” the doctor said excitedly. Hexanavir was his mentor’s most prized treasure. Now that he had helped return it, he would surely be rewarded.

“Stole my antidote? Who?” Rowan was puzzled.

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CS CamScanner

“It’s him!” exclaimed the doctor as he pointed to someone behind Rowan. “He’s the one who stole your Hexanavir! He even babbled on about how you gave it to him as a gift. Thankfully I’m smart enough to see through his lies. Otherwise, he would’ve run off with the antidote!”

“Dr. Cross, Dustin’s actions have nothing to do with us. If you want to get him, just get him! It is none of our business.”

“That’s right! Hurry and get rid of him!”

The Nicholson family was afraid to get in trouble, so they all started pointing fingers at the culprit. However, no one expected the dark cloud that fell across Rowan’s face.

“Dustin, what are you still waiting for? Hurry and return the antidote and apologize! If you’re lucky, Dr. Cross might forgive you!”

Dahlia started sending him signals. Although she hated his actions at times, she still felt bad for him when he found himself in bad situations.

“Bastard! You’re done for! You dare steal my mentor’s treasure. No one can save you today!” Ross sneered with a smug look as if he had won.

One should know that although his mentor was kind and forgiving, he was serious when it came to medicine. There was no way he would let Dustin off easily for stealing his antidote!

“Dr. Cross, you’ve done a great job teaching your apprentice. Since this antidote is so precious, I’ll return it to you.” Dustin pulled out the bottle of Hexanavir and threw it over to Rowan.

Rowan almost collapsed in shock.

However, Ross still had not grasped the situation and continued mocking Dustin.

“Bastard! Now you’re scared? Why didn’t you do this earlier? Even if you return it now, it’s too late! I want you to kneel and apologize. **Maybe** then I’ll let you go!” the doctor with glasses exploded, his head held high.

“Shut up!” At that moment, Rowan’s patience had run out, and he slapped Ross across the face with all his

might.

Ross fell to the ground with a loud smack. He felt like he had dislocated his head. Blood started to flow **from**

his nose.

“S—
sir. Why did you hit **me**? He’s the one you should hit!” Ross asked, stunned as he held his face, not

understanding what he did wrong. His master had slapped the wrong person.

“You dare disrespect Mr. Rhys? You’re the one who should be slapped!” Rowan bellowed in a fit of rage. He lifted Ross to his feet and slapped him several more times.

Ross’ face turned a darker purple with every slap. Even his teeth started falling out.

Everyone was confused at this scene.

“What is going on? Shouldn’t Dr. Cross be lashing out at Dustin? Why is he hitting his apprentice?” everyone

wondered.

“You imbecile! Brainless scum! Who **gave** you the **guts** to disrespect Mr. Rhys? I’ll beat you till you come to

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Chapter 86

your senses!” Rowan roared as he kept hitting with no mercy.

If Dustin hadn’t stepped up to stop Rowan, Ross wouldn’t have survived.

After all these years, Rowan had been searching for Dustin so that he could repay him for his kindness. And now that they had finally met in person, it should have been a momentous occasion. However, his failure of an apprentice disrespected and openly mocked his greatest savior. He was clearly **looking** for a beating!

After letting out his anger, Rowan presented the bottle of Hexanavir to Dustin and said, “Mr. Rhys, I’m terribly sorry. It’s my fault for not training him well enough that you had to go through all that. Please forgive me!”

He fell to his knees in front of Dustin.

Seeing Rowan kneeling before the man, everyone was stunned into silence. Their eyes widened with shock as if they had seen a ghost.

“The great Dr. Cross is kneeling and apologizing to a nobody? What in the world is happening?!” everyone wondered.

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Chapter 87

Rowan's actions **had** left everyone in the room stunned.

"N—no way! Dustin knows Dr. Cross? How is that possible?!"

"Oh my goodness, Dustin is incredible! He can even make Dr. Cross apologize?"

Everyone

in the room exchanged glances of shock as they watched Dustin's calm, unfazed

expression and the respectful look on Dr. Cross' face. They had difficulty picturing someone mediocre knowing someone like Dr. **Cross**.

"Are—are my eyes playing tricks on me?" Florence was in disbelief.

*The great Dr. Rowan Cross, the best doctor in the world, was apologizing to Dustin? How unbelievable!

"Could it be that Dustin's Hexanavir really was a gift from Dr. Cross?" Dahlia was also shocked to her core. To be honest, ever since the divorce, she noticed that Dustin had become more discreet.

"What a nuisance!" Matt muttered to himself, looking gloomy. Dr Cross' appearance had disrupted his plan.

"S—sir... You really know this guy?" Ross asked in disbelief, cradling his face.

"Know him? Mr. Rhys is my savior. You've got some nerve. How dare you disrespect Mr. Rhys? Hurry up and kneel! Apologize to him!" Rowan roared, slapping Ross twice more.

"I—

I'm sorry. I was the one who didn't recognize master's savior. Please forgive me!" Ross gave in and hurriedly knelt before Dustin. He was no longer as arrogant as he **was** before.

"Mr. Rhys, this failure of an apprentice made a grave mistake not recognizing someone incredible like you. Please don't pay any mind to what he says. Of course, if you **need** to vent your dissatisfaction, you may punish him as you see fit. I'll take responsibility even if you hit him to death!"

Rowan's words shocked the injured doctor as he trembled in fear. From the look on his master's face, he realised he had messed with the wrong person.

If Rowan did not go easy on him, he's dead!

"I don't **need** to punish him. I just hope you will be stricter with apprentices so they don't ruin your reputation,

Dr. Cross," Dustin said in a gentle voice.

"Of course, of course," Rowan agreed, nodding. "I will make this one reflect on his behavior. If he doesn't change his ways, I'll kick him out!"

"That's your decision to make," Dustin added.

"Failure! Hurry up and thank Mr. Rhys for being so forgiving!" Rowan roared.

"Thank you, Mr. Rhys, for your kindness!" the doctor kneeled before him.

"That's enough. Get up." Dustin waved him away.

"Mr. Rhys, it's **been** so long since we **last** saw each other after we parted ways. Do you have some time to

have a meal with me?" Rowan asked.

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Upon hearing the invitation, everyone in the room was fired up. What an honor it was to share a meal with Dr. Cross. Even the great elites from Millsburg had to make reservations to meet him.

"Dammit! This Dustin guy really hit the jackpot!"

"I know, right? To get on Dr. Cross' good side, he must have a great life ahead of him."

They were jealous and filled with envy. The words that left of Dustin's lips in reply to the esteemed doctor shocked everyone even further.

"I don't have the time right now. I'll let you know when I'm free," Dustin replied.

“H—

he rejected Dr. Cross? The guy who got kicked out of the Nicholson family rejected an invitation from the great Dr. Cross? Did I hear that correctly?” everyone questioned.

“Oh, okay. I can always make time for Mr. Rhys.”

No one expected Rowan’s response. Not only was he not angry, but he was even happier than before. Dustin had not explicitly rejected him. That meant Rowan still stood a chance.

“Mr. Rhys, you’re busy. I won’t waste more of your time. Goodbye,” Rowan said tactfully, shaking Dustin’s hand. He dragged his apprentice by his ear and left the room.

After they had left, the ward was in an uproar again. They looked at Dustin in surprise.

“Dustin, how do you know Dr. Cross?” It was Dahlia who spoke up first.

“I helped him once, so he owes me a favor.” Dustin said bluntly.

“Just like that?” Dahlia was shocked.

“What else is there?” Dustin replied.

“So that’s how it is. I thought.” Dahlia trailed off.

Everyone else let out a sigh of relief at his reply. They thought that Dustin had curried Rowan’s favor using other mysterious means. It turned out that he was just lucky.

“Humph! So what if you helped him once? You just got lucky! What’s so special about that!”

“He only owes you a favor. He already gifted you a bottle of Hexanavir. And now he’s saved your reputation.

The next time you ask him for help, he won’t comply!”

“We should stand on our own two feet. You shouldn’t keep seeking out others for help. After all, it won’t last

forever.”

Now that they knew the truth, the crowd started making sarcastic comments. After all, they still couldn't accept that a nobody like Dustin could be better than them.

“Dustin, thank you for what you did earlier,” Dahlia mumbled awkwardly.

She never thought that Dustin would know Dr. Cross. He even cured her grandfather's illness. Reflecting on

her actions, she couldn't help but feel guilty.

“You don't have to say anything. Saving Granddad was my decision. It had nothing to do with you,” Dustin

Dahlia's gratitude vanished with Dustin's cold words. She frowned **and** thought to herself, “I already expressed my gratitude. What else does he want? Should I apologize to him in front of everyone? Does he **need** to be so particular?”

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Chapter 88

“Rhys! What is your problem? So you got lucky and saved the old man! You don't have to be so rude about it!” Florence cried, clearly upset. How dare he treat her daughter that way? Did he think he was all that?

“At least I saved him. What about all of you? He almost lost his life because of you!” Dustin retorted coldly.

“You... What is this attitude?!” Florence sputtered. She had almost reached her limit.

“Enough! Stop yelling at each other! What a disgrace!” Henry then demanded, “Florence, all of you, go outside. I need to speak to Dustin for a while.”

“Humph!” Although Florence was not happy about it, there was no other option but to leave.

“As soon as they left the room, the group started muttering.

“Say, do you think Old Mr. Nicholson wanted to talk to Dustin about his will or something?”

“I’m not sure. That guy is great at getting on Old Mr. Nicholson’s good side. No matter what, we need to be

careful!”

“Ha! I don’t understand. James is his biological grandson, and yet Old Mr. Nicholson favors that guy more. I

really don’t know what’s wrong with him!”

They murmured to each other, expressing their dissatisfaction.

“Oh, that’s right. Where’s James? Why isn’t he here while Old Mr. Nicholson is sick?”

Dahlia scanned the room and realised her brother was not present.

“He went drinking with his friends. We couldn’t get through to his phone. He probably left it on silent mode,”

Florence said, shaking her head.

“Humph! He only knows how to go to bars and drink. No sense of responsibility at **all!**” Dahlia’s expression

darkened. With behavior like that, it was no surprise that her grandfather **favored** this other guy more than his

biological grandson.

“Ms. Nicholson! Something’s wrong!” Lyra cried as she arrived in her work attire. She looked like she was in a

rush.

“What happened?” Dahlia asked, confused.

“I was notified that your brother started a commotion and got into a conflict with some people. They started a

fight.” Everyone was shocked to hear Lyra’s words.

“What? Who’s got the guts to bully my son?!” Florence demanded as her blood started to boil upon hearing the news. She had evidently missed the fact that her son was the one who had started the fight. 1

“I don’t know the details, but I heard that the other party had many more people. If we don’t get there in time to

stop it, James might be in trouble,” Lyra added.

“Then what are we waiting for? Let’s go help him!” Florence rolled up her sleeves, looking like she was ready to fight.

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Chapter 88

“He only knows how to get into trouble. How annoying! Lyra, hurry and get more people to the bar!” Dahlia instructed. She led the group to the pub. After all, James was her brother. If he got into trouble, she had to

clean up his mess.

Meanwhile, in the other hospital ward, Dustin received a phone call from Duane.

“Hey, Dustin. I found the incredibly **rare** Panax root that you asked for. Are you free now? We should meet up and have a chat.” 1

“Oh? Where are you?”

“I’m at Enchanted Tavern. I’ll wait for you to get here!”

“Alright. I’ll **be** there.” Dustin hung up the call, said his goodbyes to Henry, and headed to his destination. 500- year–

old Panax root was invaluable. Now that Duane had gotten his hands on it, Dustin could not miss the

opportunity.

Half an hour later, as Dustin arrived at Enchanted Tavern, he noticed Dahlia waiting next to her car.

“Why are they here?” Dustin wondered. He was confused, but he did not reach out to them.

He followed a group of people inside.

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Chapter 89

There were a lot of people gathered in the bar. Some of them were spectators. Others were involved in the fight.

The group that the onlookers were most interested in was a small group led by James. A few of them had bruises covering their faces and blood rushing from their faces. They were forced to kneel on the ground, looking hopeless.

“James, how did you end up like this?” Dahlia could not help but frown when she noticed James’ injuries.

“Sis! You’re finally here!” James staggered as he stood up. It was almost as if he had met an angel.

“Oh! My poor son! Who did this to you? Tell me. I’ll give them what they deserve!” Florence shrieked at James, heartbroken. Even when her son made a mistake, she could not bring herself to lift a finger against him. There was no way she would allow others beat him up like this.

“Mom! That’s the bastard who hit me!” James pointed behind him, looking vicious.

Florence followed his gesture, and her eyes fell on a beautiful woman in a revealing dress sitting calmly at a table. Behind her stood a few burly, strong-looking men.

“Bitch! You are all dead meat! My sister is the president of the Quine Group! You will pay for hitting me!” James roared. They would pay twice the price of what he had gone through!

“The Quine Group? Is it powerful?” The woman in the red dress swirled her glass of wine, unfazed by his words.

“Humph! You don’t even know the Quine Group! I knew you guys looked uncultured! Let me warn you. Hurry up and apologize to my son and settle for his medical fees. Otherwise, you’ll all pay the price!” Florence warned.

“Old b*tch! You dare disrespect our boss? I’ll rip your tongue apart!” shouted one of the **men** standing behind

the woman in red. He pulled out a switchblade.

“What? Are you threatening me? You think you scare me?” Florence scoffed as she stumbled two steps

backward with fear. She was stubborn.

“What happened?” Dahlia had always been the rational one. She started asking about the situation.

“What happened? You should ask your brother about that.” The woman in the red dress stood up slowly and

pointed at James. “He started making a commotion at my place. He even started hitting my men. I was just

teaching him a lesson. I’m not crossing the line, right?”

“I’ll pay for the damage done. But why did you have to be so cruel to him?” Dahlia asked, frowning.

“Cruel? Haha! I already went easy on him. Otherwise, he would’ve lost more limbs!” The woman sneered. Enough! I won’t waste another second with you. If you want to settle this peacefully, hand over 700 thousand dollars! If you don’t, none of you will leave this room!”

“700 thousand dollars? Why not go rob someone?!” James roared.

“That’s right! I haven’t dealt with you for hurting my son! How dare you ask us for money? Where **did** you get

your guts?!” Florence glared at her.

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Chapter 89

“You guys better come to your senses while I’m still being nice. After my man gets here, it won’t be as simple as handing over money,” the woman replied calmly.

“So what if you have a man? Tell him to come here this instant if you dare! I want to see how capable he really is!” Florence pushed, unafraid.

“You’re messing with the wrong guy! Do you know who our lady’s man is? He’s Sir Draco! Our leader of South

City, the Cobra!” boasted one of the men.

“The Cobra?!”

The Nicholson family immediately turned pale.

Swinton had four main territories: the North, South, East, and West Cities. East City was ruled by the King of the Underworld, Trevor Spanner. Meanwhile, South City was ruled by the infamous Cobra!

Compared to the King of the Underworld, the Cobra was said to be even more relentless and vile. According to legend, the Cobra loved raising alligators. Anyone who dared cross him was fed to his gators. People from West City could not afford to offend the Cobra.

They really were in trouble this time!

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Chapter 90

“No wonder nobody dares to cause trouble here. Who knew Rosaline was Lord Draco’s woman?”

“It’s not that nobody dares to cause trouble; it’s just that anybody who caused trouble is dead! A tycoon with a net worth of billions flirted with Rosaline, and Lord Draco ordered that his limbs be chopped off. After the incident, the tycoon didn’t dare lift a finger and even apologized personally.”

“Fuck! That’s brutal!”

“No shit. Lord Draco is South City’s biggest bully. No one dares disrespect him!”

After finding out who the woman, Rosaline, was, the bar erupted in a furor. Some were shocked, some were in awe, and some sat back to watch the show.

“We’re in trouble this time!” James gulped as cold sweat dripped down his forehead. If he had known that **Sir** Draco ruled this place, he would not have dared to cause trouble, even if someone had put a gun to his head.

“How did I end up offending the devil himself?”

Florence shrugged, her face filled with fear. She wasn’t as fiery as before. She could bully some small fry, but when it came to a brutal thug like the Cobra, she knew her place.

“Why so quiet? Weren’t you great at speaking your mind earlier? Why don’t you show us again what you’ve got?” *smirked the muscular man.

Was there anyone in South City who didn’t know of Sir Draco’s reputation? Almost nobody dared to offend Sir Draco!

“Don’t panic. I’m here. They wouldn’t dare touch you,” Matt spoke up next to them.

Florence and James were surprised at his words. They had nearly forgotten they had someone backing them

up!

Matt was from the Laney family in Millsburg. What did he have to fear in this territory? No matter how mighty the Cobra was, he wouldn't dare go against the Laney family, would he?!

With that realization, Florence and James straightened.

"Matt, the Cobra rules over this place. Is this really okay?" James asked tentatively.

"Don't worry. He's just some snake in the grass. He's nothing to me." Matt gave a small smile. He finally had a chance to flaunt his influence, so he had to show them all he had.

"I'm glad then." James grinned. He thought he was done for, but now he had another shot.

"Hey! What are you mumbling about? Are you going to pay up or not?!" Rosaline barked, getting impatient.

"What are you going to do if we don't pay up? You think we're scared of you?" Florence mocked, placing her hands on her hips. With Matt backing her up, she feared nothing.

"**You** won't pay?" Rosaline laughed coldly. "If you **don't** pay up, we'll do it Sir Draco's way. Anyone who causes trouble here will have their limbs chopped off!"

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She raised her hands and made a sign. The muscular men behind her unsheathed their machetes and strode

forward.

"Wait!"

Matt hissed and stepped up from behind. His **good** looks and **classy** aura always made women swoon.

“And who are you? How dare you meddle in my business?” Rosaline **looked** him up and down.

“I’m Matt Laney from the Laney family in Millsburg.”

“The Laney family from Millsburg?”

The room was in an uproar.

“Even an elite from Millsburg is here. We’re in for a good show!”

“No wonder those two are so **bold**. They **have** Mr. Laney backing them up!”

“Mr. Laney is so handsome. I wonder if he has **a** girlfriend.”

The crowd pointed fingers and gossiped. Their awe made Florence and James feel proud. The Laney family’s reputation was valuable indeed. With the Laney family backing them up, who would dare go against them?

“So you’re Mr. Laney. Nice to meet you,” Rosaline rasped, forcing a smile.

Of course, she had heard of the Laney family. There was a time when they were the aristocrats who led everything in Millsburg. Although they weren’t as glorious anymore, she did not dare provoke them.

“Since you know who I am, that makes settling things easier. Tell me, how do you intend to deal with this?” Matt **asked** as he clasped his hands behind his back arrogantly.

“Since you’ve spoken up, Mr. Laney, I naturally have to show you some respect. I’ll treat what happened here today as a misunderstanding. It’s over.” Rosaline conceded. They had a business to run, and she did not want to cause problems for Sir Draco.

“It’s over?” Matt snorted, “You hit a friend of mine, and you think two words can smooth things **over**? There are

no free lunches here.”

“What else do you want?” Rosaline asked, frowning.

“Pay up and apologize, of course!”

“Apologize?” A dark shadow fell across Rosaline’s face. If she was dealing with this herself, she was okay apologizing. However, she was representing Sir Draco. If she apologized to them, wasn’t that an insult to Sir

Draco?

“Are you **deaf**? Hurry up and apologize, or I’ll trash this place!” With her hands on her hips, Florence’s arrogant

air returned.

“You don’t only have to apologize. You have to pay up. Damn it, you’ll have to pay me five million for beating me up like this! James shouted. With Matt backing him up, he **had** all the confidence in the world. He was milking Matt’s influence as much as he could.

“Mr. Laney, this is Sir Draco’s territory. Save me some face. Let’s not make enemies.” Rosaline pleaded, feeling

awkward.

Chapter 90

“You want me to save you some face? Who do you think you are?” Matt smirked. “Even if the Cobra were here, I’d demand an apology. Much less one from you!”

“Who thinks he has what it takes to make me **apologize**?” A thundering voice rang out across the bar.

A bald man wearing sunglasses, with a **cigar** between his lips, walked in menacingly. His fierce demeanor and intimidating aura frightened the crowd as they stepped aside. A path opened for him.

“Sir Draco, what brings you here?” Rosaline’s eyes lit up as she rushed to greet him.

“**Just** showing one of the gentlemen around.”

The Cobra put an arm around her waist and asked, “What’s going on? I thought I heard someone demanding

an apology from me.”

“It’s like this...” Rosaline began, recounting everything that had happened with no details **spared**.

“Mr. Laney from Millsburg, is it? So you’re the one who wants me to apologize?” The Cobra stepped forward and looked Matt up and down. His expression wasn’t friendly at all.

“That’s right. Your people beat my friend up. Apologizing is the natural thing to do,” Matt quipped. With his hands behind his back, he was as arrogant as ever.

“Apologize? Fuck you!” The Cobra was furious. He slapped Matt across the face.

Matt stumbled and nearly fell over.

“Fuck!” he yelled.

The onlookers in the bar were stunned.

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Chapter 91

The Cobra was more brutal than they had expected.

He even dared to slap an elite from Millsburg over a minor misunderstanding. There was no doubt that he was the mighty Cobra!

“How dare you hit me?” Matt cried as he cradled his burning cheek in disbelief. How dare some random thug hit him? He was from the Laney family!

“So what if I hit you? Don’t you deserve it for causing trouble on my turf?” The Cobra shot him a **cold** smile.

“Do you know that I’m from the Laney family?!” Matt thundered. He had always been a prideful person, so getting slapped in public was the greatest humiliation of his life!

“The Laney family? So what?” snorted the Cobra. “Don’t you know how to show respect on someone else’s turf? I don’t care if you’re the king. When you’re on my turf, you bow to me. You understand?!”

The Laney family had been glorious once. Even his boss had to show them his respect in the **past**. Now, they were no different from anyone else. Even if they were famous, the Laney family **had** fallen a few social classes long ago.

“Cobra! Are **you** provoking the Laney family so openly?” Matt challenged, with an unkind look on his face. He had thought that using his family name **would** scare the Cobra. To his surprise, his trick was ineffective.

“Stop f*cking making a fool of yourself here! What’s so grand about being a **Laney**? I’ll be **honest** with you. I’ve got someone backing me up, and it’s Sir Anderson!” shouted the Cobra, his **eyes** bulging.

“Sir Anderson?!” Matt **looked** taken aback. All his rage dissipated instantly.

Sir Anderson wasn’t just an aristocrat but one of the Five Big **Guns** of the Anderson family. He was the **true** face of the business world and a powerful figure in this city!

Even when the Laney family was still in their prime, they had had to bow to Sir **Anderson!**

He never expected a puny thug like the Cobra **would** have the Anderson family backing him.

“Hey, Laney! If you don’t want to get a damn beating, then get lost. Or else, I’m going to beat all of you up together!” growled the Cobra fiercely.

“You—

* Matt trailed off. He was outraged but helpless. He couldn’t afford to offend Sir **Anderson.**

Seeing Matt fall silent, Florence **and** James’ **confidence** wavered. They had **tought** that they could do anything they wanted with the Laney family backing them up. They **never** expected the Cobra to be so brutal. He hadn’t just embarrassed the Laney family. He had even slapped Matt. If the Laney family was n’t enough to scare the Cobra, did this mean certain death for them?!

“Who were the ones causing trouble just now? Come **out** and face me!” the Cobra bellowed furiously.

James was terrified, **and** he nearly peed his pants.

“Sir Draco! Let’s talk things out. My brother is **young** and ignorant. I’ll apologize **on** his behalf. I’ll pay double for all the losses incurred!” Dahlia spoke up hastily as she watched the situation **go** awry.

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Chapter 91

The Cobra was ruthless, and he meant what he said. In this situation, they had no choice but to sacrifice.

“Pay double? Do I look like I need the money? If I don’t make an example of you today, won’t any Tom, Dick, or Harry dare cause trouble on my turf next time? Men, chop their hands off!” he **ordered.**

The muscular men behind him strode forward, brandishing their machetes.

“Dahlia! Help me! Help me!” James exclaimed, scared out of his wits, as he hid behind Dahlia.

Just as he was about to get caught, a beer bottle flew through the air and smashed into the heads of one of

the burly men.

With a smash, the man collapsed dead on the spot. The crowd was stunned.

“Who’s there? Who did that?!”

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Chapter 92

The Cobra’s expression darkened, and he swept his piercing gaze around the room. He was greeted by the

sight of beer bottle after beer bottle.

“Smash, smash, smash, smash!”

The bottles shot out like cannonballs and sent each man sprawling. Each bottle met its target with deadly

accuracy!

“Who’s being such a f*cking coward? Come out and face me if you have the balls!” roared the Cobra furiously.

No ordinary man could send a dozen men flying with just beer bottles.

“Sir Draco, forgiveness is a virtue. **Why** won’t you show mercy?” a voice **replied**.

Dustin strolled out from amongst the crowd, attracting stares across the room.

“Who is that? How dare he attack Sir Draco’s men? Does he have a death wish?”

“He’s quite handsome, but he’s not very smart to offend Sir Draco.”

“If it were me, I would have run **away** after hurling the bottles. Why would he f*cking show his face? Isn’t he courting death?!”

The crowd gossiped. Some were surprised, some showed admiration, and some enjoyed the drama.

“Why are you here?” Dahlia questioned, confused. She never assumed Dustin would show up.

“What is this idiot doing here?” Florence and James exchanged looks of confusion.

“Who are you, boy? How dare you attack my men?” the Cobra asked, with a menacing expression that

suggested he wanted to bite Dustin’s head off.

“Who I am is not important. For the sake of your safety, Let’s just let this incident slide,” Dustin replied curtly.

“Let it slide? Who the f*ck do you think **you** are? I’ll just let it slide just because you said so? — Just as he was about to curse, a beer bottle smashed into his head. 1

Blood and beer trickled down his face.

Everyone was appalled! The onlookers’ eyes bulged with looks of utter disbelief. No **one** had expected Dustin to be so bold. He had hit the Cobra just because of a disagreement. He showed no hesitation. He must be out

of his mind!

After a brief moment of silence, the whole bar exploded in an uproar.

“He’s done for! This young man is dead! No one can save him!”

“I must say I admire his courage. He even dares to hit Sir Draco! He has the courage of a lion!”

“He really is a hero. He has my respect!”

“He sure looks cool, but who can survive Sir Draco’s fury?”

1/7

CS CamScanner

Chapter 92

The crowd tattled on, but their gazes as they looked toward Dustin was like looking at a prisoner facing the guillotine.

The crowd muttered on, but their expressions turned to worry **as** they watched Dustin, a prisoner facing the guillotine.

—

“Dustin! Are you crazy?! You you actually...” Dahlia sputtered. She **was** so shocked that she couldn’t

complete her sentences.

That was Sir Draco! He lorded over South City and the head honcho of the underground! He did not give a **damn** about the Laney family! How how dare he?!

“This idiot must have hit his head. How could Dustin be brave enough to hit Sir Draco?” James was dumbfounded.

Although Dustin was standing up for them, what he did was just too crazy! James would never dream of doing something like this.

“You like fooling around so much, don’t you? I’m going to watch your last moments!”

As the shock passed, Matt couldn’t help but smile coldly. He had felt uneasy since Dustin had shown off at the hospital. He had even dared to fool around on the Cobra’s turf this time.

He really didn’t value his life!

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Chapter 93

“How... how dare you hit me?!”

The Cobra rubbed his head in disbelief. His hand was covered in blood. In the years since he had taken over South City, no one had dared disrespect him, much less hit him with a bottle.

“This fool must have a death wish!” he thought.

“Sir Draco, take my advice. Let it go,” said Dustin calmly.

“Fuck you! I’m telling you, you’re dead meat! I’m going to rip you apart!” the Cobra cursed and swore as he returned to his senses.

As the threat left his mouth, a knife was held to his neck. The sharp blade pierced his skin, and drops of blood trickled from the fresh wound. An inch deeper, **and** the knife would have pierced his artery.

Silence. The entire bar fell into complete silence. The Cobra’s roars stopped, along with the crowd’s prattling.

Everyone was utterly shocked as they turned to look at Dustin, who was wielding the knife. Hitting Sir Draco with a bottle could still be excused as an accident. Unfortunately, holding a knife to his neck was undeniably an act of provocation and humiliation.

Dustin’s boldness surprised everyone again as he shouted, “You idiot! Do you know what you’re doing right now?”

The Cobra went stiff and said fiercely.

“If you dare touch a hair on my head, I swear you won’t walk out this door alive!”

“Sir Draco, don’t frighten me. I’m a scaredy cat. You can’t blame me if my hand trembles and I slit your neck,” Dustin teased. The blade went deeper. More blood started flowing from the exposed flesh. The Cobra’s facial muscles twitched in fear.

“Stop!” Rosaline shouted. “I don’t care who you are, but let Sir Draco go. Otherwise, your friends will die with you!”

“Dustin! Don’t be a fool! Put down the knife!” Dahlia yelled.

She was petrified that Dustin would kill the Cobra in a moment of impulse. If that happened, then they were all done for!

“Dustin! Are you crazy? Let Lord Draco go! Don’t drag us down with you!” Florence shouted, panicked. Of course, she could not care less if Dustin died, but she didn’t want to be next. If Sir Draco died, they would have to face the consequences.

“Young man, I admire your courage. So I’m giving you a chance right now. Put down the knife, and I’ll spare your life!” said the Cobra icily.

“Sir Draco, it seems like you’re still missing the picture. Right now, I hold the power,” Dustin stated.

“What? You have the guts to kill me? Do you know what will happen if you touch a hair on my head?”

“I’m not afraid of you. If it comes down to it, I’ll just give my life for taking yours.” Dustin responded, an

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unbothered look on his face.

“You“..” The Cobra was a little speechless. He was fearless, but he feared those who did not fear death. To his dismay, Dustin did not fear death.

“Dustin, know your limits. It’s not too late if you stop now!” Dahlia persuaded. No matter what, she didn’t want to see Dustin get killed over this.

“Young man, I advise you to stop while it’s not too late. Sir Draco already promised to let you off the hook.

You’d better not push things too far.”

*That's right! Sir Draco is finally showing mercy. Don't play with fire, or you'll get burned."

People shot him advice from the crowd. They recognised Dustin's courage, but if he was stupid, he was just a typical **fool**.

"Young man! You have no idea who you've offended. I work for Sir Anderson. You're spitting right in Sir Anderson's face if you dare hurt me! If that happens, not just you, but your friends and family will all die!"

threatened the Cobra.

"Sir Anderson? Is he oh-so-great?" Dustin retorted.

"He's not just great, but the whole of Swinton respects him. I'm sure you've heard of Mr. Anderson of Swinton Group. He is Sir Anderson's kin! You should know how to weigh the odds!" said the Cobra.

"After hearing this, I want to meet Sir Anderson," Dustin exclaimed, **looking** interested.

"Hmph! I'm afraid you'll pee your pants if you meet Sir Anderson!" The Cobra smiled wryly.

A hubbub arose near the door.

A fit, middle-aged man wearing a suit walked in with bodyguards flanking him. He looked charismatic and intimidating without even trying.

"Sir Anderson?!"

The moment the man appeared, the Cobra's spirits lifted dramatically.

The bar went into an uproar, and the crowd retreated in respect. They knew that the man they were looking at was someone even the Cobra bowed to!

"Shit! Sir Anderson's here!" Dahlia's expression changed.

She could only imagine how the magnitude of the influence and background of someone in Mr. Anderson's

league.

"How foolish! If he had let Sir Draco go earlier. Too bad now that Sir Anderson is here. He dug his own grave!"

"I don't care if he dies, but he's dragging us down with him. What bad luck!"

Florence and the others were shocked and terrified at the same time. They couldn't even afford to offend the Cobra, much less the man behind him, who was none other than Sir Anderson.

"You fool! Sir Anderson is here. Aren't you going to surrender?" shouted the Cobra.

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CS CamScanner

Sir Anderson did not only have a strong family background, but he was also extremely powerful. He **had** seen Sir Anderson get away with killing dozens of men with his own eyes.

"Sir Anderson! You came at the perfect time. Someone caused trouble here and is even holding Sir Draco hostage!" Rosaline complained without hesitation.

"Oh? Who is brave enough to touch my men?" The middle-aged man cocked an eyebrow and looked toward the commotion.

However, when he saw Dustin, his expression went blank. He **was** clearly taken aback.

In fact, Dustin **was** also stunned.

He never imagined that Sir Anderson was also Duane Welch!

"Boy, you'd better put the knife down before Sir Anderson gets **mad**. Or else you're never going to walk out of

here alive!” threatened the Cobra nastily.

Dustin obeyed at once and dropped the knife with a clang.

“Hmph! You’re scared now, aren’t you? But it’s too late!”

The Cobra distanced himself and stood with a threatening stance, ready to enact his revenge.

Before he could give the order, Duane asked, “Dustin, what happened? Did my men offend you?”

“It’s just a small misunderstanding. I never thought they were your men, Uncle Duane.* Dustin smiled.

“Uncle Duane?” The Cobra was dumbfounded as he watched the two men talk amicably.

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Chapter 94

When Sir Anderson showed up, everyone thought Dustin was done for.

To their surprise, nothing dramatic happened when Sir Anderson saw Dustin. Instead, they chatted amicably like they were old friends.

The Cobra was appalled by this turn of events. Even Florence **and** the others were stunned.

“This can’t be for real, right? Could he really know Sir Anderson?”

“My goodness, who is that man? How could he and Sir Anderson be talking like **buddies?**”

The crowd gossiped in hushed voices, obviously taken aback.

*S—Sir Anderson—
you know him?” The Cobra gulped. He was slightly panicked **and at** a loss.

‘Dustin is Natasha’s friend. What gave you the nerve to offend him?’ Duane’s expression grew colder by the second.

“Huh? Ms. Harmon’s friend?” The Cobra got the fright of his life.

Natasha Harmon wasn’t just one of Swinton’s big guns, she had the support of Millburg’s aristocrats. She was as prominent a figure as Sir Anderson himself. What’s more, Natasha was a very protective person. Anyone who dared to offend her friends was doomed to face ruthless revenge!

“Sir Anderson, I—1- the Cobra stuttered.

“Pack it up and stop being a baby. Apologize to Dustin, **and whatever** happened will be forgotten.” Duane waved his hand.

“Okay, okay...” The Cobra nodded repeatedly and bowed to Dustin. “Mr. Rhys, I’m terribly sorry. I didn’t know who you were and offended you. I hope you’ll let this slide and forgive me this once.”

“You’re exaggerating. As long as you won’t take revenge,” said Dustin plainly.

“I wouldn’t dare...” The Cobra kept wiping away his sweat as he said, “From now on, you and your friends will be treated as our VIPs. Everything will be on the house!”

His humble response shocked the crowd. Who would have thought that the Cobra, who was so villainous **just** a moment before, would apologize so humbly the next?

“Dustin, let’s have a chat. This way.” Duane wasn’t joking. He stretched out a hand in invitation and led the

way to the office on the second floor.

The moment they left, the entire bar erupted!

*I... I wasn’t just seeing things, was I? Did that fool just talk to Sir Anderson like the best of pals?” James asked in disbelief.

After all, Sir Anderson was the Cobra’s backer. He could turn Swinton upside down with a lift of his finger.

"If I'm guessing right, Ms. Harmon must have something to do with their acquaintance." Dahlia suggested, her senses returning quickly.

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She had heard Sir Anderson mention Natasha Harmon. It was undeniable that he had spared Dustin for the sake of the Harmon family's reputation.

"You must be right! It has to be! How else can a small fry like him know such a big shot?" James **nodded**

fervently.

I

"Hmph! I thought he had some real potential, but it turns out that he was just putting on a show by relying on someone else's influence!" Florence huffed, displeased.

"A man should have a spine. How can a man always count on a woman to back him up?" Dahlia **shook** her head in disappointment. Climbing the ranks by kissing up to someone looked grand on the surface, but it was

just a quick taste of heaven. It would never last long.

"What a lucky bastard!" Matt's expression **was** stormy, and his gaze stung with disdain. It was **already** shameful enough getting slapped by the Cobra earlier, but now, Dustin's glory had made him look even more pathetic in comparison. He could not accept that a good-for-nothing like Dustin had outshone him! Meanwhile, in the office on the second floor, Dustin sat across from Duane while the Cobra **served** them.

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Chapter 95

"Duane, let's not beat around the bush, shall we?" Dustin sipped his tea and said, "You said you've found the Panax root. Where is it?"

"Since you're so anxious, I won't tease you any longer." Duane smiled and clapped his hands.

A bodyguard entered the room carrying a wooden box. Placing the box on the table between him and Dustin, Duane opened it slowly. A dark yellow root no bigger than a palm sat inside. It was a Panax root with

unusually long roots.

*This really is good stuff!" Dustin exclaimed upon examining the root closely. He looked delighted.

A 500-year-old Panax root was an extremely rare treasure! Now that he had another herb, he was another

step closer to his goal!

"How is it, Dustin? Are you satisfied?" Duane smiled expectantly.

"Of course, I'm satisfied. Thank you so much." Dustin smiled, reaching out to take the root.

Suddenly, the lid of the box snapped shut.

"Dustin, what's the hurry? Let's talk more," Duane asserted. One hand remained wrapped around the box. Evidently, he was not planning on giving its contents to Dustin that easily.

"Duane, what's this about?" Dustin narrowed his eyes.

"I'm very interested in your Gemiphen formula. Can you sell it to me?" Duane smiled faintly.

"Duane, this wasn't what we agreed on. As per our agreement, I cure your ailment, and you give me a 500-year-old Panax root in return," Dustin reminded him.

"Are you sure you remember correctly? Yes, you cured me, but I gave you the Hillview Hotel in return. As for the Panax root, you'll have to exchange it for your Gemiphen formula!"

"You sound like you want to go back on your word," Dustin warned, his expression gradually growing colder. He had thought that Duane had come to give him th

the Panax root, but to his surprise, Duane had been eyeing his Gemiphen formula all along.

“Dustin, don’t put it that way. We just want mutual benefits. If you’re unsatisfied, I can give you another thirty million in cash!” Duane stuck out three fingers.

“I’ve said this before. My Gemiphen formula is not for sale. You can **only** give me herbs in exchange for it,”

stressed Dustin.

“Haha... am I not doing an exchange with you right now?” Duane hinted, tapping on the box between them.

“Duane, if people find out you’re not a man of your word, won’t you become a laughing stock?” Dustin’s

expression was as cold as ice.

If he negotiated politely, Dustin didn’t mind selling him two packets of Gemiphen. However, Duane’s way of obtaining the formula was foolish.

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Chapter 95

*So what if people find out? Who would believe you?” Duane challenged. His nervous smile did not reach his

eyes.

The Gemiphen formula was priceless. If he could get his hands on it, he could take over the entire Anderson

family!

“Duane, for Ms. Harmon’s sake, I won’t burn bridges between us. So now, you’d best give **me** the Panax root.”

Dustin said calmly, suppressing his anger.

“And what if I don’t?” Duane retorted.

“Then don’t blame **me** for snatching it away.” Dustin was very blunt.

“Snatch? Haha. If you can take this box from me, I’ll let you have it for free!” Duane laughed. He had trained

in martial arts for years and had long since reached the highest level of mastery. How dare an amateur like

Dustin snatch something out of the hands of a master like him?

“Okay! You said it yourself!” Dustin wasted no time and reached for the wooden box.

Duane was fully prepared. His hand bent into a claw and grabbed Dustin’s forcefully. The battle had begun.

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Chapter 96

Duane was still smiling confidently at the start of the battle.

But it was not long before he noticed something was very wrong. Dustin was much stronger than he **had** expected. He could feel terrifying surges of energy rushing at him like waves in the ocean. They made the bones in his hand tremble. They would break any minute!

Duane's expression darkened, and he couldn't take it anymore. He threw a hard punch at Dustin, trying to

make him fall back. However, Dustin did not dodge and faced it head-on instead.

Their fists collided, and Duane's chair was smashed into pieces! The force of the punch shoved Duane

backward until he hit the wall to catch his balance.

Even so, Dustin remained seated calmly. They both knew who was more powerful!

"Damn! I never knew you had tricks up your sleeve. I underestimated you!" Duane's eyes narrowed as a

complex mix of expressions clouded his face. With how young Dustin was, Duane had never expected him to **be** so powerful. Considering how young he was, he never expected Dustin to be so powerful. Just one punch

had thrown him off his feet.

Although strength couldn't completely represent his fighting skills, it was enough to prove his physical

strength.

"Thanks for the Panax root, Duane." Dustin didn't waste any time. He picked up the box and got up to leave.

Duane was already on his blacklist for being untrustworthy. This was the last time they would do business together.

"Sir Anderson, do you want me to send some men after him to get it back?" asked the Cobra hesitantly.

He could tell that Duane and Dustin weren't actually friends. If so, he **had** nothing to fear anymore.

"He is quite strong. I'm afraid your men won't be able to take him on." Duane cautiously moved his numb arm.

"Are... are you going to let him go just like that?" The Cobra was a little disgruntled. After losing face earlier, he was eager to redeem it.

"Let him go? Hmph. Not so easily!"

Duane laughed coldly. "I'll **get** my hands on the Gemiphen formula. Just wait and see. I have many ways to

make him surrender to me!"

Meanwhile, outside the bar, **Lyra** arrived with the company's bodyguards. When she saw that Dahlia and the others were safe and sound, she breathed a sigh of relief.

"Ms. Nicholson, is everything resolved?"

"I guess you could say that." Dahlia nodded.

"I heard this is the Cobra's turf and thought there might be trouble. I didn't think it would be so easy. I'm sure Mr. Laney is to thank for this?" Lyra smiled.

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Chapter 96

The suggestion caused Matt's expression to sour immediately. This woman just had to annoy him!

"Hmm? Why is he here?" Lyra wondered as she spotted Dustin leaving the bar.

He questioned, "What are you guys still doing here? Waiting for someone to take revenge on you? I don't have the energy to save you again." He spoke with a calm voice, grasping the wooden box in his hand.

"Who needs saving? You're so nosy!" Florence snapped **rudely**.

"Hpmh! Stop showing off. If it wasn't for Ms. Harmon, could you have walked out of there alive?" James

mocked brashly.

"That's enough!" Dahlia waved her hands to stop their bickering. She turned to Dustin and said, "Dustin.

thanks for saving us, but I don't condone your behavior."

"Oh? Do you have **any** advice, Ms. Nicholson?" Dustin cocked an eyebrow.

"You're too impulsive! You don't think before you act. Did you **ever** consider the consequences your actions

might bring?" Dahlia asked.

"I don't know what consequences my actions would have caused, but I'm certain that your brother's hands

would have been chopped off," Dustin retorted matter-of-factly.

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“I’m just trying to remind you to think twice before you act. Just because you have support from the higher-ups doesn’t mean you can run amok.” With a solemn look, Dahlia added, “Dustin, you must realize that your worth has to be backed by ability. Currying favors with powerful people can propel you to greater heights, but it won’t last unless you can prove you’re a person of high caliber. So don’t think you’re all high and mighty-

consider this a lesson from me.”

Dustin snickered upon hearing this. “How can you be sure that I’m currying favors with the powerful?”

“Is that not the case? If it weren’t for Ms. Harmon’s reputation, would the Cobras have let you go so easily?” **Dahlia** didn’t hold back with her remark.

“Whatever you say. I know that, whatever I do, I’m nothing but a useless prick in your eyes,” Dustin sneered as

he shook his head.

First impressions truly were tough to change. Even with the evidence in front of their eyes, some people would simply refuse to believe it. **They** preferred scoring for excuses in an attempt to consolidate their prejudices.

“Oh, Dustin, don’t be disheartened. Keep your dignity and utilize your capabilities to carve out your own career and legacy instead of being a lazy bum who leeches off others,” Dahlia urged in a deep voice.

“So what if I’m a bum? Catching easy fish is also a skill. It just means I work smart,” Dustin shrugged.

“You...” Dahlia **was** starting to get annoyed. She had put sincere effort into trying to talk sense into him, but

her advice seemed to fall on deaf ears. Not to mention the fact that he did not appear ashamed of his behavior

at all. It was apparent that there was no saving some people from their stubbornness.

As the two went back and forth, a few patrol cars pulled up and blocked the intersection.

The doors of the patrol cars swung open, and **several** uniformed police officers stepped out and approached them swiftly.

“We’re looking for Dustin Rhys,” said one of the police officers.

“That’s me.” Dustin responded, “Is something wrong, officer?”

“We just received a report that you’ve stolen some valuable objects. Please come with us!” shouted the officer.

“Stolen? Officer, there must be a misunderstanding.” Dustin declared, squinting **his** eyes.

“Alright, **may** I ask what’s inside this box?”

“Panax root.”

“Then that proves it! Come with us immediately for further investigation!” The officer said little more as he

handcuffed Dustin.

“Officer! What exactly is going on?” exclaimed Dahlia, as she rushed forward, the color drained from her face.

“Who are you?” asked the patrol officer.

“I’m his friend,” she replied.

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“Hmph, suspicious! You could be an accomplice. Take her away as well!”

In one swift movement, the officer clicked a pair of handcuffs around Dahlia’s wrists. This incident left everyone at the scene stunned.

“Officer, this has nothing to do with her. It’s all me,” said Dustin with a frown.

“He’s right, he’s right! This is all Dustin’s doing. It has nothing to do with my daughter! If you want to arrest him, then do that! My daughter has done nothing wrong. She’s innocent!” pleaded Florence.

“That’s right, officer! My sister is innocent. She’s a kind soul!” James exclaimed, panicked.

“We’ll find out if she’s innocent once the investigation is over. Take her away!” barked the police officer. With a single command from the squad leader, Dustin and Dahlia were escorted into the police cars.

““Wait!” Matt stepped out from the crowd and began, “I’m of the Laney family of Millsburg. Please cut us some slack and let...”

“Any more nonsense, and you’ll all be coming along!” snapped the officer. His cold glare silenced Matt instantly.

There was nothing anyone could do as they watched Dahlia leave with them.

“It’s over! Goddamn good—for—nothing Dustin, getting my daughter in trouble!” cried Florence as she stomped

the ground in distress. 1

“I don’t give a damn if he digs his own grave, but to drag Dahlia with him? What a bastard!” James scowled with resentment.

“Now’s not the time for this. Quick, we need to think of a way to save Ms. Nicholson!” said Lyra.

“You’re right! We have to find a way. I know a friend who works at the police station. I’ll give him a call at once!”

“I know a relative who has connections with some police officers of higher ranks. I’ll find out if he can offer us

any help.”

Suddenly, the air was filled with the excited chattering of everyone in the group, gathering assistance from anyone they could think of.

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Chapter 98

Nighttime, in the interrogation room of the police station.

Dustin and Dahlia sat with their backs against each other, bound to the chairs in the middle of the room.

The air in the room was cool and damp, and darkness shrouded them completely. They could feel an invisible

weight on their shoulders.

“My bad, I didn’t mean to drag you into this mess,” Dustin spoke first.

“They claimed you stole some valuables. Is that true?” Dahlia asked, cutting to the chase.

“What do you think?”

“You don’t look that bold to me, so my guess is someone is trying to frame you. Does this have anything to **do** with the Cobra?”

“The Cobra is merely a pawn. The mastermind is none other than Duane Welch.”

“Duane Welch? Are you talking about Sir Anderson?” Dahlia was dumbstruck.

“Weren’t you on fairly good terms with him before? Did you strike a nerve? How?”

“I punched him,” Dustin admitted flatly.

“What?” Dahlia choked, struggling to keep her calm, “You You dared hit Sir Anderson! Are you out of your

mind?!”

Sir Anderson wasn't just anyone—
he was like a brother to Mr. Anderson. Not to mention being of the

prominent Welch family of Millsburg! He was someone even the vicious, unyielding Cobra would kneel to. Yet

Dustin dared place a hand on him, the epitome of digging one's own grave!

“He hit me first. I only hit back in self-defense.” Dustin didn't seem bothered in the slightest.

“Y—
you act too rashly!” Dahlia fumed, “Who do you think Sir Anderson is? Do you think he's someone you can

afford to offend? One order
from him is all it takes to wipe you off the face of the earth!”

“Since I've already offended him, there's nothing else we can do than go
with the flow,” Dustin said with a

shrug.

“Easy for you to say, but do you think you can handle this?” Dahlia's patience was running thin. She asserted, “You better find an opening to call Natasha later. She's the only one who can save you now!”

As the words left her tongue, she felt an acrid taste at the back of her throat. Although she wouldn't admit it if she didn't have to, there was no denying that there was no comparing herself to Natasha when it came to family background.

Suddenly, the metal door to the dark room creaked open, interrupting their conversation. A man with a rotund beer belly appeared in the doorway and **stepped** into the room. He sat down on a chair and flicked the switch of the bright lamp on the desk.

The glare from the lamp made the two detainees squeeze their eyes shut instinctively.

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“So, you’re Dustin Rhys or something.” hissed the fat man maliciously.

“Yes.” Dustin continued squinting until his eyes grew accustomed to the intense light.

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“Do either of you know who I am?” the man asked.

“No clue.”

“Then, allow me to introduce myself. I go by Gardner, the inspector here. I am nicknamed Heinous Hades by

many!” The fat man lifted his chin with pride. 1

Dahlia’s heart dropped. Having spent a good chunk of her life mingling in this field, it was not her first time

hearing that

nickname. He was a **man** of barbarian cruelty, always baying for the blood of his next victim. Any offenders who fell into his hands could only pray for an outcome less than horrific.

They were in grave trouble this time around!

“Nice to meet you, Mr. Gardner. We’ve heard a lot about you.”

While Dahlia anticipated the worst, Dustin seemed relatively calm and breezy.

“Great! Given that you’ve heard of my name, I assume you’re familiar with my habits. I recommend that you

learn your place and cooperate. That is your only hope of leaving here alive!”

The inspector lit a cigar, slid it between his teeth, and took a deep breath.

“Mr. Gardner, what do you need my cooperation for?” Dustin asked with a calm voice.

“The lot of you stole some valuable items, and the law can sentence you to prison. However, I am giving you

the chance to straighten out the issue with the original owner. If we reach a mutual agreement, no charges

will be pressed.”

“Mr. Gardner, you must be mistaken. I didn’t steal anything. The Panax root belongs to me,” Dustin rebutted

politely.

“Hey! Kid! Are you sure you know what’s happening?” The fat man snorted. “Does it matter whether you stole it or not? Once you step foot in my territory, I make the rules. If I say you stole it, it means you stole it. Do you

understand me?”

“Mr. Gardner, isn’t the way you’re approaching this case a little unreasonable?” Dustin’s eyebrows creased

into a frown.

“Unreasonable? Haha. My words could not be more reasonable!” snarled the fat man. A sinister smirk stretched across his face. “Now, you both have two options. One, to reach a deal with Sir Anderson. Or two,

spend the rest of your lives in jail!”

“Can I choose neither?” Dustin asked.”

“Hey! I’m trying to engage in a peaceful discussion with you. You’d better be sensible and take the option, or else you won’t have it easy if you cross me!” Hostility flashed in his **eyes**.

“Are you trying to threaten me?”

“What if I am?” the inspector sneered. The cigar hung from his teeth as he continued with disdain, “I know you

have some punch in you, but even superpowers won't be useful in my territory! **Besides, need** I remind you that your gorgeous girlfriend will be very popular if she ends up in prison! Even if you could not care less about yourself, you should keep her in mind! That is, if you can bear watching as the other prisoners ravage such a delicate beauty!"

Dustin's expression hardened. Murderous intent seeped from his eyes. "If you dare touch her, rest assured that nothing but death will await you!"

While his aggressive remark stunned Dahlia, she couldn't help the warmth that filled her chest.

"Haha! You can barely stand up for yourself. And to think, you're trying to threaten me! If you have brains in that head of yours, just hand over the Panax root and call it quits. Otherwise, you can't blame me if I throw your beloved in prison! Give it some thought. You'll have thirty minutes to think it through. I'll be back with hopes of an affirmative answer."

With a grotesque grin, Gardner turned to leave, leaving nothing but a loud, resonating bang in his wake. The room plunged back into darkness.

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Chapter 99

The night progressed slowly. Florence, James, and the others waited anxiously outside the police station.

Dahlia **was** the backbone of the Nicholson family. If something were to happen to her, the Nicholsons would undoubtedly fall apart. Therefore, to save themselves, they did everything they could to arrange for her release.

which meant pulling **every** string possible.

A policeman appeared out of nowhere.

James immediately stepped forward and asked, "Mr. Clarke, how's it looking? Can you let my sister go?"

“James, I dug around and discovered that Gardner is the inspector in charge of this case. A mere policeman

like myself won’t be able to do much to help,” the man said with a shake of his **head**.

“What else can we do? Do you **have** any other ideas?” James lamented with panic.

“Mr. Clarke, we would **be** eternally grateful for whatever you can do to help us!” Florence pleaded.

“I’ll try my best, but I can’t promise anything. Plus, don’t forget the sum of money.”

“Sir, I’ve just forked out two million dollars. Take it for now, and I’ll get more if it doesn’t suffice. Please help us out. We can talk about further payment later!” James **cried** as he pulled out a card and handed it to the

policeman.

“Alright then, I’ll give it another shot.”

The policeman slid the card into his pocket discreetly, turned around, and walked back into the station.

“James, two million isn’t a small amount. Are you sure we can trust your friend?” Florence asked, her voice

uncertain.

“No matter what, we still **have** to give it a **go**.” James muttered through gritted teeth.

“By the way, has anyone seen Mr. Laney?” someone in the crowd quipped.

“Matt said he went to meet a friend who may be able to help get Dahlia out of his pickle,” Florence replied.

“So that’s where he’s gone. With Mr. Laney’s help, we have double the reassurance. I’m sure it’ll be alright.”

With that, the group let out a sigh of relief.

Meanwhile, in a luxurious villa, Matt was having the time of his life with a gorgeous woman in a hot tub. His **body** intertwined with hers as they blissfully made love to each other.

“I doubt you’re here simply to visit. You must have a favor to ask of me, am I right?” the woman smirked.

“Nothing ever gets past you, does it?” he conceded with a slight smile. He began, “I have a friend who’s being held at the police station, and I need your help bailing her out. I’m sure you know that Swinton is not my home ground.”

“A friend? What’s the **name**?” she asked.

“Dahlia Nicholson.”

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Chapter 99

“Oh? A woman? Is there something going on between you and her?” The beauty raised an eyebrow suspiciously.

“Hehe... she’s just a friend. She helped me out awhile back, so I’m merely returning the favor.” Matt

maintained a nonchalant expression.

“Is that so?” Dubious, the woman pressed on. “Matt, don’t claim I’ve never reminded you that you are mine and mine only. You best believe you’ll regret being promiscuous out there. If a vixen dares to try to seduce you, I will make her life a living hell!”

“What are you even talking about, baby girl? You are the one I **love** most in life. How could I possibly have eyes for other women?” Matt quickly pulled her into a tight embrace.

“Since you say you love me so much, you shall attend my birthday party in two days and meet my father **as** “my boyfriend,” the lady **said** with a smile stretching from ear to ear.

“Are you introducing me to your family already?”

“Why? Are you afraid?”

“Your father is the one and only Sir Hummer. I bet you won’t be able to name me someone who isn’t afraid of the prospect of meeting him! However, it goes without saying that I would cross the highest mountains and the deepest seas for you!”

“Aw, aren’t you the sweetest! Alright then, it’s a deal!”

At the same time, at Java Joys.

Natasha was seated on the couch, reading silently, when Ruth barged in.

*Sis! Bad news! Dustin’s been arrested!” she blurted as soon as her lips parted.

“Arrested?” Natasha was taken aback. “What happened?”

“I just received news that Dustin was arrested and escorted to the police station for **the** theft of valuable

items!” Ruth managed between pants.

“Theft? Is that it?” Natasha’s confusion **grew**.

“The theft is nothing but a coverup. In reality, Dustin is being framed. However, things don’t look good given

that he’s fallen into the hands of that fat man Gardner,” Ruth continued.

A string of protests rang from Natasha’s mouth immediately.

“That fat bastard! Such audacity—how dare he touch my man? Gather your men at once and follow me to the police station to get our people back!”

Meanwhile, in Hunter Anderson’s mansion.

“Dad! Bad news! Something major happened!”

Jeff Anderson rushed into the study with large beads of sweat covering his forehead, startling Hunter as he practiced his brush strokes.

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“You idiot! How many times have I told you that you must stay calm when facing problems instead of overreacting? Why don’t you ever heed my advice?!”

“Dad! I’m not overreacting this time. Something big really did happen!” Jeff wiped the sweat from his face.

“Pah! You better remember: no matter how big a situation, you must stay calm! That is how a real man should act!” After relaying his teachings, he finally asked, “Now tell me, what’s going on?”

“It’s about Mr. Rhys. He’s been arrested by Gardner!” Jeff exploded.

“What?”

Hunter started trembling in fear. Even the brush in his hand broke in two.

“Quick... call someone! We have to go to the police station,” he instructed his son. He roared, “That fat f*ck “Gardner. If he dares touch a hair on Mr. Rhys’ head, I’ll skin him alive!”

“Dad, shouldn’t you remain calm?” Jeff’s lips twitched with irony.

“To hell with calm!”

The news struck him like a lightning bolt, so shocking that Hunter broke into a cold sweat.

“If Mr. Laney emerges unscathed, all will be well. But if something were to happen to him, everyone in Swinton would suffer. Not to mention Gardner, you, and even myself!”

“Huh! Is the situation so grave?” Jeff winced. He still had zero clue about Dustin’s true identity.

“What are you doing still lingering around? We have to get him out of there!” ordered Hunter.

After slapping his son awake, Hunter darted out the door.

Deep in his heart, he prayed, “Gardner, Gardner, you fat motherf*cker better not mess around! If you do, Swinton will be soaked in blood!”

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Chapter 100

As the chaos unfolded in the outside world, nothing but peace and calm hung in the air of the inspector’s

office at the police station.

“What’s the situation, Mr. Gardner? Has the kid confessed yet?” asked the Cobra impatiently as soon as he sat

down.

“It doesn’t matter whether he has or not. Any prisoner who falls into my hands is sure to **give** in eventually.”

The fat inspector took another drag of his cigar with a smug expression.

“It’s not a problem if you’re on-site, but you can’t guarantee that things won’t take a turn for the worse. I think you ought to get it out of the way while you can,” the Cobra suggested.

“Why do you say that? Are you trying to teach me how to do my job?” Gardner cast a cold glare at him.

“Of course not. I wouldn’t even dream of it. It’s just that the kid has someone backing him up. If this isn’t

resolved soon, trouble may arise,” the Cobra explained with a quick apology.

“What trouble could possibly arise? I’m just doing my job. Plus, this is my territory. Who would dare disobey

me?” he reminded the man with certainty.

“Well, that’s true, Mr. Gardner. You are Mr. Granville’s son-in-law after all—who would dare disrespect you?”

agreed the Cobra flatteringly.

“Hmph! At least you’re smart enough to know that!” the inspector guffawed.

He was perhaps prouder of having the mayor as his father-in-law than of his identity as an inspector. The title of mayor denoted the highest position of power in the whole of Swinton.

“Mr. Gardner, this is a gift from Sir Anderson. Please accept it,” said the Cobra as he held out a gift box with

both hands.

Gardner opened the box, and the shimmer of the gold accessory put a smile on his face.

“Hehe... Sir Anderson is simply too generous. Send him my thanks! Also, reassure him that I will handle this with extra care and ensure nothing goes wrong!”

“Thank you, Mr. Gardner!” The Cobra bowed in gratitude.

While the two spoke, the squad leader who had made the arrest entered the room unannounced.

“Is something the matter?” Gardner instantly slammed the gift box shut.

“Sir, the Nicholson family has just sent someone to intercede, and they’ve offered to pay a hefty amount to release Dahlia Nicholson on bail,” the officer reported.

“Pah! That woman is a wanted criminal. There’s no way she can be released on bail. Send them away!” commanded Gardner with a dismissive wave of his hand.

“Yes, sir.” The squad leader turned and left.

However, he knocked on the **door** again in less than a minute.

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“What is it this time?!” barked the inspector, clearly losing his patience.

“Sir, Ms. Harmon called in earlier, claiming that we’ve arrested the wrong person. She has asked us to release Dustin Rhys immediately.” the officer said.

“Ms. Harmon? Do you mean Natasha Harmon?” Gardner’s expression froze.

“That’s her.” The officer nodded.

“Cobra, what’s going on? You failed to mention that this kid had anything to do with Natasha!” The inspector’s eyes turned feral. Natasha was a lady of superiority in all aspects; money, power, and influence. Under normal

circumstances, she was not someone he would offend for no reason.

“Mr. Gardner, he’s just a good-for-nothing Natasha dotes on. In fact, he has no proper background. With your status, you need not pay him much attention,” the Cobra assured the inspector.

“Hmph! That better be the case!” Slightly flustered, Gardner instructed the squad leader, “Tell Natasha Harmon that we are holding no such person in our patrol room.” Since he had already given his word to Duane, there

was no going back. For now, the best course of action would be to sweep it under the carpet.

However, **as** soon as the squad leader left, Gardner’s phone started ringing.

“Mr. Anderson?” He was baffled by the caller ID displayed on the screen. For Mr. Anderson to call at this hour..

could it be for the kid as well? Wasn’t this too much of a coincidence?!

Brushing the thought from his mind, he decided to pick up the call, still feeling apprehensive.

“Hello, Mr. Anderson! Is there anything I can do for you?”

“Mr. Gardner! Tell me, did you arrest a young man named Dustin **Rhys**?” Hunter cut right to the chase without

wasting a second.

“Oh? Did I? Why is it that I’m not aware of this?” Mr. Gardner questioned. His heart skipped a beat, but he didn’t let it show. He asked, “Mr. Anderson, did something happen?”

“Gardner! Don’t you dare pull tricks on me! Heed my order and release Dustin right this instant! Or else, don’t blame me for cutting you off for good!” Hunter yelled into the phone.

“Mr. Anderson, there must have been a misunderstanding! I don’t know a Dustin at all. How about I look into it

for you?” The officer desperately put on an act.

There was no way he would spill the beans on the plan.

“Alright then, you fat bastard. You have no idea what you’re getting yourself into! Mark my words— if anything happens to Dustin, you and your whole family will go down with him!”

Hunter hung up the phone with a threatening growl:

“Did that old man get up on the wrong side of the bed today?” grumbled Gardner, his displeasure written all over his face.

“Sir, what’s wrong?” the Cobra asked cautiously.

“What’s wrong? Where did you get the guts to ask me that?” Gardner slapped a palm onto the table. “Didn’t

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you say the kid had no background? Mr. Anderson just called to speak to me about the fellow! Does that sound like someone with no background to you? Are you deliberately trying to set me up, you motherf*cker?!"

Natasha Harmon was already a handful. Now that Hunter Anderson was also in the picture, this was equivalent to stripping him down and tying him to a skewer over an open fire.

"No way! There's no way that he has relations with Mr. Anderson! I— I really didn't know about this," the Cobra stuttered as the color drained from his face.

"Quick, call Duane now. This situation is getting way out of hand. He'll have to pay me more if he wants this matter settled smoothly," Gardner ordered.

"Alright, alright. I will call Sir Anderson immediately!"

The Cobra did not hesitate as he dialed Duane's number. Over the phone, he briefly explained Gardner's request.

After confirming an affirmative answer, he reported, "Sir, Sir Anderson has agreed to double the price as long as you can get the job done!"

Hearing this, the tense muscles on the inspector's face finally eased.

"Sir Anderson is truly generous! In that case, I'll do my very best!" he declared with a smile of contentment. Well, money did do wonders, after all. A middle ground is always more easily reached with a good payout.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori

Chapter 101

Chapter 101

Back in the interrogation room, Dustin and Dahlia sat with their backs against each other for warmth.

Such peaceful moments were rare from the moment they were married until their divorce.

No one spoke anything **as** they remained silent for a while.

"Dustin, do you think we will walk out of here alive?"

Finally, **Dahlia** broke the silence.

She couldn't stand the damp and dark surroundings that forced her to think depressive thoughts.

Furthermore, Mr. Gardner wasn't easy to deal with. Her heart thumped with fear at what would happen to them.

"Don't scare yourself. We will definitely leave this place in one piece," Dustin comforted her.

"What if we don't? Do you have any last wishes?" Dahlia murmured glumly.

"There's no possibility of us dying. Let's talk after we get out," Dustin replied.

"Not after we have offended Lord Asmon. With his connections and resources, getting rid of us would be **as** easy as killing a gnat." Dahlia sighed.

Even if she pooled all her resources, it would be nothing compared to the wealth of the nobility.

"Dahlia, this doesn't sound like you. I thought you were a person who would not give up until the last second. With your personality, you would take on any challenge that got in your way. Why are you being so pessimistic?" Dustin raised his voice.

When she heard this, Dahlia gave a chuckle. "You're right. No one knows what will happen until the last

minute. Perhaps we should have hope that things would turn around!"

The metal door creaked open once again as she finished her sentence.

Light streamed into the room **as** Mr. Gardner stomped in with a few burly, intimidating-looking men.

"Kid! Your time is up; have you made your decision?" He shot Dustin a fierce look.

"Yes, I've decided. I will not return the items," Dustin replied firmly.

"What?" Mr. Gardner frowned. "Kid, don't you know who these men **are**? I'll be honest, they are the worst

criminals and bandits I have in prison! They have been deprived of the touch of a woman for a long time! If you

refuse to cooperate, you will definitely regret it. These men will have their way with your girlfriend while you

shall watch her ravaged and abused in front of your very eyes!"

"If you dare to touch her, I'll tear this whole place down!" Dustin warned with a growl.

"You piece of shit! How dare you talk back to me! Now, you have no choice but to bear the consequences!"

Mr. Gardner gestured to his men. "**Guys**, make sure to put on a good performance for this kid so that he knows his place! Show him a fate worse than death!"

Chapter 101

"Of course, sir! We are much obliged!" The men cackled with pleasure.

They had been locked up in prison for a long time without a woman's touch. Now that such a beauty was in their presence, they could not hide their evil desires to ravish her body.

"Hi, gorgeous! Let's have a good time!"

"I'll get the girl, you can get the guy!"

The men began to strip while laughing maniacally as they stepped menacingly toward Dahlia.

"You must be looking for death!" Dustin **stood** up, furious.

He tore the shackles around his hands and legs with brute force, and they fell to the ground with a clang.

After that, Dustin turned around and untied Dahlia easily.

"You!" Mr. Gardner was taken aback at the sudden turn of events.

The shackles in the interrogation room were specially made to be extra tough. It was impossible for a human to tear the metal apart like butter.

How did this scrawny kid do that?

"Gardner, you have pushed my limits!" Dustin kicked the shackles aside **and** rushed towards him.

"Quick, stop this kid!" Mr. Gardner screamed for help. The burly men immediately surrounded Dustin, and all of

them attacked him at the same time.

"Get out of my way!" A surge of energy was released when Dustin stomped his heel on **the** ground.

The sheer force threw the men backward and crash into the walls of the interrogation room.

All of them were dead in an instant, bleeding from their internal wounds.

"Help, anybody! Please help!" Mr. Gardner turned pale and whirled around to escape.

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Chapter 102

Chapter 102

Dustin kicked the limp body of a man lying beside him.

It flew like a bullet and crashed into Mr. Gardner, who was attempting to escape.

He screamed in pain and fell to the ground, unable to run any longer.

"I've warned you not to touch her." Dustin strolled up to him and hissed murderously, his eyes boring dangerously into Mr. Gardner.

"Kid, don't forget you're in the police station! You can't go too far!" Mr. Gardner backed away on all fours.

"Too far? What will you do about it?" Dustin chuckled as he crushed Mr. Gardner's arm with his foot.

The immense pain from his broken arm caused Mr. Gardner to howl in agony.

"Dustin! Stop it!" Blood drained from Dahlia's face.

Even though they were innocent, they could be charged with excessive self-defense if they fought back against the police. It would only complicate the situation!

"Come back to your senses, kid! Confess and turn yourself in so that you still have a chance to save yourself. If not, there will be no mercy!" Mr. Gardner threatened with a grimace.

Without a word, Dustin kicked Mr. Gardner in the stomach.

Mr. Gardner spurted out the contents of his dinner last night by reflex as pee flowed out of his bladder. A

putrid stench filled the air from the mess he created.

"You—

You!" Mr. Gardner's face turned red from the violent coughing as nausea caused him to vomit bile from

his stomach.

"Dustin, have you gone crazy? If something untoward happens to Mr. Gardner, we will have to take

responsibility!" Dahlia called out frantically.

"Even if I did not fight back, he wouldn't have let us go either. Since things have come to this, we should just

kill him," Dustin retorted nonchalantly.

"The situation has not escalated to that level. Stop it now, and we can still fix this. If you murdered Mr. Gardner, everyone would **have** to pay for your mistakes!" Dahlia tried to reason with Dustin.

What if Dustin really went insane and did something stupid out of **anger**?

"Do

you hear that? Another violation from you, I will make **sure** you and your whole family pay for this!" Mr.

Gardner roared.

"Mr. Gardner, what happened?" Draco ran into the room with a group of underlings when they heard the

commotion.

However, they were all stunned at the sight of the bloody scene and Mr. Gardner, who was heavily injured.

"Kid, you must be looking for death! Let Mr. Gardner go immediately if you still want to live!" Draco warned.

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"Let him go? Alright, take him." Dustin kicked Mr. Gardner and sent him flying into the air. He crashed hard on

a few of Draco's underlings, taking down several of them simultaneously.

Dahlia **was** speechless at Dustin's impudence.

She never thought he could be so reckless as to kick Mr. Gardner.

Even when he was surrounded by ruthless men on all sides, he **did not even** think of surrendering!

Had Dustin gone mad?

Did he not understand the consequences of crossing Mr. Gardner?

He was the police inspector, also known as Heinous Hades.

Mr. Gardner was the officer in charge of the prison and criminal interrogation. The lives of prisoners were at

his mercy.

How could Dustin **be** so bold?

"Mr. Gardner, are you alright?" Draco quickly helped him up.

Mr. Gardner spewed profanities in **a** blind rage as he ordered his men, "All of you! Kill that kid right now! I want him dead and his body chopped up into pieces!"

Never had **anyone** humiliated him in such a manner!

"Kill him!" Draco shouted as they took out their weapons and charged toward Dustin.

Just as the fight was about to break out, a loud voice was heard at the door.

"Stop this instant!"

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Chapter 103

“Stop this right now!” A loud voice rang out.

A group of men in suits and armed to the teeth filed into the room.

“Who are you? How dare you enter the interrogation room without permission! Are you starting a riot?” Mr. Gardner screamed in fury. At this moment, he was stewing with rage.

The only thought in his mind was to rip Dustin up into pieces, and anybody who stood in his path would be his

mortal enemy as well!

“Mr. Gardner, what an honor to see you!”

“The crowd of people parted like the Red Sea as a gorgeous, alluring woman stalked into the room in her high

heels.

“Natasha?”

When Mr. Gardner saw who it was, the expression on his face fell as the burning rage in his eyes died down.

“You’re lucky, Dustin. Your girlfriend is here to save you.”

Dahlia said sarcastically when she saw Natasha arrive. She felt a little frustrated. Although she was relieved

at the thought of being rescued, she felt a twinge of annoyance at receiving Natasha’s help.

As she was Dustin’s ex-wife, she didn’t want to feel obligated to another woman.

Unfortunately, Natasha was the only one who could save Dustin right now.

“Ms. Harmon, why are you here at the police station this late at night with your men? What’s the meaning of

this?” Mr. Gardner stepped forward to block their way.

“Hmph! Are you seriously questioning me? You were the one who brought people in without a **fair** trial. Is this how the police investigate crimes?” Natasha scoffed.

“I have no idea what you are talking about.” Mr. Gardner said sheepishly.

“You don’t understand? Alright then, I’ll be straightforward. I’m here to request the release of my man. Let Dustin go immediately before I make you regret it!” Natasha demanded.

“Let him go? This man is a wanted criminal with definitive evidence. Are you going to make me release him? **Aren’t** you going above the **law**?” Mr. Gardner declared righteously.

Just now, Dustin had beat him up into a pulp. There was no way he could live this down.

Offending Natasha was a small price to pay for him to get his revenge on Dustin!

“How dare you talk about the law to me! Aren’t you aware of how contradictory your words are? It is as easy as pie for me to reveal all your dirty underhanded tricks. Let him go immediately if you want to keep things

swept under the rug!” Natasha threatened.

“Natasha, don’t push my buttons!” Mr. Gardner warned, his expression darkened.

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“I know that the Harmon family is influential, however, I have my rights! This is my territory and that guy is a criminal. Moreover, he is under my jurisdiction. You have no right to interfere in what I do with him!”

"If Ms. Harmon doesn't have the right, how about me Instead?" Hunter walked into the interrogation room with

his men in tow.

His noble aura caused the men to move away from him involuntarily.

"What? This kid knows Mr. Anderson?" Draco turned pale with shock. He didn't believe it when Mr. Gardner

told him about this. Now that he had witnessed **the** situation with his own eyes, only then did he realize the gravity of the situation.

"Wow, even Mr. Anderson is here. Natasha must **have** asked for his help to **save** you. Seems like she **really** can't live without you, huh?" Sarcasm dripped from Dahlia's voice as she spoke.

"Mr. Anderson, why are you here as well?" Mr. Gardner frowned.

Natasha alone was tough enough to handle. If Hunter joined in the **fray**, things might get out of hand.

"If I didn't show up, would you listen to reason?" Hunter retorted angrily.

"Mr. Anderson, I informed you in the call last time. Give me some time so I can look into it. If there's **a** mistake.

I will let him go immediately." Mr. Gardner tried to wriggle his way out.

"I have no time to waste yapping with you. Let Dustin go this instant!" Hunter ordered impatiently.

The corrupted ways of the police inspector were well known.

If they had waited for the investigation to end, Dustin would have been dead and gone.

"As an inspector, my duty is to capture wanted criminals and protect the peace of the city. I don't think there's anything wrong with my actions," Mr. Gardner defended himself.

"Mr. Gardner, I'm giving you one last chance. I'm warning you; let him go immediately. If not, you shall die an

unseemly death!” Hunter wasn’t taking it.

“Mr. Anderson, are you threatening me? Don’t you know the consequences of going against the police?” Mr.

Gardner narrowed his eyes.

“I don’t care what the consequences are. If you won’t let Dustin go, I will tear down this building!” Hunter

retorted.

Mr. Gardner’s face twisted with rage.

He never expected Natasha and Hunter to be so obstinate.

Why would they go to such lengths for a nobody like Dustin?

Didn’t they know that Mr. Granville was his father-in-law?

What’s wrong with the two of them? They wouldn’t even budge an inch

“Mr. Anderson, don’t blame me for not warning you. It is an offense that you have barged into the Interrogation room without permission. If Mr. Granville wants to find fault. It would be a nightmare for you to handle!” Mr.

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Gardner quickly name-dropped his father-in-law.

“What the hell!”

Hunter lost his patience and swung a heavy blow to Mr. Gardner’s face. “I asked you to release him immediately. What’s with all the excuses?”

“You—How dare you slap me?”

Mr. Gardner held his burning cheek in disbelief.

He was Mr. Granville's son-in-law and a police inspector.

On account of Mr. Granville, they should know better than to provoke him! Were they going to rebel against Mr.

Granville?

"What's wrong with slapping you? Another word from you, and I'm going to put a bullet through your skull!"

Hunter drew his pistol **and** placed the barrel on Mr. Gardner's forehead.

"Wh—

What are you trying to do? Stop messing around!" Cold sweat ran down Mr. Gardner's forehead.

He

never expected Hunter to pull out his gun in the police station, nonetheless. Had he gone crazy as well?

Wasn't this blatant disrespect toward the law?

"What the hell, when did Mr. Anderson become so rash?" Natasha thought when she saw the gun.

She knew Hunter as a calm, collected man. He was always good-natured and composed in any situation.

What was wrong with him today?

He lost his temper, slapped, and threatened a man at gunpoint.

If it were his

son who was kidnapped, Hunter might not even have overreacted in this manner.

"I'm going to count to five. You will bear the consequences if you still refuse to release Dustin!" Hunter warned, his face nonchalant.

"Mr. Anderson! I'm Mr. Granville's son-in-law! Are you going to defy him?" Mr. Gardner screamed in shock.

"Five, four." Hunter started counting.

“Hunter! What’s wrong with you? If you dare to touch a hair on my head, Mr. Granville will never forgive you!”

Mr. Gardner’s legs were shaking like a leaf

“Three, two, one!”

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Hunter pulled the trigger immediately after his countdown.

With a loud bang, a bullet went through Mr. Gardner's ear.

He let out a bone-chilling cry and hold on to his bleeding ear, staggering backward.

"Are you crazy? How dare you shoot me!" Mr. Gardner shouted hysterically.

He thought Hunter was just all talk. Who knew that Hunter would really pull the trigger?

"The next time, I won't miss my aim." Hunter cocked the gun and aimed it toward Mr. Gardner's face..

"I'll ask again. Will you release Dustin, or will I?"

Mr. Gardner shivered in fright. At this rate, it was highly possible that Hunter would go crazy and murder him

in cold blood.

As Mr. Gardner was stuck in a dilemma, a ruckus was heard at the door of the interrogation room again.

An elderly man with snowy white hair rushed in with his men.

"Mr. Granville?"

At his arrival, the whole interrogation room went silent.

The elderly man standing before them was the mayor of Swinton, the highest-ranking official in the city. He

was truly the most powerful man in Swinton!

“Finally, Mr. Granville is here! Rhys, you’re dead meat! What’s the use of getting Ms. Harmon’s and Mr. Anderson’s help? As long as Mr. Granville is on our side, no one will be able to save you today!”

With the appearance of Mr. Granville, the expression on Draco’s face changed from fear to arrogance. He laughed mockingly, knowing that Mr. Granville was here to back them up.

He was their savior!

When Natasha and Hunter came to save Dustin, Draco thought that they **were** doomed.

Fortunately, Mr. Granville arrived just in time, which gave him peace of mind.

“Mr. Anderson! You slapped and shot me in the ear for that punk’s sake! You have gone too far! Now that my father-in-law is here, let’s see how you will explain this to him!” Mr. Gardner snickered with a resentful expression on his face.

Weren’t they so brazen a minute ago? He couldn’t wait to see how impudent they would be now that the mayor of Swinton **was** here!

“What a coincidence; his timing was perfect. Mr. Granville knows how to make an entrance!” Natasha frowned slightly.

Mr. Granville’s position as mayor was not to be **trifled** with.

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Chapter 104

Even with Natasha and Hunter’s influence, Mr. Granville’s decision would be final.

More importantly, Mr. Granville and Mr. Gardner are related by marriage.

Were they going to open a can of worms?

“Mr. Granville, your son-in-law is guilty of distorting the truth, taking bribes, and accusing the innocent. You

must properly explain the situation to us today!”

Defying everyone’s expectations, Hunter did not back down. He raised his voice and demanded an explanation

from Mr. Granville.

Even if Hunter was the president of the Chamber of Commerce, he was still under the jurisdiction of Mr.

Granville.

His actions were no less than rebellion against his superiors! 1

“You’re lying! I’ve always been righteous and impartial in my duties!”

Regaining his composure, Mr. Gardner rushed towards Mr. Granville and started accusing them. “Father, they

were the ones who broke into the interrogation room without permission. Furthermore, Mr.

Anderson shot me in the ear! Look at this; my ear is in a mess! Father, you have to bring them to justice!”

He revealed his wounded ear to Mr. Granville. It was a shocking sight to behold as the wound was still bleeding profusely.

“Right! There’s **that** kid!”

Ignoring Mr. Granville’s dark expression, Mr. Gardner pointed toward Dustin. “He’s the main cause of all this.

Father, you must teach him a lesson. He even hit me in the stomach just now!”

“Shut up!” Mr. Granville roared in anger and slapped Mr. Gardner’s cheek.

The force of his slap was so strong that Mr. Gardner was thrown a few feet away, stars circling above his head.

“What?”

Everyone was dumbstruck at the sudden bombshell.

Who would have expected Mr. Granville to reprimand Mr. Gardner instead of backing him up?

What's going on?

Natasha's jaw dropped. Dahlia was equally as shocked.

Draco and his men couldn't believe their eyes. They were all stunned at the astonishing turn of events.

"Father? Why did you hit me?" Mr. Gardner asked, bewildered, as he rubbed his burning cheek.

He had never seen his father-in-law so furious.

Mr. Gardner was confused as to what he had done wrong.

"Bastard! You lock up the innocent and let the guilty walk free. How dare you try to defend yourself? I'm going to teach you a lesson!" Mr. Granville declared righteously.

Chapter 104

"Father, what's wrong with you? I'm your son-in-law, aren't I?" Mr. Gardner was close to tears.

Wasn't Mr. Granville here to save him? Why was he getting beaten up instead?

"Don't call me your father-in-law! I don't have a despicable son-in-law like you!" Mr. Granville scoffed and continued, "You accepted bribes and corrupted the law. In addition, you took liberties with your authority as a police inspector. As of now, you are fired from your position!"

"What?"

When Mr. Granville announced this, Mr. Gardner shuddered in fear. His body was drenched in a cold sweat.

Although he didn't know what caused the rift, Mr. Gardner knew that his father-in-law had decided to cut all

ties with him.

Furthermore, Mr. Granville was going to investigate and expose his past deeds!

They had a good relationship before this. What could have happened for Mr. Granville to change so abruptly?

Without any hesitation, Mr. Granville gave his last orders to the men standing behind him, "Come and arrest Mr. Gardner immediately! Once the investigation into his crimes is complete, throw him in jail!"

Mr. Gardner fell on his knees in dismay, his face ashen with despair.

The only reason his father-in-law would be so harsh on him must be due to pressure from a superior who had

intervened.

That was why Mr. Granville had no choice but to **toe** the line as well

How could this happen?

He had only detained Dustin, a punk with no background. How could this disaster have befallen him?

Could it be? Could it be that the Rhys kid had some powerful people backing him up?

That must be it!

At this thought, Mr. Gardner was filled with regret that he had gone up against Dustin.

Never in his dreams would he have imagined that a young punk had such for midable support. Even his father-in-law had to kowtow to him!

All of it was Duane's fault!

He was doomed because of Duane!

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Chapter 105

“We are finished!”

When Draco saw that Mr. Gardner had been apprehended, his face paled in shock.

From Mr. Granville’s appearance until the arrest of Mr. Gardner, Draco couldn’t make sense of what was going on as everything had happened in a flash.

The only thing he could be sure of was that Mr. Granville did not let his son-in-law off the hook. This meant that he was going to be in trouble as well.

Draco thought that Mr. Granville was their savior. Who knew that he **was** here to bring them to justice?

This world could be so unpredictable!

Draco turned back and glanced at Dustin, who had remained silent all this while. He had an expression of indifference on his face, as if he had known this would happen all along.

Who was this man, and why was Mr. Granville treating him with such respect?

Why would Lord Asmon have a grudge against such a monster?

“Arrest all the other men as well!” Mr. Granville barked an order. Draco and Mr. Gardner’s men were all apprehended.

Mr. Gardner and Draco stared at each other in despair.

It was obvious that they would have to pay for their crimes.

“What—
What’s happening?” Natasha couldn’t wrap her head around the plot twist.

She expected trouble when Mr. Granville appeared.

Unexpectedly Mr. Granville did not find fault with them. Furthermore, he fired Mr. Gardner and threw him into prison.

Who could have expected Mr. Granville to do such a **thing** to his own son-in-law?

“Am I dreaming? Is Mr. Granville on our side?”

Dahlia’s eyes were wide with shock. She was also taken aback at Mr. Granville’s actions.

When she knew of his relationship to Mr. Gardner, she was already prepared for the worst.

At one point, Dahlia even thought that Dustin and her were doomed.

However, the outcome was beyond belief.

Could Mr. Granville truly be a righteous and upright official?

“Are you Dustin? I can tell that you are a capable young man.”

After he had tied up the loose ends, Mr. Granville walked up to Dustin with a rare smile on his stern face.

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“Greetings, Mr. Granville.” Dustin nodded politely.

“I’m very sorry for the inconvenience. Because of my incompetence, you had to go through such trouble. I humbly request for your understanding and forgiveness.” Mr. Granville apologized.

“It is said that there will be rotten apples in every bunch. I find it very admirable for you to even bring your son-in-law to justice.” Dustin smiled.

“Thank you for your consideration, young man. Now, I can finally stop worrying.” Mr. Granville secretly

breathed a sigh of relief.

No one knew that he received a call from the Governor of Millsburg not long ago.

The only message given was to protect Dustin Rhys at any cost!

Dustin's background and influence must be unimaginable if the governor personally made a call to ensure his

safety.

In a city like Swinton, a person with such connections **was** untouchable!

Mr. Granville and his men left in a hurry after greeting Dustin.

"Mr. Rhys, Ms. Nicholson. Are the both of you alright?" Hunter asked anxiously after everyone left.

"We're fine. Thanks for your help, Mr. Anderson." Dahlia nodded her thanks.

"It's nothing. Don't worry about it." Hunter nodded in return.

"Dustin, it seems you're having a good time!" Natasha came over, her heels clacking on the ground.

She stared at Dustin with resentment, **as** if he had cheated on her.

"What do you mean?" Dustin said, puzzled.

"Am I mistaken?" Natasha crossed her arms and countered sarcastically. "When I heard that you were locked up, I was so worried that I went everywhere looking for help to get you released. On the other hand, you are

here chatting with another woman. Why wouldn't you be having a good time?"

"Don't misread the situation. She **was** arrested because of me," Dustin **replied** awkwardly.

"Is that true?" Natasha wasn't convinced.

"If that was the case, why are your hands clasped together so tightly?"

"What?" Dustin and Dahlia looked down simultaneously.

They hadn't realized that their fingers were intertwined.

Startled, they let go of each other immediately.

"I never thought a simple man like you would be a playboy. I'm so disappointed in you, Dustin! My devotion is

wasted on you!" Natasha gave an exasperated sigh, turned around and left.

"Ms. Harmon!" Dustin took a few steps toward Natasha before giving Dahlia a glance, as if he had something

to say to her.

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Chapter 105

"Why are you **looking at** me? Go after her. It's none of my business!" Dahlia **faked a** nonchalant tone and

avoided his gaze.

"Alright. Use a cab to get home." With that, Dustin ran after Natasha.

Did Dustin really chase after Natasha?

Dahlia gritted her teeth in annoyance.

Did he not know that it was just a test to see whether **he** would prioritize her or Natasha?

What a dolt!

She was being sulky to get his attention, that's why she asked him to chase after Natasha. If she asked him to

jump off a building, would he just obey like an idiot?

The thought of Dustin spending time with Natasha irked her immensely.

“Ms. Harmon, please listen to my explanation!”

Dustin caught up to Natasha at the entrance. “Due to the dangerous circumstances, I had to protect Dahlia. I’m not thinking of getting back together with her.”

“Is that true?” Natasha stared at him suspiciously.

“Of course! Why would I lie to you?” Dustin replied with a serious expression.

“Alright then, since you rushed out to explain to me, I’ll forgive you on account of your sincerity!” Natasha suddenly grinned from ear to ear..

The disappointment and resentment on her face disappeared in a flash.

Dustin was stunned at how quick a woman’s mood could change. Their emotions **were as** unpredictable as

the weather.

He couldn’t help but suspect Natasha had just pulled a **fast** one on him.

“Dahlia, you’re still a notch below me!” Natasha thought as she gave Dahlia a smug glance.

From Dustin’s actions, it was obvious that he was more concerned about her than Dahlia.

“Let’s go, I’ll send you home,” Natasha said with a bright smile.

“Not right now. I have to meet someone.” Dustin shook his head.

“Meet someone? Who?”

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Chapter 106

Chapter 106

At this moment, in a beautiful villa.

Duane was talking to a young man dressed in luxurious clothes.

Behind that man, two female bodyguards stood at attention.

They **were** armed with swords and emitted an unapproachable aura.

"Duane, what's this gemiphen that you are talking about? Is it really that powerful?" Oliver Williams took a sip

of his coffee.

"Mr. Williams, I can assure you of its effects. I have personally tried the pill myself!" Duane boasted

"confidently. "A gemiphen pill saved my life when I was close to death from internal injuries. I'm not

exaggerating when I say this medicine could heal almost anything!"

"Talk is cheap. Where's the pill? Let me have a look." Oliver stretched out his palm.

"Due to the rarity of gemiphen, I do not have one with me right now."

"Are you joking? You called me here in the dead of the night for a deal. How could you not be prepared with

the goods?" Oliver's eyes glinted coldly.

"Mr. Williams, please calm down. I would never dare to offend you. One of my men is on the way to obtain the

prescription. I'm sure he will be here soon." Duane tried to appease him.

"For your sake, I hope he does. Don't you know the consequences of toying with a member of the Boulderthorn

guild?" Oliver rapped impatiently on the table.

"Of course, Mr. Williams. Once I receive the prescription, I will start production immediately and present the

first batch of gemiphen to you," Duane answered.

"That's more like it." Oliver nodded with satisfaction. "On my end, I will say a few good words about you to my father. Who knows? He might extend his support to you if he is in a good mood!"

"Thank you so much, Mr. Williams! I will not let you down!" Duane's face broke into smiles.

According to his research, not only could gemiphen heal severe internal injuries, but it could also accelerate

the effects of training in martial artists.

If the pill was properly marketed, martial artists all over the world would be interested in getting this pill for

themselves!

That was why Duane contacted Boulderthorn guild in the first place.

As one of the top guilds in the South, Boulderthorn's influence was spread far and wide.

Their guild members were in the hundreds of thousands, having top positions in politics, the military, and the business world.

If he was able to get an exclusive contract to supply gemiphen to the Boulderthorn guild, his wealth would be multiplied numerous folds.

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Being the top **dog** in Millsburg wouldn't **be** a farfetched dream.

"Duane, don't get ahead of yourself. If you want my father's support, first, you would have to supply us with gemiphen continuously. Secondly, loyalty is paramount. Do you understand?" Oliver said sternly.

"I will remember your advice, Mr. Williams!" Duane nodded.

While talking, they were interrupted by a commotion from the gardens. The noise sounded like a cacophony of curses and cries of pain.

"What's going on?" Duane frowned.

At this moment, a bodyguard rushed into the room, his face pale as a sheet.

"Boss, someone **trespassed** into your villa!"

"What?" Duane's expression darkened. "Who's the punk who dared to trespass on my property?"

"It's too dark to identify the intruder. However, it is confirmed that he came alone," the bodyguard mumbled.

"Geez! What's wrong with the lot of you? Can't you handle even one person?" Duane roared in anger.

"Boss, that person was too powerful! Our men could not hold him down!" the bodyguard cried out helplessly.

The man had infiltrated the villa as inconspicuously as a shadow. His movements were agile and his attacks

ruthless.

No number of bodyguards could stand up against him.

With a flick of his finger, they were all blown away like leaves in the wind!

"According to your description, he must be a martial artist?" Duane scratched his chin in confusion.

"There are many martial artists in Swinton, however, few are on my level. Besides, they have started guilds of their own and rarely appear except for important occasions. They wouldn't trespass on my property without

reason."

"Boss, now is not the time to contemplate these things. For your safety, it is better for you to flee!" the

bodyguard advised Duane.

"Flee?" Duane scoffed. "How can I ever show my face in public if any simpleton could chase **me** away from my

own villa?"

"But–But that man is too powerful! What if" the bodyguard trailed off.

"That's enough. I am curious to see the man's abilities for myself!" Duane was not intimidated at all.

He had been well-trained in martial arts since childhood. How could he back down from a challenge?

"Duane, it seems you have met with some trouble. Do you need my help?" Oliver asked knowingly.

"It's just a small inconvenience, Mr. Williams. Don't trouble yourself." Duane chuckled. "Please wait for a

moment, I'll be back shortly after I settle this matter."

He stood up with a slight bow and left the room.

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Since someone came with a direct challenge, he had to accept it.

Otherwise, it would be an insult to his training all these years.

Outside, a silhouette dressed in white could be seen in the garden.

It was Dustin, walking up the driveway to the villa.

Numerous armed bodyguards surrounded him, trying to land an attack.

However, it was pointless. They were like moths flying into a flame.

With every step Dustin took, the swirling energy around him blew the guards **away** if **they** got close enough.

Howls and cries of pain rang out as he walked past the sea of bodyguards nonchalantly.

"If they were lucky, they only sustained broken arms and limbs. The unlucky ones died instantly on impact.

None were strong enough to withstand his aura.

In the end, Duane's men could only look on from a distance.

They did not have the courage to even go up to him. They could only stare at him with the eyes of looking upon a monster.

Being fully trained bodyguards, they assumed that this would be a walk in the park.

Who would have expected them to be completely defeated by a punk?

Dustin made his way up to the villa's main doors, leaving a trail of dead bodies in his wake.

Taking a deep breath, he **roared**, "**Duane**, come out and meet your maker!"

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Chapter 107

"Duane, come out and meet your maker!"

Dustin's roar of anger echoed through the villa like a clap of thunder.

When Duane **heard** this contemptuous challenge, he **was** furious.

"Which idiot is dumb enough to cause trouble on my property?" Duane thought as he rushed out in a hurry.

However, when he saw Dustin in a distance, he couldn't help but be taken aback.

"It's you, Dustin! Weren't you arrested? How did you escape?"

He **had** bribed Mr. Gardner to arrest Dustin and detain him in the Interrogation room.

Even if Natasha were to intervene, she couldn't have helped him escape.

"Was it you who framed me for the crime?" Dustin demanded coldly.

"Since you are **already** here, it means that you know the answer to your question. You're right, I am the one

who

framed you! However, you only have yourself to blame. I had to go to such lengths because you did not

appreciate the chances that I have given you." Duane smirked.

"At the **very least**, you confessed to your crime. Now, I'll give you a chance to redeem yourself. If you cripple

yourself voluntarily and leave Swinton for good, I will not exact my vengeance against you.”
Dustin said

indifferently.

“Cripple myself? Leave Swinton?”

Duane was initially stunned when he heard this. After a moment, he roared with laughter.

“Punk, have you gone crazy? Who do you think you are? If it weren’t for Natasha, do you think you could stand there and threaten me with your words?”

Duane assumed that somehow, Natasha must have found a way to save Dustin.

“If that’s the case, you’re not going to comply?” Dustin’s expression grew stern.

*Kid, it seems like you don’t understand the situation. You were the one who trespassed into my property. If I killed you here right now, no one would say anything! Of course, I’m not one to hold grudges. As long as you give me the prescription for the gemiphen, I’ll consider letting you go.” Duane narrowed his eyes meaningfully.

“It’s you who are unaware of your precarious state.” Dustin shook his head and gave Duane a pitiful look.

“I know you have great strength, punk. However, brute strength is not everything!” Duane smirked and drew his sword. “I wasn’t fully prepared during our last duel. The reason I lost that time was that my forte is in sword fighting and not bare-handed martial arts!”

“Well then, come at me with all you’ve got!” Dustin gestured for Duane to make the first move.

“Arrogant prick! Let’s see if **you** can withstand my attack after training for 20 years!”

With that, Duane struck a pose.

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Extending his arm, he aimed his glittering sword at Dustin's chest as he flew towards him at the speed of light.

However, Dustin did not dodge.

Without a word, he intercepted the attack by gripping the blade with merely two fingers.

Vibrations from the rebounding force caused the blade to bend in on itself.

"What?" Duane was utterly shocked at the sight.

Never in his dreams could he imagine that a full-blown attack could be stopped with bare hands!

Furthermore, Dustin only used two fingers!

What could be happening?

Before Duane could regain his composure, Dustin flicked his fingers.

The bent sword broke into a thousand pieces.

Duane was thrown back from the impact, and he staggered backward, his face stricken with fear.

His prowess in sword fighting seemed like child's play as compared to Dustin's abilities.

With just a single move, Duane was completely defeated!

"Wh-Who are you? How could you have such immense powers?"

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Duane exclaimed in terror, cold sweat pouring down his back.

As **a** martial artist, Duane was well-known for his agile **and** deadly attacks.

At his peak performance, the **massive** energy from his sword could move mountains!

How was Dustin able to intercept his attack?

What kind of monster could shatter swords with his bare hands?

Dustin could not be human!

"Don't you already know who I am?" Dustin closed the distance menacingly and glared at him with icy-cold

eyes.

"Stay—
Stay away!" Duane backed away in a panic. "I don't need the gemiphen's prescription any longer.

Please let me go!"

"I have given you a chance to redeem yourself, but you didn't take it. It's too late to regret now!"

Dustin clapped his hands on Duane's shoulders and squeezed tightly.

With a loud crack, Duane's arms were dislocated from their joints.

An agonizing howl escaped Duane's lips as **intense** pain spread throughout his body.

Without hesitation, Dustin added a punch to his abdomen.

The force of Dustin's attack was concentrated on his organs, which caused Duane to bleed profusely from his

internal injuries.

He fell to the ground in a heap, unable to move.

"You—You made me a cripple!" Duane gritted his teeth, his eyes were red with fury.

"On account of Mr. Anderson, I will not kill you. However, you must pay for your crimes!"

Dustin grabbed Duane by the collar and threw him carelessly into the air.

His limp body flew backward and smashed into the main doors of his villa.

At this moment, Hunter walked in with his men. He had a stern look on his **face**.

"Hunter! Save me, quick!"

When Duane saw who it was, he clung onto Hunter like a lifeline.

"Save you? You ought to be thankful that your life is spared!" Hunter scoffed. "Don't be too happy though. You

will be locked up in Azkaban for the **rest** of your life to pay for your crimes!"

"Azkaban?" Duane was visibly shaken. "What nonsense are you spouting? I am a direct descendant of the

Welch family, one of the most important families in Swinton. Even your position pales in comparison to my status. How **dare** you threaten to throw me into **Azkaban**?"

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Chapter 108

Azkaban was a prison for criminals on death row.

Once admitted, it was impossible for anyone to get out.

The prisoners locked up there were **as** good as dead.

"This was decided by the Welch family's patriarch. Your father had agreed to it as well." Hunter replied calmly.

"No! You are lying to me! Why would my father turn against me?" Duane shook his head violently.

"That's because you have offended Mr. Rhys. The only way to protect the Welch family was to sacrifice you,"

Hunter said bluntly.

"Mr. Rhys? Do you **mean** Dustin?" Duane's eyes widened. "How could it be possible? Why would the Welch

family be afraid of a young punk like him? What is his identity?"

"Dustin Rhys is just an alias. Ten years ago, he went by the name of Logan."

"What?"

"Logan, Rhys."

"**Logan** Rhys?" When Duane heard Dustin's **real** name, the blood drained from his face.

No wonder the Welch family **was** shaken to the core.

Logan Rhys, also known as the kirin, was a legendary martial artist.

His skills were in a league of their own, unsurpassable to this day.

The mere mention of his name struck fear into all of Stonia!

How could he have provoked such a formidable person by mistake?

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After Dustin's Identity was revealed, Duane gave up resistance.

His eyes were **lifeless** as if his **soul** had left his body.

Duane knew that he was a goner.

No one would save him, nor did they dare to.

"Take him away!" Hunter ordered his men to bind Duane up.

Despite knowing the truth, Duane could never leave Azkaban.

There was only one way to leave.

That is, being carried out for cremation after death.

"Stop right there! What are you doing? **Leave** that man alone!"

At that moment, Oliver appeared with his two female bodyguards and approached them aggressively.

Initially, he hadn't planned on getting involved.

However, Duane was such an incompetent Idiot! How could he lose the fight?

Oliver was forced to intervene before that knucklehead got himself locked up.

At any rate, Duane was still of some use to him.

He had to ensure Duane's safety before he got his hands on the precious gem iphen.

"You have nothing to do with this. Don't poke your nose where it doesn't belong." Hunter warned in a cold tone.

"Too bad, I insist. What are **you** going to do about it?" Oliver stuck his hands in his pockets and walked up to

Dustin with a swagger.

“Are you one of Duane’s men?” Dustin asked nonchalantly.

“Duane? With his ability, he could only be my underling! However, I have a business deal with him. Without my permission, no one can take him away. While I am still being nice, release him immediately!” Oliver retorted

proudly with his nose in the air.

“What if I refuse?” Dustin asked.

“You refuse? Punk, don’t you know who I am? Don’t you know who my father is? How dare you talk back to

me? Are you looking for death?” Oliver glared at him contemptuously.

“I couldn’t care less about who you are, or who your father is. It’s best for you to stay out of this and let us

deal with Duane,” Dustin replied nonchalantly.

“Have you gone crazy? Emma, Anna! Break this punk’s legs. Let’s see if he could continue speaking in such a condescending tone while kneeling on the ground!” Oliver smirked.

“Yes, sir!” The two female bodyguards behind him rushed toward Dustin simultaneously.

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Flanking him on both sides, they poised to strike Dustin’s knees with the intention of incapacitating him.

There was no hesitation in carrying out Oliver’s orders.

With that, Dustin did not hold back. He made the first move and slapped both of them on the cheek.

They staggered backward, stunned by the force of the heavy blow.

“You!” Cradling their swollen cheeks, they tried to draw their swords in retaliation.

Before they could do that, Dustin kicked them in the stomach and slapped them on the other cheek as well.

The two bodyguards teetered as stars circled above their heads.

“Punk, you need to be taught a lesson! How dare you engage in a sneak attack?” Oliver was burning with anger.

He rushed forward to land a punch on Dustin’s face.

It was obvious that he was a martial artist. His fists were fast, sure, and accurate.

However, Dustin wasn’t impressed. He caught Oliver’s fist and twisted it.

Oliver’s arm was displaced from its joint as he screamed in misery.

Before Oliver could catch his breath, Dustin followed up with a punch to his abdomen.

Oliver **was** thrown back a few feet away and landed heavily on his back.

The impact caused Oliver to throw up, and he vomited all over himself.

“Sir!” When they saw Oliver injured, the female bodyguards anxiously ran up to defend him.

“Kill him! I order you to kill him right now!” Oliver held his stomach and roared with a ferocious expression on his face.

“There is no mercy for those who hurt our boss!” The female bodyguards drew their swords and prepared to fight.

“Nobody moves!” Suddenly, Hunter shouted and pulled out his gun.

The bodyguards were startled by Hunter’s threat and froze in place. They did not dare to move a muscle.

“Bastard! Don’t you know who I am? How dare you point a gun at me?” Oliver stood up; his face livid.

“I’m Oliver Williams, a member of the Boulderthorn guild. Moreover, my father is the second-in-command!”

“Boulderthorn guild?”

When Oliver revealed his identity, Hunter’s expression grew serious.

As the best guild in the South, Boulderthorn has significant influence in Swinton.

Even Edwin, the wealthiest man in Swinton, was only a normal member of the Boulderthorn guild.

This showed how strong and powerful the guild was!

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“**What, are** you scared?” Oliver cackled mockingly as everyone **remained** silent.

“Now that you know who you are up **against**, kneel down and beg for forgiveness immediately. Otherwise, I will slaughter you and your entire family!”

What was the use of having guns or being a good fighter?

These were all **pointless** as compared to the support of the Boulderthorn guild.

With a single word, he could destroy them all like ants.

This was the power of influence and authority!

“Boulderthorn, is it?” Dustin was still unfazed after hearing Oliver’s threat.

“What if I kill all three of you right now? Then no one would know what had happened here.”

“Kill me? How dare you!” Oliver widened his eyes. “If you touch even a strand of hair on my head, I assure you that your body would be blown up into pieces.”

“Since you threatened my family, what’s there to be afraid of? An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.” Dustin shrugged nonchalantly.

Dustin’s words made Oliver step back in fear, as he was unprepared for a fight.

It would be troublesome if Dustin decided to follow through with what he said.

“I’m going to remember this, punk! I’m not done with you!” Seeing **as** the situation was unfavorable, Oliver and his bodyguards left in a hurry with their tails between their legs.

A wise man knew better than to fight when the odds **were** against him.

With his noble status, it wasn’t worth it to put his life on the line.

“Mr. Anderson, what do you know about Boulderthorn?” Dustin asked as his gaze trailed after them.

“Boulderthorn guild has been expanding rapidly. With their reputation in the world of martial arts, they were set to be the best guild in the South. Their members are widespread in every possible field, which allows the guild to spread its influence far and wide. In addition, I heard that Boulderthorn is planning to open a branch in

Swinton. That man’s father, Mr. Williams was sent here as a representative for the new branch,” Hunter

reported in a low voice.

Dustin nodded **in** acknowledgment and turned around to leave.

That person must have had something to do with the Boulderthorn guild, right?

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At the Nicholson villa.

Everyone was amazed to see Dahlia return home safely.

"Dahlia, you are finally home! I was so worried about you!"

"Sis! Are you alright? Have you been bullied in the interrogation room?"

Florence and James fawned over her eagerly.

Since they received news of Dahlia being detained by Mr. Gardner, they had been extremely worried for her

safety.

They've used up all their connections and spent a ton of money trying to get Dahlia out.

However, there was no reply. They were at a loss for what to do.

Just when they **had** given up, Dahlia unexpectedly returned home on her own.

"Mother, I'm fine. Sorry for making you worry." Dahlia smiled.

She was a little spooked by everything that **had** happened **today**.

Fortunately, she managed to return home safe and sound.

"It's all Dustin's fault. If it weren't for him, you wouldn't have been captured as well!" Florence muttered angrily.

"Mother's right! That shameless man is always doing sneaky things! Sis, you should stay away from **him** to avoid getting caught up in his crimes!" James chimed in.

"Actually, this incident has nothing to do with him. He was framed by someone else." Dahlia tried to defend

Dustin.

"How is it possible? If he is truly innocent, why was he arrested?"

"Yeah, why would they frame him instead of anyone **else**? This could only mean that he has bad character!"

Florence and James complained one after another with disdain.

Dahlia could only sigh in resignation.

"If it were up to me, I would choose Matt. When he heard that you were detained, he went around looking for

help to bail you out. A gentleman like him is rare nowadays!" Florence changed the topic.

"That's right! Sis, if it weren't for Matt's help, you might still be stuck in jail!" James agreed enthusiastically.

"Matt? Are you sure that it was his doing?" Dahlia said, surprised.

"Who else could it be? He and the Hummer family go way **back**. He must have asked for Sir Hummer's help to

get you out," James mused.

"I see, I thought..." Dahlia trailed off.

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She was a bit puzzled regarding Mr. Granville's appearance.

From Natasha's expression, she seemed just **as** surprised as Dahlia to see Mr. Granville there .

By the looks of it, it must be Matt who had requested help from the Hummers family.

Sir Hummers was one of the Mighty Three. It would not be surprising if he had connections with Mr. Granville.

"Dahlia, last time Matt managed to retrieve the large sum of money we had lost; now he got you out of the

interrogation room. You need to show some appreciation. Your cousin, Julie, will be here tomorrow, why don't

you invite Matt along and spend the day together?" Florence asked expectantly.

"Let's see if we have the time." Dahlia squeezed out a forced smile.

Whenever Matt's name **was** mentioned, she was reminded of another person.

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The next morning, at the Peaceful Medical Center.

"Let's eat!"

Dustin shouted from the ground floor while setting up the table for breakfast.

"I'm coming! Why are you in such a hurry?"

After a moment, a one-eyed old man limped down the stairs with a walking stick.

"Hey, punk! Where's the alcohol?" He demanded angrily.

"No alcohol for breakfast. Have some soup." Dustin gave him a bowl of chicken soup.

"I'm not going to eat if there's no alcohol!" The old man threw a tantrum.

"Suit yourself." Dustin paid him no mind. He sat down and started eating his breakfast.

The old man couldn't hold back any longer as Dustin was about to finish the food.

"Geez, what a rude young man!"

Lifting the bowl, he swallowed the soup in large gulps.

"Here, this is the Panax root you asked for. Keep it safe."

After breakfast, Dustin placed a box made from cedar wood on the table.

"Oh, did you manage to obtain another precious herb? You are really efficient!" the one-eyed man exclaimed in

surprise.

"I need another four herbs; hopefully, I can collect them all in time." Dustin muttered.

"These things can't be forced. Leave it up to fate," the old man **said** casually.

For an elderly person like him, each day was like a gift.

A silver Bentley stopped at the entrance of the medical center, interrupting the conversation

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A gorgeous, alluring woman got out of the car and walked up to them.

"Wow, what a beauty! She has curves in all the right places! Punk, aren't you divorced? Don't you want to take her as your wife?" The old man cackled gleefully.

"Shut up, old man!"

Dustin glared at him and stood up to greet Natasha. "Ms. Harmon, why **are** you here?"

"What? Am I not welcome?" Natasha smirked.

"Of course not. Have a seat." Dustin pulled out a chair for her.

"You must be Old Mr. Whiskey? I've heard that you love alcohol; that's why I brought some homebrewed ale as

a gift." With a smile, Natasha placed two bottles on the table.

"I'm satisfied as long as I have some alcohol! A glass of well-brewed ale is as valuable as liquid gold!" The one-eyed man beamed with joy.

He was just complaining about the lack of alcohol. This was exactly what he needed.

"If you like, I can send alcohol to you every day." Natasha chuckled.

"You are such a thoughtful and considerate young lady, much better than that Dahlia girl!"

The one-eyed man grinned from ear to ear.

—

"Punk, you are so fortunate to have met such a wonderful woman like Ms. Harmon. You have to cherish her!"

"Take your alcohol and go away!" Dustin complained in annoyance.

"Alright, alright. I'm going upstairs to drink on my own. I don't want to be a third wheel here."
The old man carried both bottles and went up the stairs.

"Ms. Harmon, I apologize on behalf of that old man. He could be rude and ignorant." Dustin smiled sheepishly.

"I don't think he said anything wrong. Are you offended?" Natasha raised her eyebrows.

"No." Dustin shook his head.

"That's alright, then." Natasha chuckled.

"That reminds me, I've gone through so much trouble to help you escape from the interrogation room. How are

you going to repay me?"

"Can I treat you to dinner?" Dustin asked hesitantly.

"That's too predictable." Natasha rolled her eyes.

"Well, what do you want in return?" Dustin asked in confusion.

Without a word, Natasha closed her eyes.

She pointed to her pouty red lips and motioned for Dustin to kiss her.

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Looking at Natasha's closed eyes and puckered lips, she exuded a seductive aura that left Dustin stunned.

"What's wrong with your mouth? Does it hurt or something?" Dustin **was** oblivious.

"What are you on about? I'm letting you kiss me." Natasha explained with frustration.

"Huh?" Dustin's **eyes** twitched in disbelief as he gasped audibly.

"This can't be a good thing, can it?" He thought to himself.

"Fine, if you don't want it so badly, then this will be the last time you'll ever get it," Natasha teased playfully.

"You idiot! If you don't grab this opportunity now, when would you ever get another chance like this!" The one-eyed **old** man peeping from the second floor hollered. He sighed deeply, shaking his head in disbelief at Dustin.

"You'd better shut it!" Dustin turned around and shouted back, his eyes shooting daggers.

However, when he turned his head back again, his attention was drawn to Natasha's flawless complexion and cherry-red lips, making him suddenly realize what he might be missing out on.

"Anyways, I'm done teasing you. Let's get down to business," Natasha interrupted his line of thought and

continued. "Recently, Edwin headhunted the bulk of the main workforce behind

Harmon Pharmaceuticals, so now we're currently looking for leaders to reorganize the team. Given your exceptional medical skills, how

about working for me as an honorary chief physician?"

“I don’t think I’m a good fit for the job,” Dustin grumbled.

He was great when it came to healing and saving lives, but leadership was not his strong suit, and he had absolutely zero experience in that aspect.

“To be honest, you don’t **need** to do anything for the job. You just need to help me keep an eye on things once in a while. But if you ever decide that it’s not for you, then you just **need** to hold on to that title until I find another good fit for the position.”

Sensing his skepticism, Natasha put on a pitiful look for him again. “If you don’t help me out here, I’m afraid

the only thing I can do at this point is to just sit and watch as Edwin obliterates Harmon Pharmaceuticals into dust.”

Feeling defeated and unsure of how to refuse her, he finally relented. “Fine...I suppose I can try.”

“I just knew that you’d help me! Let’s go! Come to my place first, then I can walk you through your duties and

responsibilities!” Natasha exclaimed, immediately all eyes and smiles. With that, she grabbed him and

ushered him into her car.

Half an hour **later** over at Java Joys, Ruth sat at a table with her mother, Jessica. The two of them were busy entertaining a few guests. One of them was a well-dressed, handsome young man, while the other was an old man who had a lab coat on.

The young man spoke first, cutting straight to the point. “I won’t mince words this time, Ms. Ballard. The reason I’m here today is that I’m Investigating the traitor. On a related note, I’m also here to assist my cousin

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in taking down Swinton's pharmaceutical market as soon as possible, mainly to pave the way for future developments in my family."

"Natasha can definitely rest well with you helping around, Quentin. But you know how bad that temper of hers can get. She doesn't like anyone meddling in her affairs, after all," Jessica replied with a small grin.

"I'm afraid there's nothing else I can do, not when this is the outcome of my family's deliberations. As long as my cousin does not do anything that conflicts with the family's interests, I will do the same for any of the decisions she makes," Quentin said as he sipped his tea.

"Hmph, the way I see it, you're obviously just here to spy on my sister!" Ruth, with a scowl on her face,

muttered under her breath.

With her sister's engagement with Tyler Grant coming up, the heads of the family wanted to take every precaution to make sure nothing happened, which was why they sent a spy over to keep watch on her at all

times.

"Oh, and another thing, are the rumors about Edwin Hummer poaching the bulk of the workforce of the company and stealing Eternumax's research documents true?" Quentin brought up the subject out of nowhere.

"Such rumors did surface, but I firmly believe that Natasha has the capacity to resolve everything well."

Jessica's expression was unwavering.

"Eternumax is the fruit of the Harmons' research for many years now, which could have been used as a trump card to dominate the pharmaceutical market in Swinton, but now that this incident has occurred, the guys over at HQ are furious, which is why they had to send an **expert** over." Quentin explained

before stretching out a hand to introduce the white-haired old man sitting next to him.

“This man here is Mr. Wangle. His medical research skills are second to none. So, from now on, he will become the next chief physician for Harmon Pharmaceuticals.”

But

the moment Quentin finished his sentence, a cold voice suddenly boomed from outside the cafe.

“I’ve already found the right guy for the job, Quentin. So no need to bother Mr. Wangle or whatever his name is anymore!” Natasha exclaimed with Dustin, arm in arm, as the two of them stepped through the front doors

boldly.

“What!” Quentin gasped with a frown. His expression darkened as he witnessed the lovey-dovey display

between the two of them.

Before this, he’d caught wind of Natasha securing herself a boy toy, but he didn’t expect the rumors to be true.

If the Grant family heard about this, then the marriage between the two families would obviously be greatly

affected.

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“Why’d you bring him here for, Natasha?” Jessica frowned as she probed.

Natasha replied calmly. “This is my turf, I can bring over whoever I like. Anyway, I’ve already found a **good** fit for the position of chief physician, and it’s Mr. Dustin!”

“**What?!**” Everyone exclaimed in shock when she announced that.

“You’ve got to be kidding me, Natasha! Is he even qualified to serve as chief physician for the Harmons?”

Jessica voiced her displeasure.

“Dustin’s medical skills are top of the line, and he knows the ins and outs of medicine. I believe he won’t face any problems while serving as chief!” Natasha assured Jessica.

“W— what kind of nonsense are you talking about?!” Jessica hollered, obviously agitated by her response.

Ruth interrupted and clamored to her feet to de—escalate the situation. “Calm down, there’s no need to make a

fuss. Let’s just sit down and talk it out. Dustin, let me introduce you to everyone. This is my mom, I believe you’ve met her before. And this man here is my cousin, Quentin Harmon.”

“A pleasure to meet the both of you,” Dustin responded politely with a few nods, with no hint of being

condescending at all.

“So you’re the pretty boy who **keeps** clinging on to Natasha like a leech?” Quentin sneered after looking Dustin

up and down. His gaze was full of disdain toward him. It was as if he **was looking** at ants crawling beneath his

feet.

Quentin’s holler—than—thou attitude caused Dustin to raise an eyebrow, but he quickly returned to his normal

resting face.

“Didn’t I **ask** a question? Why aren’t you saying anything?” Quentin taunted and lifted his chin as if to

Intimidate Dustin.

"I'm afraid I didn't quite catch that, Mr. Harmon," Dustin replied in the calmest manner he could muster.

"You sure you didn't catch that, or are you trying to play dumb with me right now?" Quentin egged him on

before

letting out a sharp sigh. "Fine, I'll reword my question then. Did you kill Tilda Sneider?"

"I did, but-

"Before Dustin could explain himself, he was interrupted by Quentin's booming voice, "Great! Since you've already admitted to the crime, that makes my job a whole lot easier now. I'll see to it that Tilda, one of

the pillars in the Harmon household, doesn't die in vain!" he proclaimed.

Immediately after that, he brought out an urn and slammed it on the table. "Now, I want you to look at her ashes and bow your f*cking head down as an apology to her!"

"What?" Dustin frowned in confusion.

Quentin had shown his disdain before this, but now, it was obvious that he was planning to outright humiliate him in front of everyone.

"Do you have a few screws loose or something? Are you sure that the Tilda Sneider you're referring to is the

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same one who betrayed the Harmons and also plotted to assassinate Ms. Harmon here? Are you saying that I should've spared her?" Dustin questioned.

"Who are you to decide if she gets killed or not! Even if she's a traitor, she still belongs to the Harmons. Her mess should be ours to clean up, not yours! Sho

ouldn't you choose your targets properly before disposing of them? Who are you to meddle in the Harmons' family business anyways?!" Quentin barked out.

Dustin merely let out an exasperated chuckle after hearing his bullshit speech.

Not only did he not receive any thanks for helping the Harmons dispose of their traitors, but now he was even about to get punished for it?

What an eye-opening way to show one's gratitude!

"Enough talk. As long as you bow down to Tilda to make amends for my cousin's sake, I'll consider letting you

off the hook," Quentin ordered in an overbearing manner.

After all, he was but a tiny ant to him, he could step on it as much as he wanted.

"What if I refuse?" Dustin shrugged indifferently.

"What if you refuse? Then I'll make sure to break your f*cking legs!" Quentin sneered.

"I'd like to see you try," Dustin replied as he narrowed his eyes. He had a wicked glint in his eyes.

"Tsk! Now you're just asking for it!" Quentin exploded in rage and slammed his fists on the table and the sound of a teacup shattering beneath his feet could be heard.

"Quentin Harmon! If you dare so much as to touch even a single hair on Dustin, I'll be the one to break your legs instead!" Natasha screamed in fury as she marched toward them.

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"What?"

Natasha's sudden outburst of anger caused Quentin to furrow his brows. "Are you seriously going to turn on

me just to protect this boy toy of yours?"

One reason he wanted to humiliate Dustin so much was that he hated his guts, while the other was because

he wanted to **gauge** Natasha's reaction to the situation.

"Dustin saved my life, so if you **dare** so much as lay **a** finger on him, don't blame me if I flip out on you!"

Natasha warned Quentin sternly.

If not for the fact that he was her cousin, she would have slapped the shit out of him already.

"Is that so!" Quentin snorted as his expression twisted into a scowl.

"While I can put Tilda Snider's case aside for now, I'm still very opposed to the fact that you **plan** to elect him

as the chief physician when he doesn't even have the right qualifications for the job!" Quentin argued back.

Since this was one way of securing power in the company, it was obvious that he wasn't going to let this opportunity slip away so easily. 1

"Whether he's qualified or not, it's not up to you to decide, but me!" Natasha growled with authority.

"Everything you own now was given to you by the **family**, so if you insist on getting in the way of the family's

interests, you're not allowed to blame me if I report you to the board when the time comes!" Quentin

threatened.

"Do whatever you want," Natasha spat. She wasn't afraid of him in the slightest.

“Wait!” Jessica suddenly spoke up.

“Eternumax’s research document leak isn’t a trivial matter, so the next chief physician must be capable enough to mitigate this. I feel Dustin’s still too young for this, so that would make Mr. Wangley the most suitable candidate, no?” She refused to let a naive child like himself hold such a key position in Harmon

Pharmaceuticals.

“Dustin’s medical skills are superb, so I doubt if he’d lose to some dusty **old man**,” Natasha justified

confidently.

“Fine, since you keep insisting that he has great medical skills, then I propose that he beat Mr. Wangley in a medical showdown. Then, we shall see who’s the best among them,” Quentin suggested, stoking the flames.

Natasha couldn’t help but furrow her brows as he finished his sentence.

Suddenly, she realized that she might have fallen into his trap.

“How are we supposed to compete then?” Dustin suddenly spoke up.

Although he wasn’t too interested in becoming chief, Quentin’s arrogance had rubbed him the wrong way, so he decided to roll along with his plan just to prove him wrong.

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“Competing between medical prowess is just too boring, don’t you think, young guns? Why don’t we play with poison instead?” Mr. Wangley changed the topic out of the blue.

“Sure, how do you plan to do **that**?” Dustin remained poker faced.

“Hehe... It’s simple actually. Each of us will concoct a bottle of poison on the spot and exchange it with one another to ingest. Whoever manages to come up with an antidote to save themselves first will be declared the winner. Sound good?” Mr. Wangley proposed.

“Wait a minute! But what if you can’t cure yourself from the poison?” Ruth quickly **asked**.

“Well, if you fail, then I guess you can either get lucky and survive being a cripple or die a violent death instead!” Mr. Wangley guffawed, his eyes gleamed with excitement as he said that.

“No way! Who the hell goes so far for a duel? What if something goes wrong?” Ruth exclaimed in shock.

One wrong step, and one could easily get killed!

“Since we’re going to compete with one another anyways, why don’t we raise the stakes a little? So, up for the challenge, young man?” Mr. Wangley nudged amusedly.

“Don’t fall for his tricks, Dustin! He’s obviously doing this just to back you into a corner,” Natasha warned in a low whisper.

She now suspected that Mr. Wangley wasn’t a physician at all but a master of poison!

Unlike physicians, who cure diseases and save lives, poison masters do research on the complete opposite spectrum of medicine.

For them, they specialized in witchcraft, voodoo, and poison. They had ruthless tactics and strange tricks up their sleeves.

If they settled on a competition to battle out their medical skills, then Dustin would stand a pretty good chance of winning.

But if they opted to go with a poison—concocting competition with a master of poison instead, then it **was** like they were begging to be killed!

“I’m giving you one more chance to back out of this, Mr. Boy Toy. If you admit defeat now, you’ll be giving up your title of chief physician and I’ll still need you to bow down and apologize to Tilda Snider’s ashes!” Quentin spat.

Who was this pale-skinned wimp who **was** bold enough to pick a fight with the great Mr. Wangle anyway?

“Aren’t we just dabbling with some poison? Fine, It’s on,” Dustin proclaimed. He was not the least bit afraid.

“Ha, you asked for it!” Quentin let out a maniacal laugh as he gazed at the soon-to-be-dead man in front of him.

To think he had the gall to compete with a poison master at making poison. He certainly had a death wish!

“Are you out of your mind. Dustin? You could die!” Ruth said anxiously.

“It’s not like they have any rivalry between them either, so why does he insist on putting his life on the line like

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this?” She thought to herself.

“I know full well what I’m doing.” Dustin answered nonchalantly.

“Dustin, are you sure you want to do this?” Natasha frowned.

He could see the slight worry in those beautiful eyes of hers.

She was aware that Quentin was deliberately making things difficult for him, but it wasn’t like she could

outright stop him either.

“Don’t worry, I’ll be fine. You should be worried about them instead.” Dustin grinned.

In fact, he was not only proficient in medicine but very much a specialist in voodoo magic and poison as well.

“Less talk, more poison-making. Mr. Boy Toy!” Quentin urged hurriedly, afraid that he’d chicken out and go

back on his word.

“Wait!” Dustin voiced out and raised his hands all of a sudden.

“I’m all for making poisons, but my only condition is that I **need** you to be involved in this as well.”

“What are you talking about?” Quentin asked in shock, feeling a little uneasy.

“Didn’t you say that you wanted this to be exciting? Later **when** we’re done, why don’t you and I test it with

our bodies, then leave our lives at the mercy of the Lord?” Dustin suggested coolly.

“Cut the crap!” Quentin hollered, and his expression immediately changed. “How are you compare your

peasant life with mine? Why don’t you look at yourself in the mirror for once?”

“Admitting defeat so quickly? If you don’t have the balls to take up this challenge, then kneel down in front of me and admit defeat right now. Oh, and I’ll need an apology too, then I can pretend none of this ever happened

in the first place.” Dustin taunted.

“You-

” Quentin stumbled over his words as a burst of anger overtook him in an instant.

Would he even have any face left after this if he backed down now?

Then again, he was the one with the money and status, so it wasn’t like he stood to gain anything from putting

his life on the line with a filthy peasant like him.

I won't

"Rest assured, Mr. Harmon. With my skills, I'll make sure that any **kind** of poison this punk conjures up even hurt you in the slightest," Mr. Wangley announced with conviction.

If he were to scan the entirety of South City, he was confident that the only person who was able to top him

was Dr. Linden Watkins when it came to making poisons.

"Are you sure about that?" Quentin probed, his brows furrowed slightly.

"Of course! **Just** take the bet, Mr. Harmon, **and** I'll make sure to keep you safe from harm," Mr. Wangley declared confidently.

"Sounds good to me!" Quentin shouted and slapped his hands on the table before getting up to his feet. "If it's my life on the line you want, Mr. Boy Toy, then it's what you'll get! I'll make sure to accompany you to your last

dying breath!"

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After reaching an agreement on both sides, the atmosphere instantly became tense.

Dustin and Mr. Wangley had their subordinates purchase some medicine for them.

The plan was that the two of them would concoct poisons on the spot and down them together at the same time.

As for who would win, that would have to depend on their respective skills.

"Do you think Dustin's going to make it, Sis? What if he gets poisoned to death instead?" Ruth voiced out anxiously.

“Well, since he agreed to it in the first place, I suppose this means he’s confident that he can win. Have some faith in the guy.” Natasha assured with a straight face. Although she looked calm on the outside, she felt uneasy on the inside.

If it were possible, she’d rather Dustin straight-up admit defeat.

“You can say that, but Dustin’s only proficient in medicine. Surely he can’t beat Mr. Wangley in terms of his experience in the field of poison research,” Ruth murmured while shaking her head.

There were many subfields in the field of medicine, with each subfield being vastly different from one to the other.

So, how can an amateur compete with a professional?

Compared to the two sisters’ worries, Jessica felt secondhand embarrassment for Dustin as she sat at the side.

She wasn’t sure if she should label Dustin as arrogant or stupid to agree to compete with a master of poison at making poisons.

Then again, she was still amused that things managed to get to this point.

If Dustin loses, he’ll either be dead or crippled, which would mean that she wouldn’t need to expend so much energy thinking about her daughter’s marriage anymore.

“I would advise you to drop out of the competition while you can, Mr. Boy Toy; else, when the poison kicks in your system, you might not even get the chance to regret your decision anymore!” Quentin pressed.

“To be frank, I have to commend you for your bravery as well. To think that you’re willing to put your life in someone else’s hands. I don’t suppose you ever thought that if ever the old man loses, the one who might kick the bucket is you?” Dustin pointed out flatly.

“Ridiculous! Mr. Wangley has been researching poisons for many years now, so how could he possibly lose? You’ll see how great he is later!” Quentin gave a bark of laughter.

Dustin merely let out a short chuckle and said nothing more in response.

A few moments later, the subordinates the two of them sent to purchase medicine for them entered through the front doors hurriedly.

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Immediately after retrieving the goods, Mr. Wangle started concocting his poison at lightning speed. His movements were so fast that it was enough to make one's head spin.

In the meantime, Dustin took his time with it and did everything at his own pace.

After a long while, Mr. Wangle had finished concocting his poison, which appeared to be a bottle of viscous,

black liquid.

One could even smell a faint scent of dead fish wafting out of it.

"I'm done with my poisons, Mr. Boy Toy. Dare to put it down the hatch?" Quentin taunted as he placed the bottle on the table and provocatively glared at him.

Anyone with a discerning eye could definitely see that the black potion in front of them was highly poisonous.

This **meant** that anyone who ingested it would surely be in danger!

"What say we just forget about this whole thing. Dustin? It's obvious that anyone who drinks this will surely die!" Ruth pleaded, clearly upset.

Natasha, who was standing beside her, also couldn't help but ball up her fists.

"It's just poison. There's nothing to worry about." Dustin grinned before picking up the bottle and downing **the**

entire thing in one swig.

His swift but confident motion caused Quentin to freeze.

"Was this punk actually not afraid of death?" He thought to himself.

“How are you feeling?” Natasha hurriedly probed.

“Well, my mouth feels bitter from the aftertaste, but all in all, the taste is fine.” Dustin evaluated.

Natasha was speechless at his reply. The corners of her mouth started twitching.

“Did you think that I was asking you about the taste?” She thought to herself incredulously.

“You don’t have to put up a front if it’s **too** much for you to bear, **young** man. You just need to bow down to Mr. Harmon and admit your mistakes if you want me to save you,” Mr. Wanglely **said** amusedly.

“Your ‘poison’ is mildly toxic at best,” Dustin replied while smacking his lips a few times.

“If I’m not mistaken, what you just conjured up is the Devil’s Elixir, right? It’s a good poison of choice, but it’s **a** shame you used the wrong ingredients for it. What you should’ve used was aconite instead of epiphyllum. Although both of their medical properties are similar, there are still a few minor differences between them. This is one determining factor of what makes a poison so potent,” he explained.

“Huh? How did you know? Did you peek at me while I was concocting the mix just now?” Mr. Wanglely gasped as his expression warped into pure shock.

He was absolutely correct in deducing that the poison he made was the Devil’s Elixir, and that he had added epiphyllum as one of the ingredients.

“Was it even necessary to peek? I could tell the moment I smelled it in the air.” Dustin retorted.

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“You used a total of five ingredients, namely strychnine, Zeus’ Vine, oranges, phyllanthus, and a sliver of Devil’s grass. It’s such a shame that you were this close to making the perfect poison though.”

The moment Dustin finished speaking, Mr. Wangley couldn't help but break out in a shudder.

To think that this punk could list out every single one of the ingredients he'd used to make his poison.

He'd be fine if he had just told him that he peeked, but it **was** terrifying to think that he could deduce everything just by smell alone!

Even he felt that it would take him light years to even get to this level!

"What the hell happened, Mr. Wangley? A few minutes **have** already passed, and yet he hasn't reacted at all" Quentin thought to himself with some unease.

*Rest assured, Mr. Harmon. Anyone can tell that he's just putting on a bold front right now. Without an antidote, I can guarantee you that he'll kick the bucket in no time flat!" Mr. Wangley hollered with confidence after reeling from his shock.

Even if Dustin found a way to **make** a cure, it would still **be** impossible to completely get rid of the poison from his system.

And that was because Mr. Wangley had added something extra inside.

"Now that's music to my ears." Quentin secretly sighed in relief.

"I'm also done making my poison," Dustin declared as he presented a bottle with a yellow-colored liquid inside.

A lot of steam emanated from the foul-smelling, hot liquid. It looked absolutely disgusting.

"W— what the f*ck is that? It reeks!" Quentin sneered. He immediately covered his scrunched-up nose with his hands.

“While it might stink a bit, I promise you it tastes pretty good. Feel free to give it a go,” Dustin said casually **as** he pushed the bottle toward them.

“You can’t possibly be thinking of chickening out now, right, oh great Quentin Harmon?” Natasha pressed.

Quentin remained silent but turned to look at Mr. Wangle standing beside him, clearly hesitating.

“Relax, Mr. Harmon. I saw every ingredient this kid **used** clearly, so even if you ingest the poison, I can whip

out an antidote for you in under three minutes!” Mr. Wangle assured confidently.

*Sounds great. Here we go!” Quentin exclaimed with his newfound courage. He then proceeded to pick up the

bottle, pinch his nose, and down the whole bottle.

“Eugh!” Quentin gagged just as he downed the poison. It felt like it was about to come back out again.

Not only did it reek, but it also tasted bitter, rancid, and disgusting all at the same time.

It felt as if he had just eaten a pile of shit. It was an extremely unpleasant experience.

“Uh uh, it won’t count if you spit it out!” Dustin reminded.

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“You-

“Quentin gritted his teeth. He had no other choice but to swallow everything back down with a flushed

face.

It'd be a waste to spit everything out after all that effort of drinking it in the first place.

“What exactly did you add inside? How come it stinks so much?” There was a “lingering’ taste in his mouth

and teeth that refused to go away.

“Oh, nothing much. Just some golden juice,” Dustin said flatly.

The moment he revealed it, Mr. Wangle’s face contorted with shock.

Even Jessica, who had been sitting at the side all this while, raised an eyebrow upon hearing that.

““Golden juice“? What the f*ck is that?” Quentin probed, feeling uneasy.

““Golden juice“, or “golden liquid‘ or ‘fecal fluid‘, it basically just means “human excrement” in layman’s terms,” Dustin explained **with** a small grin.

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“WHAT? HUMAN EXCREMENT?”

As soon as Quentin heard this, he immediately started dry heaving next to Dustin.

But since the poison **was** already in his stomach, he couldn’t spit it out even if he wanted to, his face flushed

red instead.

Before this, the phrase ‘eat shit‘ had only been a suggestion, but he couldn’t believe that it had actually happened to him.

“I didn’t expect Dustin to be so heartless by forcing our cousin to eat shit. How is he going to eat anything else from now on?” Ruth commented as she covered her nose with her hands. She then started to move away

from them with a look of disgust.

“For all the shit he spews out from his mouth, I think this is a most fitting punishment.” Natasha couldn’t help but add fuel to the fire too.

“How dare you trick me, you little bastard!” Quentin roared as he raised his head. His expression darkened and his gaze was murderous.

He had never been humiliated this badly in all his life.

“Since we were tasked with making poison, I had the freedom to choose my own recipe, so I was allowed to add any ingredient I saw fit inside, no?” Dustin stated matter-of-factly.

“Good, good! You’ve got some nerve, don’t you?” Quentin shouted, his face contorted with anger.

“I can’t wait to see you begging at my feet later once the poison kicks into your system!”

“We’ll certainly see who will **be** the one who gets down on their knees later. Now, you’d better ask the people

around you whether they can cure the poison I made or not.” Dustin grinned.

“Give me the antidote now, Mr. Wangle!” Quentin urged.

He certainly didn’t want his high-class body to suffer any more damage.

“Calm down, Mr. Harmon. Let me take a **look** at you first,” Mr. Wangle picked up the bottle with the rest of the

poison and brought it close to his nose to smell it.

Then, he dipped his finger into the remaining liquid and placed a drop on the tip of his tongue to taste it.

“Here I was beginning to think it **was** some kind of potent poison. Who would’ve guessed that it was Venenum

Insectum all along?” Mr. Wangle chuckled. It seemed he had found his answer.

“‘Venenum Insectum’? What’s that?” Quentin asked.

“‘Venenum Insectum’ is a poison that’s made from seven types of venomous organisms. They’re first ground

into a fine powder, then mixed together. If I’m not mistaken, the organisms in question **are** snakes, scorpions, toads, centipedes, spiders, poisonous bees, and fire ants,” Mr. Wangle explained with confidence.

“Are you for **real**? You got all that from tasting one small droplet?” Ruth asked incredulously.

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If he had the skills to figure out Dustin’s recipe like that, that would mean that he was pretty much an expert

as well.

“As expected of a poison master, you clearly **are** an expert in your field,” Dustin remarked with a smile.

He had to admit that Mr. Wangle was indeed talented, but it was a shame that he was so close yet so far

once again, mistaking his concoction for Venenum Insectum instead of Venenum Insectum.

The golden juice was merely added in for extra flavor.

“Will you stop spewing nonsense to yourself already, Mr. Wangle? Hurry up and make me an antidote. My

stomach is starting to hurt again.” Quentin whined as he clutched his abdomen with a strained look.

His stomach had begun to churn again two minutes later.

“Wait for me while I whip up an antidote for you, Mr. Harmon.” Mr. Wanglely s wiftly started preparing an

antidote with the ingredients that remained.

“H—

Hurry up! It’s getting more and more painful by the second!” Quentin howled in pain.

The longer time went

on, he felt as if there was a knife inside his abdomen that kept stabbing his ins ides. He

started to break out in a cold sweat.

In the meantime, Dustin looked absolutely fine and showed no abnormal symp toms, so much so that he

managed to sip his tea leisurely.

“H—how are you not affected?” Quentin stuttered, visibly taken aback.

Dustin had drunk the poison first, so why was it that he seemed like he wasn’t affected by it in the slightest?

“I’ve already gotten rid of the poison in my system. So, how could I still be affe cted?”

“You’ve already concocted an antidote? But how? You didn’t do anything!” Qu entin spat in disbelief.

“That’s not for you to worry about. Why don’t you focus on your case first? Lik e what you’re going to do if the

person standing next to you can’t cure the poison,” Dustin suggested with moc k concern.

“The poison I conjured up was a rough one, by the way. It’ll induce searing pain first, and if you fail to obtain

the antidote within three hours, then it’ll tear through your guts and intestines and cause you to die a horrible

death!”

“What!” Quentin gasped and panicked.

His stomach was already hurting badly before this, but after receiving a scare from Dustin, it seemed to hurt

even more.

“I’ve got the antidote for you, Mr. Harthon!” Mr. Wangle announced as he brought a vial of white liquid over to

him in the nick of time.

Without any hesitation, Quentin downed the whole thing in one gulp..

As soon as the antidote landed in his stomach, he immediately felt better.

However, after enduring the pain for a few seconds, he vomited all the white liquid out of his system.

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“What are you doing, Mr. Harmon? You just threw up the antidote!” Mr. Wangle exclaimed in surprise.

“I—I couldn’t help it. I **really** couldn’t hold it in!” Quentin whined helplessly.

“You could even stomach eating shit, so why can’t you do the same for the antidote?” Mr. Wangle scolded, flabbergasted.

“Cut the crap! Hurry up and prepare another dose, I’ll make sure to hold it in this time round,” Quentin shouted

as his face twitched.

Mr. Wangle had no choice but to do as he was told.

Soon, he'd finished whipping up another dose, and Quentin wasted no time in ingesting it.

This time, he managed to hold it in.

"My stomach still hurts like hell, Mr. Wangle. Why haven't the effects kicked in yet?" Quentin complained with a strained look on his face.

"It can't be, the main ingredients to make an antidote for Venenum Insectum are forsythia, lotus root, and white creepers. Then, it just needs to be supplemented with a few herbs and heated **up**, to be able to detoxify the poison. Perhaps the effects of the antidote haven't kicked in yet, so I'll need you to wait a little while longer," Mr. Wangle comforted.

Quentin nodded and forced himself to endure the severe pain for a few more minutes. His face even started

contorting to reflect the indescribable pain he was feeling as time went on.

"Mr. Wangle! I don't think this was the right antidote! Not only did it do nothing to ease the pain, but it also

hurts even more now!" Quentin shouted through gritted teeth and continued to be drenched in sweat.

"How could this be?" Mr. Wangle stepped forward to check Quentin's pulse.

"D—don't tell me this isn't Venenum Insectum?" Mr. Wangle exclaimed.

"Huh? Then what about the antidote that you gave me just now?" Quentin roared in anger.

"What else did you put in your poison, you bastard? I clearly saw you add venomous creepy crawlies inside!" Mr. Wangle turned around and questioned.

"The kind of ingredients I used isn't the main focus here. The real question should be whether you can get rid

of the poison or **not**," Dustin said indifferently.

“You played dirty, didn’t you? So be it! Even if this ends up in a tie, as long as you hand me the antidote. I’ll

give you the antidote for the Devil’s Elixir!” Mr. Wanglely proposed as he made the decision to be the bigger

person.

If he’d concocted the poison using a different recipe, then he would need to take the time to analyze it properly. But now that Quentin was writhing in pain, he didn’t have the luxury to take his time.

It would **be** bad for him too if his source of income were to disappear just like that.

“You want the antidote, don’t you? Fine.” A cocky grin spread on Dustin’s face

.

“According to what you said to me earlier, I want the same back from you. I want you to kneel down before me

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and admit defeat. After that, I’ll give you the antidote.”

The second he finished his sentence, Quentin and Mr. Wanglely’s expressions changed.

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“Don’t get ahead of yourself yet, you bastard!” Mr. Wangley shouted in anger.

“You have to remember that Mr. Harmon isn’t the only one who’s poisoned here. Without my antidote, you won’t be able to **live** past tomorrow with my poison in your system!”

“Is that so? Wanna bet on who kicks the bucket first?” Dustin chuckled.

“Why you-!” Mr. Wangley had been rendered speechless.

Looking at the current state of affairs, it was obvious that Quentin was the one who would lose first.

And it was exactly for this reason that Mr. Wangley proposed to call it a draw.

Unfortunately, the other party was having none of it.

“Hurry up and give **me** the antidote already, Dustin! We’ll count this as a loss on our side!” Quentin yielded grudgingly.

If it weren’t for the fact that he really couldn’t bear the pain anymore, he would never concede to a puny ant like him.

“You can’t just ‘say’ that you’ve lost. Where’s the sincerity in that, Mr. Harmon?” Dustin teased while shaking

his head.

“Don’t you test **me**, Rhys!” Quentin roared.

“When you make mistakes, it’s only logical that you admit your wrongdoings, no? Are you telling me that you can’t even do that much?” Dustin urged on, devoid of the slightest bit of fear.

“Oh, so you want me to get down on my **knees** and admit my mistakes to you? What makes you think you’re f*cking worthy of that?” Quentin sneered as his expression turned cold.

"Of course, I'm not worthy. I guess you'll just have to get rid of the poison by yourselves then," Dustin replied with a shrug.

"Are you threatening **me** right now?" **Quentin** scowled.

"Goodness, no. I'm just returning the favor," Dustin replied, unperturbed.

"Enough, everyone stops this farce at once!" Jessica suddenly screamed.

"You'd better hurry **and** pass the antidote to Quentin right **now**, Dustin. Otherwise, you won't be able to take

responsibility if anything happens to him after this!"

"With all due respect, ma'am, every man considers his promises like gold. So since I **made** a promise just now, naturally I would need to fulfill that promise," Dustin replied plainly.

"What are you on about? And why do you insist on making yourself an enemy of the Harmons today?" Jessica snapped, her pretty face now stone cold.

She initially thought that Dustin would back down and be the bigger man in this situation, but didn't expect him to be so insensitive instead.

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"Can you cut the act already? You didn't say anything when Quentin was bullying Dustin before, so why are you jumping to Quentin's aid when he's in a difficult situation now? Do you even have a shred of dignity left?" Natasha suddenly voiced out.

"Why are you speaking for an outsider when Quentin is your own cousin?" Jessica frowned.

"I only speak for the truth, not blood relations!" Natasha proclaimed, righteously.

"Quentin was the one who started this whole **thing** in the first place, so now he's getting

what he deserves. Since we're outsiders in their competition, we should just sit and watch and not interfere!"

"Why you-!" Jessica growled, obviously angry at her daughter's outburst.

Although she let Natasha have her way outside, she really could not do anything about her in private.

All of her nagging and lectures failed to get to her.

She was such a thorn in her side!

"This is the last time I'm going to ask, Rhys! Are you giving **me** the antidote or not?" Quentin demanded while gritting his teeth.

"And I'll reply with the same answer. Kneel down and apologize first," Dustin stated flatly.

"Fine! Fine!" Quentin finally gave in with a sinister look on his face.

"I **can** kneel down, for sure, but are you sure you want to take responsibility for the consequences that ensue?" Quentin growled, his expression was murderous now.

"I'll need to see it for myself first." Dustin smiled mockingly.

"Fine! I hope you don't regret this!" Quentin shouted through clenched teeth. After hesitating for two seconds,

he finally dropped down to the floor on his knees with a heavy "thud".

But as he knelt, his death glare was firmly planted on Dustin, and his expression extremely fierce.

Humiliating him in public like this was equal to asking for death!

"The man has already knelt before you. Are you satisfied now, Dustin? Hurry up and hand him the antidote

then!" Jessica snapped.

Humiliating Quentin Harmon was equal to humiliating the entirety of the Harmon family.

How dare a measly doctor humiliated a Harmon like that. He was really asking to be killed!

“Here. Bottoms up.” Dustin said as he fished out a small, white vial and poured out the powdery contents into

a cup of tea.

“Is that Hexanavir? Mr. Wangley thought to himself.

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When Mr. Wangley laid his eyes on the small, white-colored vial, his expression immediately turned into shock, but a look of greed replaced it soon after.

That was legendary Dr. Rowan Cross' Miracle Cure!

Why does a punk like him have such a treasure on him in the first place?

Anyone could see that this antidote was incredibly precious and worth a lot of money!

Even the tiniest amount of powder could already fetch sky-high prices.

It was no wonder that the punk could act so cocky, and that was all because he was in possession of Hexanavir.

Today shall be the day of his downfall!

“Hmph!” Quentin snorted and said nothing before downing the whole cup of tea in one gulp.

Almost immediately after he gulped down the tea, the ongoing sharp pains in his stomach gradually started to disappear.

The pain completely disappeared a few minutes later.

This caused Quentin to feel like he'd just survived a huge ordeal.

"I won't forget the shame you inflicted on me today, Rhys! You had better not all into my clutches anymore in the future!" Quentin barked before turning to Natasha Harmon. "And as for you, Natasha, you'd better solve the crisis surrounding Eternumax soon. Else, don't blame me if I report you to the board!"

The moment he finished barking, Quentin left the room in a haggard state.

"You'll definitely regret everything you did today, young man!" Mr. Wangley grunted before turning to **chase** after Quentin.

Did he know who Quentin was? How could a puny doctor like him humiliate him like that?

If ever he decided to seek revenge eventually, he bet that his bones wouldn't be spared even after he was

brutally murdered!

"So you came prepared, Dustin. You really scared me just now." Ruth heaved a sigh of relief.

"It was all thanks to the Hexanavir your sister sent me. Otherwise, I wouldn't have won so **easily**," Dustin let

out a small chuckle.

But of course, the antidote merely made things slightly easier for him.

"Hmph! It was all a trick then!" Jessica snorted and looked at Dustin in disdain.

She initially thought that he'd used his skills for this, but who knew that he had just utilized Hexanavir which was made by the legendary Dr. Rowan Cross.

"You can stay unconvinced as long as you like, but the fact remains that Dustin won" **Natasha** argued with a

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hard **glare**.

“So what if he won by a fluke? What makes you think this kid can research Eternumax without Mr. Wangle here?” Jessica questioned.

Eternumax was the heart and soul of Harmon Pharmaceuticals for many years now and was an equally important part of the family’s development **plans**.

This was why she refused to believe that such an unknown figure like Dustin would have any ability to save

the day.

“Who says? To me, Dustin is way more knowledgeable than whoever this Wangle guy is.” Natasha stood her

ground firmly.

“Fine, since you keep insisting that he’s **the** superior choice, then why don’t we make a bet? If he can develop

Eternumax from scratch, I’ll take it as he’s passed the test. Otherwise, I’ll have him resign from his post immediately to make way for the others!” Jessica roared, clearly enraged.

“I have no qualms with that,” Natasha said, refusing to give way.

Whether he would be able to do it or not was a separate matter. She couldn’t back down now.

“Rhys, you punk! You’d better not let my daughter down!” Jessica spat after getting a clearer look at Dustin. She then folded up her sleeves **and** up and left.

“What did mom mean by ‘test’ just now?” Ruth asked, out of curiosity.

“Kids shouldn’t butt into adult matters.” Natasha rolled her eyes at her in response.

“Hmph! Well, I’m sorry for asking. Who died and made you queen?” Ruth pouted.

“You all keep mentioning Eternumax, but what is it exactly. Ms. Harmon?” Dustin asked while feigning ignorance.

Natasha Harmon forced a smile and started explaining. “Although the Harmon s have a firm grip over many industries, the main focus is still medicine. This was why the decision behind the selection of business

partners and benefit—
sharing were all made in hopes of dominating the pharmaceutical market of th e entirety of Swinton. Thus, that was how we began
researching and developing a new kind of drug, which we plan to use to captu re all of that market share,

“Everything
was going to plan in the beginning, but no one **had** expected that there would be a traitor who had

been planted among us. Thus, Tilda Snider’s assassination presented an oppo rtunity to us, while serving as a warning to all traitors. But the moment they r ealized that they were about to be exposed, they employed methods of coerci on and enticing benefits to lure our employees to other companies instead, wh ich was how they took away a big chunk of our workforce. Not only that, they even stole our research findings! And the research findings in question were f or the new drug we’re developing, Eternumax!”

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“I see.” Dustin nodded.

Dustin recalled something and asked, “Following what you said, between you and Edwin, whoever first create s Eternumax would dominate the market in Swinton?”

“You could say that,” Natasha confirmed his thoughts.

“However, the documents of my researchers have been robbed. We have to s tart all over again. It would be too difficult.”

“Humph! That Hummer is too despicable! Him and his dirty tricks!” Ruth was i ndignant.

““What kind of medicine is Eternumax?” Dustin asked once again.

“Eternumax is a medicine that not only increases your lifespan but also retains beauty. It was said to be derived from an ancient antidote recipe. However, because the recipe was crafted such a long time ago, half of it was lost. We could only keep researching to restore the full recipe.” Natasha explained.

“An ancient antidote recipe?”

“If I’m following correctly, I do know about a type of secret medicine that has a similar effect to Eternumax.” Dustin rubbed his chin

“Oh? And what medicine is that?” Natasha’s eyes sparkled with interest.

“This medicine is called Immortunol. I read about it from a medical book archive. It also increases one’s lifespan and retains beauty. Its effects should be on par with Eternumax.” Dustin smiled faintly.

The archives that he **read** contained all valuable antidotes that had been lost in time.

Whatever **was** listed in there was definitely no ordinary medicine.

“Hah! I don’t believe you for one second! Eternumax is a secret ancient recipe. How could this ‘Immortunol’ even compare to it? I’ve never even heard of such a thing!” Ruth pouted.

“Just because you never heard of it, doesn’t mean it does not exist. There could even possibly be a surprise discovery.” Dustin suggested.

“No matter if it works, we should give it a try. Let me know what ingredients you need. I’ll prepare them right away.” Natasha offered without any hesitation.

That was because there was no other way to go about this. They were in a bind.

“Rue, bring me a pen and paper.” Dustin turned around and commanded.

“Hey! I told you a thousand times already. My name is Ruth! Ruth!” Ruth clenched her teeth.

Ruth gave Dustin a kick before bringing him the pen and paper.

After **taking** the pen and a few scribbles, Dustin finished writing Immortunol's recipe in an instant.

Natasha scanned through the list and nodded. "These ingredients are quite common and **easy** to find. The

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only tricky ingredient would be Luminianth Root."

*Sis, there are a few sellers in the medicine market. Perhaps we could find some there." Ruth suggested.

"Yeah. Bring Dustin along to check it out. I still have some stuff to do." Natasha replied.

"Alright..."

Ruth pouted. Although she was a little disappointed, she agreed to her sister's request.

Her sister had a lot of stuff to do. She knew that she had to help her out.

After setting their destination, Ruth drove Dustin to the market.

A Mercedes-Benz parked in front of a shop named Emporium.

Dahlia and the others stepped out of the car which stopped abruptly.

Other than Florence and James, there was also a pretty, well-dressed lady beside them.

This woman was Florence's niece, Julie Amberson.

"Julie, didn't you say you wanted to get a present? Why are we at a place like this?" Florence was confused.

"Aunt Florence, I just got the news that this shop has a very rare ingredient called the Luminianth Root!" Julie whispered.

"Luminianth Root? What's it for?" The name piqued Florence's curiosity.

“It’s great as a gift, of course! Tomorrow is the Hummers’ birthday party. I’m planning to gift this to Miss Hummer!”

“Why are you gifting this instead of gems or jewelry like everyone else?”

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Chapter 119

“Hehe...You wouldn’t know, would you? Miss Hummer is a noble lady. She doesn’t need gems or jewelry. If

you truly want to impress her, you should give her a one-of-a-kind gift. Luminanth Root has the ability to

retain one’s beauty. No woman could ever **resist** it. I believe that Miss Hummer would like it!” Julie uttered

confidently.

“You’re not wrong, but this Luminianth Root costs a fortune, right?” Florence asked.

“Of course! This is an extremely rare item. You won’t be able to buy it without three to five million dollars.”

Julie nodded.

“What! It’s that expensive?”

Florence was shocked. “Julie, do you even have that much money?”

“Of course, I don’t. But you do! So, lend me a few million dollars, I’ll return it to you next time.” Julie requested

without hesitation.

Her words stunned Florence.

Dahlia and James also frowned at her words.

This cousin of theirs would always borrow money every time she visits.

Last year she “borrowed” a Mercedes-Benz from them for two days. Until now, she still hadn’t returned the car.

It seemed like they will not be getting it back.

If they gave her a few million dollars now, there would definitely be no return as well.

“Julie, it’s not that I don’t want to lend you the money. A few million dollars is really too much.” After thinking for some time, Florence still refused.

“Aunt Florence, your family owns a business! There’s no way you don’t have that kind of money. Or is it that you guys don’t want to lend me the money?” Julie was getting upset.

“No, I really don’t have that much money.” Florence laughed awkwardly.

“If you don’t, then Dahlia should have that money, right? She’s the president of Quine Group! I don’t believe for

a second that she doesn’t have a few million dollars to spare!”

Julie turned to Dahlia as she uttered those words.

“The company’s finances are a bit tight at the moment. Every penny counts. I wouldn’t recommend spending the money on such birthday gifts.” Dahlia shook her head lightly.

If it was an emergency, she would definitely spend money without hesitation.

But for her situation, she really could not help her even if she wanted to.

“Dahlia! You can’t be that stingy? It’s just a few million dollars! It’s not like I wouldn’t return it to you!”

Julie crossed her arms and said confidently. “After I send Miss Hummer this gift, I’ll become her friend. Then,

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I'll get a high-rank position in Hummer Pharmaceuticals. I'll be earning a few million dollars every **year**, easy **peasy!**"

"Julie, you must not get ahead of yourself. It's not that easy to get into Hummer Pharmaceuticals. Never mind a high-rank position, with your experience, it would be best for you to get some training in my company." Dahlia tried to reason with her calmly.

"Dahlia, let me get straight to the point. I'm a valuable graduate of the Ivy League. Everyone wants me. A small company like Quine Group is not worth my time." Julie mocked.

Dahlia was speechless at her remarks.

This cousin of hers **was** a classic narcissist.

No experience and no skill, and yet she still dreamed about becoming a rich supervisor.

She looked down on almost everyone, and yet she doesn't even have the basics down.

"Alright! Back to the point! Are you lending me the money or not?" Julie's arms were still crossed in front of her body arrogantly.

She really had no shame as the one who was borrowing money.

"No!" James answered.

"Fine! Today I finally get to see what kind of people you guys really are! Relatives, my ass! You all just abandoned me when I'm in need. Tomorrow, I will make you pay!" With that, Julie turned around and stomped

away.

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“Julie! Don’t be mad, calm down!”

Florence quickly stopped Julie and smiled. “Isn’t it just a few million dollars? I’ll lend it to you! We’re all family after all. There’s no need to fight.”

“Mom! Why are you playing along with her?” James frowned.

“Julie is my only niece. Now that she’s in a pinch, who would help her if not me?” Florence stated the facts.

“Are you sure this is someone who needs help?” James was displeased.

“Shut it!” Florence glared at her son. “I’m not using your money. Can’t I use my own money?”

“You-!” James was shocked.

“Is she still my mother?” James wondered.

She treated a niece better than her own son.

“Aunt Florence treats me the best!” Julie chirped with a smile on her face.

This was not her first time acting like this. It was effective every single time.

“Of course, who’d treat you well other than me? Let’s go, we’ll buy you the Lumianth Root.”

Florence grabbed Julie’s hand and entered Emporium.

“Sis! You’re not going to stop mom?” James was worried.

“What’s the use of stopping her? This isn’t her first time doing such a thing.” Dahlia already gave up.

Her mother had been treating her sister’s family like this for a long time.

The only problem was their despicable attitude, exploiting her mother’s kindness.

“Hey, boss!” Julie immediately called out confidently while entering the shop.

“Welcome! What can I get for my distinguished guests?”

A middle-aged man with a big belly walked forward to greet his customers.

“A little bird told me that you sell Luminianth Root here. Is that true?” Julie sat down on one of the chairs in the shop.

“Miss, this bird of yours must be very efficient at its job! We do sell them here. In fact, it just arrived yesterday.” The shop owner spoke truthfully.

“Really? How do you plan to sell them?” Julie continued asking.

“This Luminianth Root is not that cheap. We’re planning to hold an auction for it.” The shop owner replied.

“Auctions are too much of a hassle. Why don’t you just sell it to me? It saves you the money to hold an auction.” Julie tried to convince the shop owner.

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“But The shop owner was troubled.

“What? Do you think I can’t afford it? Say it. How much are you planning to sell this for?” Julie asked.

“If miss truly wants to buy it, I wouldn’t try to stop you. I just need this much.” The plump shop owner held up five of his fingers.

“Five million? That’s expensive?!”

Florence immediately froze in place.

Although she expected it, she was still shocked when she heard the price.

“Five million already includes a discount for our friendship. If I were to auction this, I probably would earn five to six times this price. This is also an early price, otherwise, it wouldn’t be so low.” The shop owner shook his head.

“Can’t you lower the price a bit? This amount is too high.” Florence tried to negotiate with him.

“I can’t do that. This precious gem cost me a lot of fortune. To be honest, if I encounter someone who needs this, it wouldn’t even be a problem to sell it for a hundred million dollars.” The shop owner said with a serious face.

“But”

Before Florence could finish her sentence, Julie interrupted her. “Alright, alright! Aunt Florence, we shouldn’t be too sensitive! Isn’t it just five million dollars? We’re buying it!”

“Miss, I love your attitude! I will get someone to bring over the **Luminiath** Root right away!” The shop owner smiled from ear to ear as he signaled the man behind him.

The man immediately understood and ran upstairs.

After a while, he came back and presented a big wooden box.

“Inside is the Luminiath Root. Miss, will you be paying by card or cash?” The shop owner grinned, pleased with the transaction.

“Card.”

Julie said without any remorse, “Go ahead, Aunt Florence.”

The corner of Florence’s lips twitched as she painfully reached into her bag for a card.

As they were finishing up the transaction, a woman’s voice yelled from outside

.

“Wait! That Luminiath Root is ours!”

Everyone looked towards the voice, and immediately, a man and woman walked into the shop.

It was Dustin and Ruth.

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Chapter 121

“Why are you here?” Dahlia was surprised to see Dustin. When she saw the pretty lady standing beside him, she couldn’t help but frown. Her heart clenched in jealousy.

“Was Natasha not enough for him? He still wanted more women?” Dahlia wondered to herself.

“Men are all playboys after all!” She concluded in her mind.

“Dustin, you guys know each other?” Ruth looked between the two of them, feeling a little awkward.

“We do. She’s the president of Quine Group, Miss Dahlia.” Dustin explained.

“So it’s her!” Ruth’s gaze immediately turned hostile.

This woman in front of her was her sister’s greatest love rival. She certainly has to keep an eye on her. She must not let the two of them rekindle their love!

“Humph! How do we keep running into each other? How unlucky of us!” Florence’s face was full of contempt.”

“Dustin! How impressive! I can’t believe you got another girl with you so soon! You really are a gigolo!” James mocked. At the same time, he was envious of him.

“Damn it! I’m much more incredible and yet I still don’t have a girlfriend. And yet, this piece of trash changes his girls every time I meet him. First, it was the queen of business, Natasha. Now he has this new pretty girl! The world is so unfair!” James thought to himself.

“Oi! Was it the two of you making a ruckus?!” Julie scanned Dustin and Ruth, looking annoyed.

“It was me.”

Ruth stepped forward and chirped, "Boss, This Lumianth Root is ours. Name a price."

"Humph! Do you think it's yours if you say so? Who do you think you are?"

Julie said in an unfriendly tone, "Let me tell you, I already paid five million dollars for this Lumianth Root!"

"Pretty lady, we need this Lumianth Root urgently. I hope you can do us a favor." Ruth asked kindly.

"Who are you to be asking me for a favor? Scram!" Julie was stubborn and ruthless.

"Hm? Boss, she offered five million dollars, right? I'll give you eight million dollars!" Ruth frowned and declared boldly.

"Eight million dollars?!"

Everyone was shocked at the number. Especially the shop owner. His eyes were sparkling with excitement.

The other customers were also watching the scene, amused.

"Hey! What are you doing? You're picking a fight on purpose, aren't you?!" Julie's face darkened.

"This precious **treasure** deserves such a high price. Do you have a problem with that?" Ruth was only doing what she thought was right.

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Chapter 121

"Bitch! You want to play **this** game? Fine! I'll pay ten million dollars!" Julie yelled.

Florence's face turned as pale as a ghost as she heard that.

Five million dollars **was** already her limit. Ten million dollars would cost more than her fortune.

Without hesitation, Ruth replied, "I'll pay 12 million dollars then."

"15 million dollars! End this deal now! Boss! You know the first come first serve policy. This Luminianth Root

is already mine. If you **dare** to sell it to someone else, I'll destroy this shop of yours!" Julie roared and snatched the wooden box before everyone could say a word.

"Alright, alright. Luminianth Root is yours!" The shop owner agreed reluctantly. But the truth was, he was extremely happy.

"Boss, why are you selling it to her? I can give you 12 million dollars!" Ruth was not pleased with the outcome.

"It's not about the money. Business is about credibility. This lady ordered the Luminianth Root first, so it should be hers." The shop owner played along with Julie.

"Did you hear that? So what if you have money? What's mine is mine, you can't take it from me!" Julie smiled joyfully as if she had won a battle.

On the other hand, Florence who was standing behind Julie was devastated.

15 million dollars!

She was going to be broke!

Chapter 122

Seeing Julie's joyful face, Ruth clenched her teeth and held back her anger.

"Pretty lady, I really need this Luminianth Root. Can't you just sell it to me? I'll pay you 20 million!" Ruth tried her best to rein in her emotions.

"So what if you have money? You want my Luminianth Root? Dream on!" Julie hugged the wooden box closer to her body, looking proud of herself.

"You-!"

Ruth **was at** her limit. She had never been treated like this before ever since a young age.

In the end, she gave up. "Dustin! I don't care anymore! You handle it yourself!"

Looking at the situation, Dustin could only ask, "Julie, what are you planning to use the Luminianth Root for?"

"That's none of your damn business!"

Julie glared at him and declared firmly. "Listen up you guys, I will never sell the Luminianth Root to you guys

no matter what you say!"

"That is a huge Luminianth Root. You won't be able to finish it if you're planning to use it as a medicine-"

Before Dustin could finish, Julie interrupted rudely. "Shut up! So what if I can't finish using it? Even if I waste it and have no use for it, I will never sell it to you guys!"

Dustin frowned at her words. He never imagined her to be so unreasonable and petty.

"Boss! Card!" Julie snatched the card from Florence's hand and passed it to the shop owner swiftly.

No matter what, she wouldn't go back on her words!

"Julie! Well, 15 million dollars is too much, don't you think?" Florence's legs almost **gave** away.

That was her entire fortune!

"Aunt Florence, it's just 15 million dollars. It's nothing. When I earn money, I'll double it and give it back to you!" Julie promised confidently.

The corner of Florence's lips twitched as she heard that.

"Don't know how many blue moons it would take for you to earn that huge amount of money." Florence

thought to herself.

After the transaction was done, Julie was in high spirits. She mocked Ruth and Dustin, "You guys haven't seen anything precious like this, have you? I'll be kind and let you guys see it for the first time!"

After finishing her sentence, she immediately opened the wooden box.

Everyone peeked into the box, and the only thing they could see was a Luminianth Root that was the size of a palm.

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Chapter 122

The Luminianth Root was dark greyish. Its flesh was scrawny and wilted. It looked dry and had no signs of life.

Upon contact, the root crumbles into powder. A piece of its surface falls out.

"Huh?"

Julie frowned and asked, "Boss, are you sure this is Luminianth Root? Why does it look so suspicious?"

The item in front of her was way different from what she had expected.

"Of course! I harvested this Luminianth Root myself yesterday! It's definitely the real thing!" The shop owner

grinned.

"Why does it look like it's dead?" Julie was suspicious.

"Boss! Did you just scam us by selling us **a** fake Luminianth Root?" Florence was shocked and worried.

"How could I?"

The shop owner smiled meekly. "This Luminianth Root is definitely real. It's just a little ugly, but it is still the

real deal"

"Boss, that isn't ethical of you."

Dahlia **looked** at the Luminianth Root and pointed out "It is **a** Luminianth Root, but this one is obviously wilted. There's no sign of life at all. It's the same as **a** piece of wood. How could you sell it for such a high price?"

"What? A piece of wood?!"

Florence and Julie were **shocked** to the core when **they** heard this.

No wonder it didn't **look** right. It was a defective product.

"Damn you fatty! You **lied** to us! Hurry and **give** our money back!" Florence roared, her face red from anger.

"That's right! Hurry up and give us a refund!"

After coming back to her senses, Julie chimed in.

Did he really think **he** could scam her 15 million dollars for a piece of trash?!

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"Look here, we've laid out our terms clearly. You were the ones who insisted on buying it. I didn't force you guys at all." The shop owner said indifferently.

"Stop the crap! I don't want this Luminianth Root anymore. Hurry up and give me a refund!" Julie grabbed the man by his collar and roared.

"What? Are you trying to stir up trouble in my shop?"

The shop owner's expression did not falter, and he quickly clapped his hands once.

Soon, a group of brawny men came out from the room behind.

Seeing the fierce looks on their face, Julie and the rest were immediately stunned and silent.

"Are you guys tired of living? How dare you stir up trouble in Mr. Walter's shop?"

"Anyone could tell that they're brainless, they have no clue about the rules here."

"Exactly! They don't even check the item before raising their bid. Doesn't that say something about their stupidity?"

The crowd started gossiping.

"What? You think that I'm scared because you have a few men?"

Florence glared at him, putting up a brave front as she threatened, "You son of a b*tch! I'm warning you, you
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better give me a refund right now or I'll sue you for fraud!"

"Go ahead, sue me as you please." Mr. Walter remained unfazed by her threats.

"I really did sell you a Luminianth Root. No matter where you ask, this is what you get. As for the price, you were the ones who added it. It has nothing to do with me. There's no use in suing me!"

"You-!" Florence clenched her teeth. She didn't dare to lift a finger because of the men.

"You fat bastard! Why didn't you mention anything about the Luminianth Root being defective?" Julie said, pissed at the turn of events.

"Before you paid, I already passed the Luminianth Root to you. Now, you're blaming me because you didn't open and check it yourself?" Mr. Walter retorted assertively.

Julie's blood started to boil at his statement. However, there was nothing she could do.

Although she wasn't the one who paid for it, the feeling of being scammed was still frustrating.

"Hahaha! 15 million for a piece of wood! That's hilarious!" Ruth mocked without remorse.

Now she finally had the chance to pay them back for making fun of her.

"Mind your own business!" Julie barked.

"Actually, now that I think about it, I should thank you for not selling it to me. Otherwise, I would've been the

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one who's scammed!" Ruth laughed.

"You-you!!"

Julie was fuming, steam was coming out of her ears and her face flushed red in anger.

One could almost see the daggers in her eyes.

"Miss, didn't you say you want to buy Luminianth Root? We'll sell it to you. Just **give us** 20 million dollars." Florence looked as if she'd seen an angel. She immediately brought the Luminianth Root to Ruth.

"Do you think I'm stupid? Are you really asking 20 million for a piece of trash?" Ruth mocked.

Although she was rich, she wasn't stupid.

A wilted Luminianth Root had no use for medicine.

"If you think that's expensive, then I'll lower the price for you. **Is** 15 million okay?" Florence begged once again.

Right now, she only hoped to sell it out as fast as possible. Otherwise...

"No." Ruth refused firmly.

"10 million! 10 million is good, right? We're already making a loss here!" Florence begged frantically, and sweat started to form on her face.

"Do you think this thing is still worth 10 million dollars?" Ruth asked, looking at Florence as if she was crazy.

"Five million! Just five million dollars!"

Florence was on the verge of tears. Her **eyes** darted around the room. "Anyone, please! Will someone be generous enough to buy it for five million dollars?!"

Right now, she could not ask for the original price. She could only hope for minimizing her loss.

"Stop wasting your energy. Only an idiot would buy this piece of trash!" Ruth pursed her lips

.

Right after she finished her sentence, a voice rang from behind.

"I'll buy it for five million dollars."

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Chapter 124

"I'll buy it for five million dollars." Dustin's voice captured several customers' attention. They all looked at him

as if he had grown another head.

Anyone who's in the right mind would be able to tell that this Luminianth Root **was** defective. Only an idiot

would buy a Luminianth Root in that condition.

"Dustin, have you lost your mind? Why are you spending **five** million for a piece of trash?" Ruth was shocked.

Although it wasn't a lot of money for her, it was still a dumb decision.

"You, you really want to buy it?" Florence could not believe it.

"What? Do you not want to sell it?" Dustin asked.

"I'll sell it! Of course, I'll sell it!"

Florence nodded her **head** repeatedly as a smile bloomed on her face.

Although she **still** made a loss for selling it for five million dollars, it **was** still better than nothing.

"Dustin, this Luminianth Root is obviously useless. Are you sure you want to buy it?" Dahlia asked in surprise.

"Oh, silly! What **are** you talking about? This Luminianth Root is a precious gem!" Florence was taken aback.

She finally got a chance to sell it out. How could Dahlia suddenly sabotage her?

"What if he changed his mind?" Florence was worried.

Dustin nodded. "Of course, I'll buy it. At least I think it's very useful."

"Yes, of course! This is a precious Luminianth Root, the rarest you can find in the world! You're definitely getting all your money's worth for five million dollars!" Florence pitched frantically. It was as if she'd met her

saving grace

"Dustin! Five million dollars is not a small amount! Do you even have that much money?" James questioned.

"I don't, but she does."

Dustin pointed towards Ruth who was standing beside him.

"Me?" Ruth **was** stunned. She rolled her eyes.

"I won't do such a dumb thing!"

"Can you take it as me borrowing your money? This is extremely important to me." Dustin asked earnestly.

"Alright, alright! I give in. Here, take your five million dollars. You better remember this as a lesson." Ruth

couldn't refuse.

After all, five million dollars was not a lot for her.

In the end, they managed to secure a **trade**.

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After receiving the money, Julie couldn't help but laugh. "Dustin! You really are dumber than I thought! The

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Chapter 124

Luminiath Root was obviously defective **and** yet you still insisted on buying it! I praise you for your courage!"

"Thankfully there's an idiot to fall for it, otherwise we'd make such a great loss!" Florence gloated.

"Five million for a piece of **trash**, how amazing!" James laughed mockingly as he shook his head, enjoying the

show.

"How would you guys know that this is a piece of trash?" Dustin remained unfazed.

"Are you blind? Can't you see? It's wilted! If it's not trash then what is it?" Julie mocked.

"That's only what you think. In my **eyes**, it's a priceless treasure." Dustin smiled.

"Priceless treasure? Looks like you're not just blind, you're brain-dead! You think a piece of trash is a priceless treasure! I can't believe those words just came out of your mouth!" Julie started laughing

uncontrollably.

"How dumb and clueless can you be!" James pursed his lips.

"Have you guys thought about why this Luminianth Root wilted?" Dustin said with a smirk.

"What?"

Everyone was shocked.

"Why?"

Ruth was curious.

Dustin smiled. Instead of replying, he took the Luminianth Root in his hand and slammed it onto the ground.

With a loud "Thunk!", the Luminianth Root shattered to pieces.

"Dustin! Have you lost your mind?!" Ruth was shocked to the core.

Dustin just shattered the thing that they bought for five million dollars!

"Has he really lost his **mind**?" She wondered, clearly in disbelief.

"Even if you're rich, you shouldn't trash like that!" She thought.

"He's brain-dead after all!" Julle laughed louder.

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Chapter 125

"You're hopeless." James thought he was looking at an idiot.

"What on earth are you up to?" Dahlia also frowned at the scene.

She really could not understand his outrageous behavior.

Ignoring the crowd's gazes, Dustin reached down to the shattered Luminianth Root and started to search for

something.

Soon, a crimson **red**, finger-sized Luminianth Root appeared.

This small and delicate Luminianth Root was red as blood. It was even emanating an odd smell.

One could tell that it was no ordinary item.

"That's odd, how could there be a smaller Luminianth Root?" Ruth was confused.

"Is it possible for Luminianth Root to give birth?"

At that moment, Mr. Walter seemed to realize something and exclaimed. "No—no way! Could it be—that's a Blood Luminianth Root?!"

Everyone in the room went wild at his statement.

"What? Blood Luminianth Root? Mr. Walter, you're not kidding, are you?!"

"That's right. I've seen it in a book, this is **truly** a Blood Luminianth Root!"

"Oh my God! I can't believe that I get to see a Blood Luminianth Root with my own eyes! How exciting!"

The crowd broke into a discussion.

Some were surprised, others were envious.

"Wait! What's a Blood Luminianth Root?" Ruth looked around, not understanding what was going on.

"Blood Luminianth Root is also one of the Luminianth Root variants. However, it is more precious and rarer than a normal Luminianth Root! You could say that it's the King of Luminianth Roots! It is an invaluable treasure!" Mr. Walter gulped, looking elated.

"Invaluable treasure? Then how much would it cost?" Ruth asked out of curiosity.

“Blood Luminianth Root is extremely valuable. If I were to auction it, it would cost more than ten billion dollars!” The words from Mr. Walter’s mouth shocked everyone in the room.

“What? Ten billion?!”

Everyone could not believe what he just said.

This was an amount that none of them could afford even if they had sold all their possessions!

“How—
how could it be? This tiny thing is worth ten billion dollars?” Florence’s eyes widened in disbelief.

“Ten billion is just the reserve price. If it were really to be auctioned, it might even be higher!” Mr. Walter

exclaimed.

His words drained the last bit of color from Florence’s face.

This Blood Luminianth Root was hers. Yet, she sold it out for five million dollars. From ten billion to five million dollars...

The difference was just too big!

“How could this happen? No! This can’t be!”

At that moment, Julie and the rest were in shock, unable to accept the situation.

Who would’ve thought that a Blood Luminianth Root could be found inside a wilted Luminianth Root?

“Dustin, my man! I can’t believe you’re so lucky! You managed to discover a Blood Luminianth Root. These five million dollars were well spent!” Ruth burst out laughing.

Even for someone like her, she had never seen anything that was worth ten billion dollars.

“You! Thanks for your sacrifice, otherwise we wouldn’t have been able to get our hands on such a valuable treasure. To be fair, this was supposed to be yours. What a shame, you guys weren’t able to recognize the value of it. Thanks to your losses, we’re able to get it for such a cheap price! Ten billion dollars! How wonderful!” Ruth shook her head and sighed.

Her words pierced into their hearts.

Julie and Florence turned red in anger, looking as if they had fallen into a pool of mud.

That was a treasure worth ten billion dollars!

Because of a small mistake, they **gave** it away to them.

They were really down on their luck!

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Chapter 126

“This fellow really hit the jackpot! I can’t believe he really found a **Blood** Luminianth Root!”

“I know right? With a treasure like that, he won’t have to worry for the rest of his life!”

“Damn it! If I knew there was a treasure hiding in that piece of wood, I would’ve bought it myself!”

With the Blood Luminianth Root’s debut, the onlookers immediately started talking.

All of them looked at Dustin with a gaze full of envy.

“Fuck! This guy really struck gold!” James clenched his teeth, eyes filled with rage.

“**That’s** odd, how did he know that there was a treasure hiding inside? Dahlia was more puzzled than shocked.

Everyone had no clue, even Mr. Walter.

And yet, Dustin managed to notice.

“Is it really luck? Or was there another reason?” She wondered.

“Dustin, we really won big this time! But, how did you guess that a Blood Luminianth Root was hiding in there?”

Ruth asked the question that was on everyone’s minds.

“To be honest, I wasn’t sure as well. It was purely a guess.” Dustin said humbly.

“A guess? You’re saying that you had no idea there was a Blood Luminianth Root inside? And you still used

five million dollars to gamble?” Ruth was a little stunned.

“You can put it **that** way.” Dustin **nodded**.

“I really don’t know whether to call you stupid or lucky.” Ruth gave him an incredulous look.

“I admit that it was indeed a big gamble, but my bet was right. When something goes wrong, there is usually a good reason behind it. There must be a **reason** for a long-living Luminianth Root to wilt. I read about

something similar from a book before.” Dustin smiled faintly.

“You’re a genius! You really enlightened me today!” Ruth gave him a thumbs up.

Her respect for him immediately grew tenfold.

“Wait! This Blood Luminianth Root is mine!” Florence suddenly exclaimed.

She **reached** out to snatch the root but luckily was stopped by Ruth. “Hey! What are you doing?!”

“I’m not selling it! I’ll return your five million **dollars**. I’m not selling this Blood Luminianth Root anymore!” Florence was **in a panic**.

This was worth ten billion dollars. How **could** she give it to someone else so **easily**?

“That’s right! We’re not selling it anymore! Give it back to us!”

After coming back to her senses, Julie chimed in.

Chapter 126

Everyone could not help but frown at their unreasonable behavior.

“Oi! Are you guys that shameless? The deal is done. Now you want to back out? No way!” Ruth blocked them from the Blood Luminianth Root, her expression fierce.

She had never seen such shameless people. They were laughing when they thought they had scammed Dustin. Now that they know they made a loss, they’re using all kinds of methods to get it back.

How disgusting!

“I don’t care! This Blood Luminianth Root is mine. You must return it to me today!” Florence exploded in anger.

It was like a child throwing a tantrum,

“Dustin! I’m warning you, you better give us back the Blood Luminianth Root! Otherwise, I won’t **hold** back on

you!” Julie glared at him with daggers in her eyes.

An invaluable treasure like this **was** enough to make them lose their minds.

“You were the ones who sold it voluntarily. We also handed over the money. Now that I discovered a treasure inside, you’re backing out? Do you think we’d really **give** it back to you?” Dustin brushed them off coldly.

“Stop the nonsense! If you weren’t so despicable and scammed us our Blood Luminianth Root, did you think

we’d sell it to you?” Florence roared in anger.

“Exactly! You clearly knew there was a Blood Luminianth Root inside. Why didn’t you tell us? You purposely

scammed us!” Julie said.

Hearing this, Dustin could only laugh. He was looking at two clowns.

“First of all, I didn’t know there was a Blood Luminianth Root in there. It was just a guess. Secondly. So what if

I know there was a treasure inside? Why do I need to tell you guys? Also, you guys were the ones who harbored **bad** intentions and tried to scam someone else. Otherwise, why would you sell it to me? So, all in all, you guys brought this upon yourself!” Dustin said calmly.

Everyone nodded and agreed with what he said.

“Well said! This guy earned the treasure fair and square. He earned it with his talent!”

“When you scammed them, why didn’t you back out then? Now that you know you made a loss, you’re being shameless!”

“That’s right! If you were to follow their dumb logic, wouldn’t the Blood Luminia nth Root belong to Mr. Walter?”

The onlookers started to express their disdain.

“You— you all **are** ganging up on us, aren’t **you**? You scoundrels, I’ll kill you!” Florence yelled, ready to strike a hit.

“Enough! You’ve made a loss! What’s the point of spilling your guts here? Are you not shameful enough?!”

Dahlia yelled at Florence.

“Dahlia, you…” Florence **was** stunned.

“What **are** you standing there for? **Go!**” Dahlia said angrily, her face contorted in frustration,

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“Mom, we’re definitely not getting back the treasure now. Let’s **go** home and figure out another way.” Before

the situation turned sour, James hurriedly convinced his mom.

His sister rarely gets angry, but once she does, **no** one will be spared.

“Dustin! I’m not done with you!” Florence also didn’t dare to act out. After giving Dustin a fierce glare, she left the room unwillingly.

“Humph! So what if you guys got a Blood Luminianth Root? A guy like you wouldn’t live long enough to use it!” Knowing that they lost, Julie left him a curse before leaving.

“Bleh, bleh, bleh!” Ruth mocked as they left.

“Dustin, those who possess treasures will attract the attention of robbers. Having a treasure like this is not an easy job. You should be careful” Dahlia’s gaze lingered on him for a few moments before leaving.

Because of that, Ruth’s senses were tingling. “Dustin, that gaze of hers **was** a bit weird. Are you guys still not

over each other?”

“What nonsense are you on about?” Dustin rolled his eyes.

“Hey! Don’t say that I didn’t warn you, but you must keep yourself together. Don’t give in to her temptations!” Ruth warned with narrowed eyes. She clenched her teeth, showing her two canines that seemed threatening.

“Rue, what on earth is going on in that little head of yours? Now that we’ve got the Luminianth Root, let’s head home!” Dustin lightly knocked on her head.

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Chapter 127

The night passed by peacefully.

Natasha enjoyed her cup of coffee at Java Joys **as** she flipped through **pages** of documents.

She looked worn **out** after staying up the entire night.

“Natasha!” Just then, Quentin **and** Mr. Wangle stormed in through the **door**.

“What is it?” Natasha couldn’t even be bothered to spare them a glance. She continued to flip through the

documents.

Bang!

A wooden box **was** rudely slammed on the table.

It opened up to reveal a single white pill in it.

“Check this out. Natasha. Do you know what it is?” Quentin pointed at the pill, and his tone was unmistakably demanding

“How would I know? You tell me.” She sat up lazily.

“Hah! You can’t even recognize the Eternumax?” Quentin looked unimpressed

.

“So this is Eternumax. Well, what about it?” Natasha asked, not too concerned

.

“What about it?! You have the gall to **ask** me what about it? I bought this Eternumax from the Hummers! They’ve managed to manufacture it! Are you aware of that?” Quentin raised his voice.

“Oh? So what? Isn’t it only a matter of time?” Natasha couldn’t be any calmer.

“What is this attitude you’re showing? Do you not see the severity of the issue at hand? The Eternumax that the Hummers produced have shown phenomenal results, and many of the rich and powerful have already put in their orders. Its price has **sky**–

rocketed, and they’re now worth a whopping 500 grand per pill!” Quentin

looked exasperated.

“Oh? So?” Still Natasha was **unfazed**.

“An object **is** valued in proportion to its rarity. Eternumax is monopolizing the market right now because there are no other medications that **can** compete wi

th it yet. But once the Hummers start producing it, we will be severely affected!" Quentin rapped sharply on the table.

"What exactly are you saying?" Natasha countered.

"You **are** now left with two choices. You either **develop** the Eternumax **as** soon as possible, or you will have to

collaborate with Edwin Hummer!" Quentin announced decisively.

"Our **research** findings on the Eternumax have been stolen. It's too late to **start** over from scratch. As for working with **Edwin** Hummer, that's impossible." **Natasha** relused flat out.

"You disagree with **both** options. But you don't have **a** solution to solve the situation, don't you? The family

puts such importance **on** you, and this is **how** you **repay** us?" Quentin questioned aggressively.

"I have my way of dealing with it. You don't have to worry." Natasha **was** still undisturbed.

"This has to do with the gains of the family. I will not allow you to mess around! If you do not come up with a satisfactory solution in three days, do not blame me for reporting you to the board!" Quentin declared justly.

"Do as you wish." Natasha shrugged nonchalantly.

"Fine! Just you wait!" Quentin scoffed before he turned to leave.

From how he saw it, Natasha was bound to lose this time around.

Once she messes up, the family will need a scapegoat to pin the blame on, and he would have an excuse to force her to back out.

Not long after Quentin left, Ruth came running in.

"We did it! We did it!" Ruth exclaimed as she ran in, looking for Natasha with excitement.

"Did what?" Natasha looked up, bewildered.

“The Immortunol! Dustin managed to produce the Immortunol!”

Ruth pulled out a little bottle as she spoke and poured out a green pill from it.

The pill was bright and clear, with a sort of luster to it.

It even has a slight fragrance.

“Oh? This is Immortunol?”

Natasha looked astonished.

Appearance-wise, the pill looked really attractive, akin to a pearl.

“It tastes really good too! Would you like to give it a taste?” Ruth gushed, as though showing off a precious

treasure.

“It tastes good? Do you think this is some kind of snack?”

Natasha did not know what to make of her sister’s comment. But still, she picked up the Immortunol and

popped it in.

It dissolved instantly, and a cool **sensation** flowed through her body as she swallowed it.

A tingly sensation came over her, and she felt rejuvenated. All of her exhaustion seemed to have dissipated on

the spot.

She was refreshed and energized right away!

“Immortunol is amazing indeed!” **Natasha** could not **contain** her awe.

She was really in disbelief at how it **was** able to exhibit such palpable effects immediately.

“Sis! Your face! You look like you’ve aged backward! Your complexion looks much brighter too!” Ruth cried out

in surprise beside her.

“What are you blabbering about? That’s impossible!” Natasha rolled her **eyes**, obviously not buying **what** Ruth had **just** said.

“It’s true! Take a look in the mirror if you don’t believe me!” She took **out** a compact mirror and **passed** it to her sister,

“What?” One look in the mirror was all it took to give Natasha a shock.

She found that after ingesting the Immortunol, her complexion had improved.

Even the dark circles under her eyes, a **result** of her staying up the whole night, had disappeared too.

Her skin’s texture felt like she had just applied a mask to it, bright and hydrated.

“My goodness! This is miraculous!”

She was in utter disbelief **as** she touched her face.

One Immortunol made her feel so rejuvenated, removed the dark circles under her eyes, and primed up her **skin**, making her look much more alluring.

Its beautifying effects were a game–changer!

“How is it? I wasn’t lying, was I?” Ruth looked very pleased with it.

She had been busying herself with assisting Dustin ever since they got their hands on the **Blood** Luminianth Root the **day** before..

So she **played a** part in the production of Immortunol, at least that was what she believed.

“It’s great, isn’t it!” She was momentarily lost in her thoughts before breaking out into a grin. 1

Frankly speaking, she had not held high hopes for them being able to produce the Immortunol. But Dustin had proved her wrong yet again.

He **was** truly their lucky **star!**

“Sis, Immortinol does not only give superb effects, but its production cost is also so much lower than Eternumax. We spent 5 million dollars on the Blood Luminian Root, which Dustin diluted with water, and now, that can last us years!” Ruth’s statement was incredible news.

“Really? That’s wonderful!” Natasha’s spirits were lifted.

Based on what she had just experienced, she was sure that the Immortinol’s effects far surpassed that of the Eternumax.

Furthermore, if they could control its production cost, that would be a breakthrough!

It would not be an exaggeration to **say** that once Immortinol was out on the market, it would bring Eternumax down to its knees.

“Ruth, we **need** to keep Immortinol a **secret**.”

“Why?”

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“Edwin will be having a press release for the launching of **Eternumax** in a few days. We have to take him by surprise and hit him where it hurts. It’ll give him a huge shock in **front** of the press!”

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Chapter 128

Over at the Nicholsons’ that afternoon.

“Dahlia, are you going to Miss Hummer’s birthday party this evening? Can you bring me along?” James asked

excitedly when he saw the invitation on the table.

She was, after all, the daughter of Edwin Hummer, the richest man in the country. It would be beneficial to

make acquaintances with such a person.

“I will be attending the birthday party, but the invitation is limited to two persons only. Julie has already called dibs on it.” Dahlia cast a damp over James’ enthusiasm.

“Her?” Displeased, James turned to look at Julie, who **was** on the couch applying makeup to her face.

“Dahlia, I’m your brother! How could you bring her, and not me?” He grumbled.

At that, Julie shot him a glare and **said** condescendingly, “And what can you do there? Everyone attending the party tonight will be people of status and elites. Wouldn’t a high school dropout like you just embarrass

yourself showing up there?”

“Hey, what’s that supposed to mean? Do **you** think that you’re all that great?” James was irked.

“Better than you, at least.” Julie wasn’t one to back off easily.

“You!”

James was just about to burst into a fit of anger when Florence stopped him just in time. “That’s enough. Julie’s our guest, you should play nice. I think it’d be a good opportunity for her to make good connections at the party this evening since she’s fresh out of college. Let her go with Dahlia.”

“Do you hear that? If I manage to befriend **Miss** Hummer, I’d be on the highway to success! When the **time** comes, I’ll make sure you benefit from it too!” Julie said with her **head** held high.

“Hah! You? I’d be better off relying on myself!!”

James plopped down on the couch, obviously feeling indignant.

Ever since Julie came, all the attention had been shifted to her. He felt that he was now out of favor.

“Ah, right, Dahlia, I nearly forgot.”

Florence seemed to recall something as she rummaged around in her bag. In the end, she pulled out an intricate jewelry box.

“This **is** a **present** that Matt gifted you two days ago. Since you’re attending the party today, I think you can

put this to **good** use. Have a look.”

As she spoke, she opened up the jewelry box. There was a pair of ruby earrings in it..

The earrings were exquisite and delicate. They were dazzling under the light’s illumination.

“Wow! It’s spectacular!”

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Julie’s eyes lit up as she scrambled to get up. She pulled the jewelry box over for a better look at the earrings. Aunt Florence, such gorgeous earrings **must** cost a bomb, won’t they?”

“I heard Matt mention that these are Pandarum earrings, and they are custom — made. This is the only pair in the whole of Swinton. It costs millions, Florence announced proudly.

“Is that so? As expected, only the best from Matt!”

Julie beamed as she picked up one of the earrings and put it on. “Aunt Florence, how does it look on me?”

“You’re a born beauty, Julie. Of course, it looks magnificent on you,” Florence answered.

“Hehe! Well, thank you then, Aunt Florence!”

Julie brazenly took the other earring and put it on too. It was evident that she was about to take it as her own.

Her actions gave Florence quite a shock. “Julie, this is your cousin’s gift from Matt. It wouldn’t be too nice for you to wear it tonight.” Florence chuckled awkwardly.

“What’s wrong with me wearing it? I’m just borrowing it for the night, it’s not like I’m not going to give it back.” Julie snapped bluntly.

“But”

Florence **was** about to counter what she just said, but Julie cut her off. “Aunt Florence, **we’re** relatives. You can’t be so petty, can you?”

“Julie Amberson! These are my sister’s earrings! What rights do you have to wear them?” James finally could not take it any longer.

She said that she was just borrowing them, but the fact was, she had never once returned the items she

borrowed!

This was plain robbery!

“Hey! Why are you shouting at me? Isn’t it just a pair of earrings? Aren’t you just being selfish?” Julie slammed her hand on the table aggressively.

“I’m selfish? Do you have any **idea** how greedy you look right now? Do you have no shame?” James bellowed.

“How dare you scold me? Aunt Florence! Did you hear what James said? I can leave if I’m not welcome here!” Julie flared up.

And with that, she turned to leave.

But before she could even take her first step, Florence pulled her back. “What are you doing, Julie? Of course, you’re welcome here! Aren’t they just a pair of **earrings**? I’ll lend them to you!”

“Mom! You-!”

“Shut it!”

Florence whipped around and shot him a glare. “You’re her older cousin! Why do you keep picking fights with her? Can’t you be more generous?”

“Fine! Keep siding with her then. See if I care!” James was so angry that he stormed out and slammed the door.

Dahlia frowned. It wasn't the earrings that she was concerned about, but Julie's domineering attitude did not sit well with her.

“Dahlia, you do not mind me wearing your earrings, do you?” Julie smiled as she touched the earrings gently.

“It's up to you.” Dahlia could not be bothered to continue speaking to her.

To begin with, she **was** not comfortable with Matt's gift to her.

“Hehe! Thank you, Dahlia.” Julie beamed brightly as she continued applying her makeup.

That evening at Kingdom Hotel, a black Mercedes-Benz rolled up to the main entrance.

The door opened, and Dahlia and Julie got out of the car.

Dahlia dressed down for the occasion in a black dress and black heels. She kept her accessories simple too.

Julie, on the other hand, went all out and dressed herself up, almost looking like a peacock.

She had jewelry from head to toe and looked dazzling under the lights.

To further accentuate the million-dollar pair of ruby earrings, she even did her hair up in a chignon.

She **was** out to be in the limelight.

“Wow! What a stunning lady! She looks like a celebrity!”

“I think she looks even more attractive than any celebrity out there! Her looks and elegance are other-worldly.”

When the both of them got out of the car, a bunch of guests at the entrance turned to look at them. However,

most of their attention **was** on Dahlia.

Despite Julie's showy appearance, she did not receive much attention

After all, it **was** clear that Dahlia was far superior to her in all aspects, from looks to figures. Julie's

extravagant outfit alone **was** not enough to make up for what she lacked.

"Hmph!" She was not pleased.

She had made every preparation she could think of for the birthday party that evening, and she had expected to impress everyone with her beauty.

It had never occurred to her that Dahlia's presence would steal all the attention.

"These men are so blind! How could a woman who had been married before compare to me?" She thought.

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"Dahlia, you can head up first. I'm waiting for a friend here." Julie made up an excuse to send Dahlia **away** once they entered the hotel lobby.

She was well aware that with Dahlia around, she would never get the attention she yearned for.

How would she make acquaintances with the rich and famous then? How would she get to know rich, eligible men?

"Okay, I'll be waiting for you at the banquet hall." Without giving it much thought, Dahlia took the elevator up to the banquet hall.

With Dahlia gone, Julie quickly became the center of attention. She deliberately walked around the lobby and flaunted coquettishly, attracting much attention

Some men approached her in an attempt to strike up a conversation, but she rejected them all, playing hard to get.

“Hey, you’ve got such lovely earrings! May I know where you bought them from?”

“Yes, that’s **true!** I’ve never seen such exquisite earrings before!”

“These rubies **are** huge! They must **have** cost you a lot!”

Soon, not only the men came up to her, but even the ladies flocked over to ask her about the earrings. As usual women could not resist jewelry.

“These ruby earrings are from Pandarum. My boyfriend gave them to me. These are uniquely custom-made, and they **are** the only pair out there. As for the price, they were not too expensive. Just a million or two.” Julie pretended to be unconcerned about their price and smiled.

Though her words sounded humble, arrogance **was** evident on her face.

“A million or two, and you say it’s not expensive? Seems like you’re not the average Tom, Dick, and Harry!”

“How fortunate you are to **have** a boyfriend who gives you such precious earrings!”

“From how I see it, it’s not the price that matters, but the sincerity behind it! It’s custom-made and unique! That’s so **sweet!** How I envy you!”

The group of women chattered away praising Julie.

That fueled Julie’s vanity, pleasing her to no **end**. She really enjoyed being the center of attention and being

praised by others.

Right then, a Rolls–Royce Phantom pulled up at the door.

The car door opened and out stepped **an** alluring **woman** with delicate features and long, flowing hair. She

came **walking** in like a celebrity **among a** group of adoring fans.

“Miss Hummer?!”

The lady’s appearance garnered a lot of attention and a commotion started both inside and outside the lobby.

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Chapter 129

The crowd that had surrounded Julie immediately dispersed and flocked over to Tina, ready to flatter her.

She was, after all, the star of the day. Edwin Hummer’s daughter, **Tina** Hummer!

Julie had intended to go over and welcome her too, but as there were too many people surrounding Tina, she

did not do so.

She knew that going along with what everyone was doing would not make her stand out, and she needed to stand out to make Miss Hummer notice her.

At the thought of that, she intentionally stood at the entrance and tried her **best** to show off the biggest asset she had on her at the moment, which happened to be the pair of ruby earrings.

That was the first step to forming a connection with Miss Hummer. She refused to believe that there **was** any

woman on earth who could resist the temptation of such irresistible jewelry.

As Julie predicted, Tina stopped in front of her when she reached the entrance, with the crowd still around her.

Her gaze was fixed on Julie.

Julie suppressed her excitement and walked up to Tina to introduce herself when she saw that the timing was

right. “Hello, Miss Hummer. I am Julie Amberson. Pleased to make your acquaintance.”

She stretched her hand out for a handshake. But Tina ignored her outstretched hand and stared unwaveringly

at her earrings.

“Those ruby earrings, where did you get them from?” she asked icily.

“My boyfriend gave them to me. These are custom-made Pandarums, you won’t be able to find a similar pair

out there. But of course, Miss Hummer, if you fancy them, I can give them to you.” Julie **was** secretly **delighted**.

“Even the daughter of the wealthiest man can’t resist these earrings,” she thought to herself.

“Boyfriend?”

Tina’s expression clouded over. “Is it Matt Laney?”

The reason why she asked was that she had received the exact same pair of ruby earrings from Matt as her

birthday gift not too long ago.

“Oh! Do you **know** Matt too, Miss Hummer? In that case, we’re friends **too!**” Julie’s **eyes** lit up.

Who knew that a pair of earrings would be the key to her success?

“Who’s your friend? Bitch!”

Tina glared at Julie and struck her across the **face**.

Smack! A loud, crisp sound **was** heard.

Julie was at a **loss as** she held her cheek in her hand. “**Miss** Hummer, why did you hit **me?**”

“What is your relationship with **Matt** Laney? You better come clean. If you hide anything from me, I’ll make

sure you won't live to see the next sunrise!" Tina's **expression** made it clear that she meant every word she

said.

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Chapter 120

She would not let other women mess with what was hers.

"Miss Hummer, I think you're mistaken. Matt and I are just regular friends, nothing **more** than that!" Julie

started to fluster.

She did not know what **had** happened, but it was obvious that she had angered **Tina**.

"Would regular friends give you ruby earrings worth a million dollars? Do you think I'm a dim-wit?" Furious

was an understatement to describe what Tina **was** feeling at that moment.

"It has nothing to do with **me**, Miss Hummer! These ruby earrings aren't mine, they're my cousin Dahlia's! I **only** borrowed them for a few **days**!" Seeing that the situation wasn't favorable to her anymore, Julie stopped

pretending and came clean with the truth.

"Dahlia Nicholson?" Tina's eyes narrowed into slits.

She remembered that that was a name that Matt had mentioned when he asked for her help concerning the interrogation room. She hadn't put much thought into it then, but it turns out that there **was** something fishy

going on with the two of them.

"That b*tch! She seduced my man, and she has the audacity to show up at my birthday party?! Is she **trying** to **provoke** me?" Tina gritted her teeth **as** a murderous glint flashed in her eyes.

“This is all Dahlia Nicholson’s fault, Miss Hummer. I’ve got nothing to do with it. Will you please let me off?”

Julie **was** so scared that she broke out in cold sweat.

She finally **got** an idea of what had happened. Tina and Matt were obviously a couple. The main problem was that Tina recognized the pair of earrings. That was no different from her catching Matt and Dahlia together.

“Shut up! If you do not have a death wish, then do what I tell you to do!” Tina roared.

“You name it, Miss Hummer. Whatever you need me to do, I’ll try my best to accomplish it!” Julie promised

wholeheartedly.

“Put this into Dahlia’s bag.” Tina **took** a delicate jewelry box and handed it to Julie.

“What do you mean, Miss Hummer?” Julie could not wrap her head around Tina’s request.

“Don’t ask questions! Just do **as** you’ve been told!” Tina scolded. “Yes, yes.” Julie nodded vigorously. She was in no place to refuse.

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Chapter 130

Over at the banquet hall, Dahlia was puzzled when she saw Julie panting as she entered. “Didn’t you **say** that you were waiting for a friend, Julie? Where’s your friend?”

“Something came **up** and she couldn’t make it.”

She smiled sheepishly. “Oh, Dahlia, could you lend me your compact mirror, please? I need to fix my makeup.”

“I remembered that you’ve brought one yourself,” Dahlia said.

“Mine’s faulty. I’d prefer to use yours.” Without waiting for a reply, Julie took Dahlia’s bag and fished around in it.

Dahlia was annoyed by that. She had to admit, her cousin was really a spoiled brat who lacked manners.

“**Thanks**, Dahlia.” Julie tossed Dahlia’s bag back to her after she managed to get the compact mirror out. Then, she made up some excuse to go to the **was hroom**.

Right at that moment, Tina made her entrance, followed by a crowd behind her, creating a ruckus in the banquet hall,

In the end, **she** stopped smack in the middle of the hall.

“Quiet down, everyone. I **have** an announcement to make.” Tina raised her hand and gestured for the crowd to

calm down.

The effect was immediate and the hall fell silent.

“It’s my birthday party today, and it was meant to **be** a happy occasion, but something awful has happened!”

Tina’s gaze swept across the hall before she continued. “A pair of valuable earrings which I have intended to wear for the occasion has been stolen. They are a unique pair of custom-made Pandarum earrings, and they are priceless to me!”

The crowd was **in** an uproar when they heard that.

“What? Did someone steal Miss Hummer’s **earrings**? Who has the guts to do that?”

“We must find out who did it! Such a vile person must never be let off the hook!”

“Damn it! If I ever find out who stole Miss Hummer’s belongings, I’ll make sure to rearrange his face!”

The crowd in the hall **was** all worked up, shouting curses and threats at the thief.

On the one hand, they despised the thief, but on the other hand, they **were** trying to please Tina.

“Everyone, please calm down. The fact is, I know who did it.” Tina continued.

“Who? Where’s the thief **among us**? Everyone looked around, trying to figure out who the culprit was.

Tina smiled mirthlessly and strode over to Dahlia.

“She’s the one!” Tina pointed a finger at Dahlia.

“What?”

The crowd was collectively taken **aback** by the accusation,

If the culprit had been a creep, they would have **gone** ahead and taught him a lesson.

But it turns out that the person whom Tina had accused of stealing her belongings was an enchanting beauty.

Everyone **was** at a loss.

“Isn’t that the president of Quine Group? Why would she steal?”

“Exactly! Everyone knows Ms. Nicholson. She wouldn’t stoop so low, would she?”

“One may know a person for a long time without understanding his true nature. Who knows what vile intentions this lady is hiding behind her glamorous appearance?”

The men were generally doubtful of Tina’s accusation, whereas the ladies trusted her fully.

“Miss Hummer, there must be some sort of misunderstanding. I have not stolen anything.”

Dahlia took a moment to regain her composure before denying Tina's accusation.

She had never thought that Tina would pin it on her.

"A quick search should easily be able to tell us whether or not you did it." A faint smile graced Tina's features.

"Miss Hummer, would it not be inappropriate to conduct a search on a guest whom you've invited to your birthday party in front of everyone?" Dahlia **knew** that she was innocent, but that did not **mean** that she should allow others to do as they please.

After all, Tina's suggestion to go through her belongings was an obvious act of disrespect.

"What do you have to fear if you're **not** guilty?" Tina smirked.

"That's right! If you truly are innocent, what harm would a search do to you?"

"Hmph! I think that someone's just feeling guilty!"

The ladies started to back Tina **up**.

Dahlia's presence alone was enough to overshadow their radiance, so they were eager to see her get into trouble.

"Fine, since Miss Hummer insists on going through my things, then, by all means, go ahead." Dahlia could not be bothered to argue with her, so she handed her bag over.

Her conscience was clear, and she did not want to cause a scene, so she might **as** well let them go through

her bag to prove her innocence.

Tina did not **say anything** and simply gestured for her bodyguards to search Dahlia's bag.

Soon, the bodyguards fished out a delicate jewelry box from the bag. The jewelry box even had Tina's name carved on it.

"Miss Hummer, here it is!" The bodyguard handed the jewelry box over to her.

Chapter 130

"Ladies and gentlemen, do you see **this?**"

Tina raised the jewelry box and took out the pair of magnificent ruby earrings in it, displaying them to the crowd. "This! this is evidence!"

The moment the pair of ruby earrings were produced, it brought about a whoosh of uproar throughout the entire hall.

Eyes widened as shock came over everyone's faces.

"No way! Would the president of Quine Group do such a thing?"

"Hah! And I thought that she would be above that! Who would've guessed that she was so materialistic!"

"I thought that such a beautiful person would know to conduct herself better than this! Of all things to do, why would she go and steal from others? That's terrible!"

At that moment, the winds of opinion completely shifted.

With irrefutable evidence staring them in the face, everyone chose to believe Tina.

"No! That's not possible!!

Dahlia's expression changed as she shook her head vigorously. "Why is this in my bag? I've never even

touched it!"

"You b*tch!"

Infuriated. Tina slapped Dahlia.

Smack! Five red streaks immediately bloomed on Dahlia's cheek.

"Miss Hummer, I did not steal them! Someone must **have** set me up!" Dahlia fought to explain.

"How dare you deny it when we have concrete evidence? Seems like you're one to give up only at the sight of the gallows!" Without saying any more, Tina gave her

two more slaps. She truly wasn't going easy on her.

Dahlia's face swelled up and her hair was a mess.

"I did not **steal!**" She clenched her jaws, an unyielding **look** in her **eyes**.

"If I said you stole it, that means you did!"

Tina scoffed. "Guards! Hold her down! I'm going to **teach** her a lesson today!"

"Yes, Miss Hummer!"

Two of her bodyguards went up to Dahlia and restrained her. They held her arms behind her back and brought

her down to her knees so that she **was** kneeling.

"You slut! How dare **you** seduce my man? Have you got a death wish?" Tina grabbed hold of Dahlia's hair, a

wicked look on her **face**.

"It was you? You were the one who framed me?" Dahlia **was** stunned for a moment before it struck her. She had been Tina's target from the get-go!

Chapter 125

"Hah! Guess you're not such a thickhead after all." Tina let out a low laugh.

"But so what if you know? No one can help you now. I can deal with you however I want to." With that, she picked up a bottle of red wine and stuffed the neck of the bottle into Dahlia's mouth.

The red fluid gushed into Dahlia's mouth, and Dahlia choked on it, coughing unstopably. Her face **was** flushed red.

She felt lightheaded and it was horrible.

"Down it! I **said**, down it!" Tina's expression was nothing short of maniacal.

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“You whore! How **dare** you seduce my boyfriend? I’ll make your life a living hell!

Tina kept forcing the wine on Dahlia, humiliating her before the crowd.

She was rough and ruthless.

By the time the bottle of wine was emptied, Dahlia had slumped to the ground helplessly.

Even then, Tina did not stop. She grabbed a fistful of Dahlia’s hair and pulled her head up.

Then, a torrent of slaps rained down on Dahlia, each one harder than the one before.

“You slut! You whore! How dare you mess with my boyfriend? How dare you?” Tina shouted as she roughed

Dahlia up, almost in a frenzy.

When Tina finally stopped, Dahlia’s face was swollen and blotched, with streaks of blood coming out the

corner of her mouth.

“Why? Why?” Dahlia asked breathlessly, trying to regain her bearings.

“You **have** the audacity to ask why? Are you unaware of what you have done, you b*tch!” Tina reached for

Dahlia’s hair again and slammed her head hard to the ground.

Blood gushed out immediately. A mixture of blood and wine dripped down Dahlia’s face.

The sight of Dahlia lying on the **ground** and unable to get up did not garner any sympathy from Tina, in fact; it

seemed to excite her.

She raised her leg and stomped hard on Dahlia's linger.

"Ah!" Dahlia could finally hold in no longer, and a shriek escaped **her**.

A piercing pain overtook her senses.

"You shameless tramp! You like flirting around with other men, don't you? I'd like to see if you'd ever seduce my boyfriend again!" A crazed smile crept up on Tina's face as she repeatedly stepped on Dahlia's hand **with**

her stilettos.

Each time, it struck with greater brutality and ferocity.

In no time, both of Dahlia's hands were a mess of flesh and blood. It **was** a terrifying sight.

"Ahh!" Dahlia's face turned lifeless from the agonizing pain, and she trembled uncontrollably.

Even the strongest of men would not be able to endure it after such merciless torture, much less a woman like

Dahlia.

Most of the crowd felt sorry for her **when** they saw the state she was in.

Surely an act of theft did not warrant such cold-blooded torture?

It was too **cruel!**

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"Dahlia, you can't blame me for this. You've only got yourself to blame for messing with Ms. Hummer's boyfriend and offending her." In a corner, Julie trembled like a leaf.

She did not think that Tina would be so unforgiving. She just came short of torturing Dahlia to her grave.

“Ms. Hummer, she’s out cold.” A bodyguard told Tina,

Dahlia had already passed out from the abuse. She had multiple fractures on her fingers, and her entire palm was bloody. It **was** a ghastly scene.

“She’s down so soon? What a bore.” Tina looked down at Dahlia like she was not done with her yet.

She lifted her leg and wiped the blood off her heels **on** Dahlia’s clothes. Then, with a nonchalant wave of her hand, she said, “Throw her out. I’ll play with her next time.”

Had it not been for her birthday party that night, she would make sure that she had her fun with her.

After Dahlia was thrown out, Julie, who knew that she **was** guilty, dared not **dally** any longer. She sent Dahlia to the hospital immediately.

The medical staff in the emergency ward were all shocked by Dahlia’s state when she was sent in.

She was a gruesome sight to behold, all covered in blood.

The greatest issue was that it was an obvious case of assault, not an accident.

So the question was, who would be **so** brutal to torture a woman until she was in such a miserable state?

“Where is the patient’s next of kin?” A doctor asked.

“There was another lady here with her earlier on, I don’t know where she went.” A nurse looked around, searching for Julie.

“Check the patient’s bag to see if there’s **a** phone in there. Contact her family right **away**.”

“Okay, sure.”

The nurse went through Dahlia's bag and quickly found her phone and unlocked it with Dahlia's fingerprint.

She called the contact which was set as "Husband".

Over at Peaceful Medical Centre, a phone rang.

Dustin, who was in the process of producing Immortunol, pulled his phone out and frowned.

He picked up the **call**. "Hello, is anything the matter?"

"Hello? Are you a family **member** of the owner of this phone? I'm calling from the emergency ward of **East**

Swinton Hospital. You need to come here as soon as possible. The patient's in bad shape."

"She's hurt? What happened?" Dustin's brows knitted even tighter together.

"I'm not too sure either. Come quick."

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Dustin fell silent. Without a moment's hesitation, he rushed over to Fast Swinton Hospital after hanging up the call.

When he stepped into the emergency ward to find Dahlia lying unconscious on the hospital bed, his expression clouded over.

Her face was swollen, blood came out from her mouth, and her forehead had suffered a strong impact.

Worst of all was her fingers, which were broken from being stepped on. They were a bloody mess that he could hardly bear the sight of

It was not difficult to imagine the pain she had been through before she lost consciousness.

"You're her husband, aren't you? What have **you** been up to? How could you let your wife be tortured so terribly? That's very irresponsible of you!" The head nurse complained, feeling sorry for Dahlia.

“How is she?” Dustin’s brows furrowed.

“The patient is not in critical danger currently, but her wounds will take quite a while to heal. Her hands, especially, have multiple comminuted fractures. There is a possibility that they may never fully recover,” The head nurse cautioned him.

“Who did this?” Dustin’s expression was terrifyingly cold and emotionless.

“How would I know? You’re her husband, and you have no idea who did it?” The head nurse scowled.

Dustin held his silence. Suddenly, his gaze shot over to the door.

There was a suspicious person craning by the **door** in an attempt to peek at them.

He dashed **over and** grabbed the person.

“**Hey**, Rhys! What are you doing? Let go of me!” Julie cried out in dismay.

“Who did this to Dahlia? Tell me Dustin demanded furiously.

“I—How would I know?” Julie stuttered.

The very next

next second, she was lifted off the ground by a hand that found its **way** around her throat.

She suffocated, and her struggles **to** catch her breath proved futile.

“I’ll ask you **again**. Who did it?” There **was** a fierce glint in Dustin’s eyes, and a chilling hostility emanated from

him.

A bone-piercing coldness instantly enveloped the entire **ward**.

“It—

It was Edwin Hummer’s daughter, Tina Hummer who did it Flustered, Julie blurted out the truth.

She had never seen such a frightening side to Dustin.

His gaze was akin to that of the Devil, giving chills to whoever met it. Julie **beg an** to tremble.

“Watch over her.”

Once Dustin got the answer he **wanted**, he left without another word.

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A fiery anger burned in his chest.

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Chapter 132

The sky started to rain.

At that moment, the atmosphere at the party in Emperor Hotel was lively as usual. The commotion earlier

clearly had not affected the party.

Tina looked like a princess, surrounded by people. Everyone approached her to leave a good impression.

Yet, most of the people did not interest her. Only a few distinguished guests were worthy of chatting with her.

“Miss, Mr. Williams and Mr. Chapman are here.” One of the butlers came up to her and reported.

Tina turned around and saw two fine-looking men who were standing quietly at the entrance of the party.

One of them was Oliver from Boulderthorn!

The other was Oliver’s senior, Troy Chapman. Behind the two of them were two bodyguards.

“Mr. Williams. Mr. Chapman. It’s good to see you again.” **Tina** immediately gave them a warm welcome with a smile.

“Happy birthday, Ms. Hummer.” Oliver and Troy presented their gifts respectively.

“Oh, please. It is my honor to have you both as my guests. There’s no need for presents. Tina grinned.

“It is only proper to reciprocate Joshua’s kindness. After all, he has always treated us well. A small token of appreciation is nothing.” Oliver smiled.

Had they come from an ordinary rich family, she wouldn’t have given them a second glance.

However, Tina’s brother, Joshua, was a disciple of Boulderthorn. He was their senior. And so, it was necessary

for her to attend to them.

“Oh right, why is my brother not here today?” Tina asked.

“Joshua is on a retreat at the moment. He’s unable to leave, so he sent us here to meet you.” Oliver explained.

“I see

Tina nodded and extended her hand.

“Please have a seat, let me know if there’s anything you need.”

“Alright. Thank you, Ms. Hummer.” Oliver gave a slight nod before sitting down alongside Troy.

Because of Tina’s warm attitude, the **surrounding** guests’ attention gathered **around** the two men.

“Who are they? Why did Tina personally welcome them?”

“I don’t know. They seem unfamiliar, I don’t think they’re from Swinton.”

“Then, perhaps they are someone important from **Millsburg?**”

The sound of whispers rippled through the crowd as curiosity overlooked them.

As the evening wore on, **more** guests arrived at the party, and the atmosphere grew increasingly lively.

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Chapter 132

At that moment, a black silhouette approached the entrance of the Emperor Hotel with an umbrella in hand.

After reaching the gate, he was stopped by two guards.

“Stop right there! Today is Ms. Hummer’s birthday. Only those who received an invitation **are** allowed to enter!”

“Step aside!” Dustin did not want to waste another second and immediately headed inside.

“Scoundrel! You’ve got some nerve!” The two guards immediately gripped Dustin’s shoulder.

The instant the two of them made contact with him, they were hurled backward with a force that sent them tumbling through the air, their cries of pain echoing through the night.

“Quick! Inform Sir Zims!” One of the guards immediately took out his phone **and** called for backup.

When he turned back, Dustin had already walked past the gates.

After **a** short ride in the lift, he walked inside the ballroom.

As he looked at the lively crowd, Dustin took **a** deep breath before shouting, “Which one of you is Tina

Hummer?!”

His voice wasn’t piercing, yet it echoed across the room.

The lively crowd instantly went silent. Everyone turned towards him with displeasing looks.

“Who dared to call Ms. Hummer by her name?!” Everyone wondered.

“Hm? Who’s calling me?” Tina stood up slowly **with** a displeased look in her eyes.

Dustin silently walked forward as everyone **stared** down **at** him.

“Hey, isn’t that Dahlia’s ex–husband? Why is he here?”

“I’m guessing he’s probably here to apologize. After all, stealing from Ms. Hummer is not a small matter.”

“He’s apologizing after his woman got beaten up? How shameful!”

People all around the room began to murmur amongst themselves as they pointed at the man. They were mostly mocking him.

“What? Are you here to apologize for that b*tch?”

Tina’s **eyes** scanned the man **from** head to toe, her lips curling into **a** sinister smile as she sized him up. “If you’re really **interested** in helping your friend, you might want to start by getting down on your knees. And who

knows, if I’m **pleased**, maybe I’ll consider letting her off the hook.”

“So, you were the **one** who caused Dahlia’s injuries?” Dustin slowly approached her.

Seconds later, he stood in front of her.

“So **what** if I was the one who **caused** her **injuries**? That b*tch didn’t know her limits. A slut like her **deserved a** beating!”

Tina laughed coldly. “And let me tell you, this matter is far from over. Today **was** just a little warning. In the future, I’ll **pay** it back bit by bit! I will be her night mare for the rest of her life!

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Chapter 132

As soon as the words left Tina’s lips, a sudden, sharp sound echoed through the room.

“Smack!”

Tina **was** sent flying across the room.

Her body flipped through the air, twisting and turning in a blur of motion, before finally crashing down onto the ground with a sickening thud.

In an instant, blood started oozing from her nose, and her teeth scattered around the place.

The entire room was stunned at the scene. Everyone’s jaw dropped to the ground in disbelief.

No one would’ve thought that Dustin would hit her. Moreover, he slapped her in front of such a crowd.

Everyone knew that she was Edwin Hummer’s daughter! She was the belle of the ball in all of Swinton!

“Had he lost his mind?! How dare he lay a finger on Miss Hummer? Does he not treasure his life?!” Everyone thought.

“You—
You dare to hit me?” Tina held her burning cheek and stood up as her legs wobbled beneath her.

Her face was filled with shock and confusion. **Ever** since she was a child, no one dared to disrespect her. Let alone slap her. She didn’t know how to react.

“Smack!”

Without wasting another second, he slapped her once again with **all** his might.

As blood spurted from her mouth, her once—pretty face now disfigured, her teeth shattered and her features swollen and reddened, the sight was both shocking and distressing.

Her hair was in complete disarray, leaving a chaotic mess in its wake.

“I’ll make you pay ten times the pain that you inflicted on Dahlia!” Dustin roared out.

His words and actions were impulsive and reckless.

“Boom!”

In a split second, the party was in shambles.

One could **say** that the first **slap was** done out of impulse.

A second slap was already humiliating and provoking her.

But who in the right mind would want to provoke the Hummers?!

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Chapter 133

“He dared to hit Ms. Hummer? He must be asking for death!”

“He’s out of his mind! He’s definitely gone insane!”

“He struck Ms. Hummer in front of such a crowd! Not even the Gods could spare him now!”

Because of Dustin’s actions, the whole room went into chaos. Some were shocked, not knowing how to react. Others were impressed, while the rest **were** in disbelief.

For all their lives, they’d believed that only a person like Tina Hummer could bully others. They could never even imagine someone who would strike back!

“Kill him! Kill him now!” When Tina stood up again, she was in a frenzy. Her face contorted with terrifying rage.

“Kill! Him!”

The guards in the area finally returned to their senses and charged toward him with a baton.

Dustin was unfazed. He moved at the speed of light, defecating each guard with a single punch, sending them flying across the room in all directions.

He glided through the entire fight effortlessly, not a single hint of struggle showing on his face. The sight of the guards writhing on the ground in agony left everyone stunned.

It was worth noting that these were Hummer's elite bodyguards, each capable of taking down five men with ease. And yet a single punch from Dustin was all it took to bring down all of these elite bodyguards.

It was indeed surprising.

"Guards! Bring me more guards!" One of the bodyguards quickly reached for his walkie-talkie **and** called for backup.

Dustin remained unfazed and continued to advance, step by step.

"Stop him! Quick, stop him!" Tina was frantic as she stumbled backward.

A few onlookers had the urge to play hero and rescue Tina, but one stern look from Dustin was enough to leave them frozen in shock, unable to **make a move**.

"You bastard! How dare you lay a hand on me? Do you have any idea who I am? I am Edwin Hummer's daughter! If you don't want to meet an ugly end, then bow down and apologize to me right now!" Tina's voice trembled with fear, despite the brave front she put on.

She mentioned her own family background as a means of defense, hoping that he would know better and back **down**.

Her threat fell on deaf ears **as** she was met with another heavy slap in response,

In a split second, her **head** was spinning as blood spilled from her mouth.

"You don't need to mention that. Even if your **dad** is here, I'll still slap you! Dustin said with a cold

expression as he **grabbed** Tina by her hair and slapped her even harder.

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Chapter 133

Each slap landed with a heavy sound ringing across the room.

“Smack, smack, smack, smack!”

After a few slaps, Tina’s face was left disfigured. Her nose and lips were tangled up. It was a gory scene to behold.

All the guests w

were stunned and frozen in shock at the sight before them. Every single one of them had their

jaws drop to the ground.

This **was** just crazy!

It wasn’t just about hitting her face. He was disrespecting the Hummers! He was playing with fire and risking his life!

“Stop!” Suddenly, a loud angry yell reverberated across the room.

In the next moment, Oliver and Troy emerged from the crowd. Upon seeing the blood on Tina’s face, both of them became furious in an instant.

“Who dares to make a ruckus at Tina’s party?!” Oliver bellowed in an intimidating voice.

“Huh?” Dustin turned around and immediately recognized the familiar faces.

“So **it’s** you!”

Oliver was taken aback at first, but his surprise quickly gave way to a wave of seething anger. “What a coincidence! I’ve been searching for you everywhere. I can’t believe you’d **show** up here!”

“Oliver, you know this guy?” Troy was curious.

“Troy, this was the guy who punched me two days ago,” Oliver said **with** gritted teeth.

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“You dare to hit someone from Boulderthorn? You must be tired of living!” Troy’s gaze immediately turned cold

and unfriendly.

Troy and Oliver were as close as brothers, and any harm inflicted upon one was seen as **an** affront to the other.

“Save me! Save me!” Tina’s eyes lit up with hope at the sight of Oliver and Troy, and she suddenly regained

some of her energy.

“Don’t worry, Ms. Hummer. With me and Oliver here, this guy won’t be able to harm you!” Troy assured confidently.

As soon as **he** finished speaking, Dustin delivered another brutal slap, causing Tina to be flung across **the**

table.

Without a second of hesitation, he immediately proved him wrong.

“You-!” Oliver was furious.

He was caught off guard by Dustin’s unpredictable actions, causing **a** slight delay **in** his response.

“You bastard! You’re dead meat! Your entire family will be **dead!** These two are the best fighters in

Boulderthorn. You’re just a piece of trash in front of them! I’ll let them **break** all of your limbs before torturing

you myself!” Tina sneered, her face contorted with a lust for vengeance **as** she **stood** up shakily.

“Boulderthorn?!” Hearing the name, everyone **broke** into whispers once again

.

Everyone was familiar with the name.

Boulderthorn was one of the top two guilds in the entire South City. The **disciples** of Boulderthorn were

renowned for their incredible strength and skill, able to move mountains with just a small kick.

But the top disciples were on another level altogether, possessing **an** unparalleled level of prowess and

finesse. One of them was enough to wipe out an entire room.

“Who would’ve thought that people from Boulderthorn are here? Looks like this fellow is really dead meat.”

“Well **deserved!** Whoever dares to make **a** ruckus here would have to pay the ultimate price!”

“Kid, if I **were** you, I’d be on my knees begging for forgiveness. If you’re lucky enough, you’d get a chance to

live.”

The crowd erupted into a frenzied discussion, with people whispering and shouting their opinions on the unfolding scene.

From their perspective, Dustin is indeed skilled in lighting. However, in front of the top disciples from Boulderthorn, he wouldn’t **even** stand a chance!

“So what if you’re from Boulderthorn? No one can stop me from doing what I want to do!” Dustin replied coldly, without a hint of **fear**.

“Bastard! You’re crazy! If I hadn’t gone **easy** on you last time, do you think you could get **away** without a

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scratch?” Oliver was furious.

“Oliver, let me handle it.”

Troy approached Dustin with **a** darkened face, but before he could take any action, Oliver stopped him **with** a hand. “Wait, do we really need to do **this**? Th

is guy isn't even from a guild. If we accidentally kill him, won't people start **spreading** rumors **about** Boulderthorn bullying others?"

As he spoke, he signaled the two bodyguards behind them. "Anna, Emma, get rid of that punk! Don't hold

back!"

"Yes, Sir!" The two women immediately pulled out their swords.

Two days earlier, they weren't prepared, so they were defeated by Dustin. But **today**, they would not let the

same mistake happen again.

"Mr. Williams! That bastard's not an easy target. Aren't you underestimating him too much by sending the two **of** them against him?" Tina was **suspicious**.

"Don't worry, Ms. Hummer. The two of them **are** very skilled. They were trained by my father. Defeating him is

nothing for them!" Oliver **said** confidently.

To be honest, both of them were **even more** skilled than he was.

"Alright! Then I'm counting on you to get my revenge!" Tina **said** with an evil smirk.

"No problem!" As soon as Oliver gave a signal, the two women sprung into action, one flanking Dustin on the left and the other on the right, both bearing down on him with fierce determination.

"Zoom!"

As the women closed in on him, their swords shimmered with deadly precision, a testament to their

impressive skill and training.

Right when everyone thought **Dustin** was about to meet his end.

With a loud "Clang!", the two swords were shattered into pieces.

The impact was so sudden and powerful that the two women **were sent** hurtling through the air as if struck by a car, flying across the room.

Before hitting the ground, a spray of blood erupted from the women's mouths, painting the air crimson, as they collapsed into unconsciousness.

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Chapter 135

"Holy Shit! What just happened?"

The crowd was once again in awe upon seeing the broken swords and the two women laying on the floor.

They originally thought that Dustin was out of luck, but no one expected that after that face-off, the Boulderthorn girls would be the ones who faced defeat.

This outcome shocked everyone in the room.

"This kid was not all talk?" Oliver's eye twitched, his face full of shock.

The previous time, he could argue and say that they weren't prepared for the attack. But this time, it was proven that there was a skill disparity.

"So you **do** have some tricks up your sleeves. No wonder you dared to cause trouble here." Troy narrowed his

eyes as his lips curled into a playful smile.

Although **Anna** and Emma were no match for Troy's skills, they were certainly enough to defeat a normal

fighter. For Dustin to have defeated them so easily spoke volumes about his abilities, even if it wasn't much

for Troy.

"Mr. Williams! Didn't you say that it wouldn't **be** a problem?" Tina exclaimed. Her disfigured face made **her**

look like a malicious demon.

“Just a bit of miscalculation. But no **worries**, this fellow wouldn’t be able to do much **with** me and **Troy** here!”

Oliver laughed awkwardly and explained.

“Don’t worry, Ms. Hummer. I **will** avenge you!”

Troy stepped **forward** and stared into Dustin’s eyes. “I admit, you do **have** so me skills. But too bad **you’re** facing me today! I’ll give you one last chance. Kneel down and beg for mercy right now, and I might spare your life.”

“Punk! Did **you** hear that? Hurry up and kneel! Otherwise, you’ll be obliterated by Troy!” Oliver added.

“**Really?** Give me all you’ve got.” Dustin answered calmly to their taunts.

“Bastard! You really can’t catch a hint! Don’t you know who Troy is? He’s the Lightning Fist of Boulderthorn, who’s never fallen in battle!” Oliver bragged confidently.

After hearing those words, the crowd went wild.

“What? Is he really the Lightning Fist, Troy Chapman?!”

“Oh my **God!** I can’t believe **even** the Lightning Fist is here, this is gelling Interesting!”

“What’s Lightning Fist? Is he **great?**”

“He’s not only one of the elites in Boulderthorn, He’s at the top of the board! He could take on a hundred men

at once. What do you think, **Isn’t** he **great?**”

“There are only a few people in Swinton who can match the Lightning Fist’s skills. Looks like this kid is

meeting his end!”

After learning Troy's true identity, the crowd began praising him.

The spectators had anticipated an ordinary fight, but it was not until a top fighter like him emerged that they realized the true potential of the bout.

Troy's chin lifted with a newfound arrogance **as** he basked in the adulation of the crowd. He really enjoyed the feeling of being admired.

"Punk! Weren't you so confident just now? Why are you silent now? Are you scared?" Oliver mocked.

Though his abilities may not have stood out as much, his senior, Troy, was undoubtedly a top-notch fighter.

He had been training all his life and was already a master at honing his energy. His ability was second best to the grand master himself,

No one in Swinton could faze him.

"What's a Lightning Fist? I've never even heard of it." Dustin remained unbothered.

These words once again drove the crowd wild.

"My goodness! Does he not treasure his life? He dared insult Lightning Fist's name!"

"He's clearly unaware of his limits! He can't even comprehend how strong Lightning Fist is!"

"What a reckless idiot! Thinking he **knows** everything! Let's see how he faces death later!"

All eyes were fixed on Dustin, who seemed to have earned the scorn and contempt of the crowd.

"Punk! You'll face the consequences for the words that just left your mouth!" Troy's expression turned cold.

He was still acting recklessly even after learning his true identity. How foolish of him!

“I don’t care who you are. You better leave now or I won’t hold back on you!” Dustin’s eyes were burning with rage as he stared Tina down.

The other people in the room were not even worthy of Dustin’s attention, as he remained solely focused on Tina.

“Mr. Chapman! Kill him!” When Tina met Dustin’s gaze, she was frightened to death. She could feel a chill run down her spine.

At the moment, she only hoped that he could get rid of **that** crazy bastard as soon **as** possible.

“**Punk!** Since you want to die so badly, I’ll fulfill your wish!” Troy flexed his muscles **as** he let out **a** yell, causing **his** shirt to rip apart, revealing his chiseled physique.

The combination of his impressive muscles and his flashy, swift movement **caused** a group of ladies to swoon in admiration.

“Today, I’ll show you what it’s like to be a Lightning Fist!”

Troy closed the distance between himself and Dustin with a small, swift movement before leaping into the air and extending his arms like a hawk, ready to strike.

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“How majestic! How astonishing!” The crowd thought.

“Die!” Troy spun around, his head **aimed** towards the ground, and struck Dustin’s head with a powerful punch.

The spectators were **impressed** as they watched Troy’s impressive pose.

“How handsome!”

“He’s so majestic!”

“Ms. Hummer, did you see that? That’s Troy’s signature move, the Lightning Fist! One punch would be able to break mountains!” Oliver explained proudly.

“It would be best if he could kill him with one slap!” Tina said with a sardonic smile.

“One punch is definitely enough to kill him!”

“**This** fellow should be proud to die in Lightning Fist’s hands!”

The guests shook their heads, convinced that Dustin’s fate was sealed.

After all he was facing a full-blown punch from the Lightning Fist himself.

In Swinton, how many people would be able to stop this kind of punch?

“You’re just all show!” Dustin’s voice was cold and unwavering as he stood his ground. Without hesitation, he retaliated with a punch that caught Troy off guard.

“Boom!”

Their fists collided with a loud bang.

Dustin had not moved an inch, but the ground beneath him had shattered.

Troy, on the other hand, let out a pained cry as his fist erupted into a trace of blood. He was sent flying across

the room at lightning **speed**, landing heavily against the wall as blood spurted from his mouth.

Before Troy could even react, Dustin **was already** in front of him, delivering another punch.

His moves weren’t as flashy, but they were deadly.

“Please spare me!” All the color drained from Troy’s face as he screamed in horror. With a loud “Thud”, he knelt on the ground.

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Chapter 136

“Whoosh!” Troy felt a strong gust of wind hit his face, causing his features to contort in pain as he could feel

his bone becoming dislocated.

His eyes were fixed on Dustin’s fist, which stopped right in front of his chest. Although it was still a few inches

away, the intimidating force still caused him to tremble in fear.

“Blargh!” Blood spurted from his mouth.

With just the sheer force of his Fist Energy, Dustin had the power to dislocate the bones in Troy’s body. The

thought of what would have happened if his fists had actually landed on him was almost too terrifying to contemplate.

He was lucky that he had kneeled in time. Otherwise, he would’ve been out **cold!**

“Spare me! Please!” Troy was now on his knees, his face drained of color as he begged frantically. All the

confidence he **had** earlier was gone, replaced by fear and desperation.

Rather than shock, Troy **was** feeling terrified at the moment.

That **was** because when their fists collided, his power shattered like glass in a split second, leaving him

defenseless against the sheer force of his opponent.

He could feel the excruciating pain in every single bone in his body. This situation would only happen when there was a significant disparity in skill level.

That is why, when Dustin was about to make another move, Troy chose to beg for mercy. Begging for forgiveness on his knees was a small price to pay in exchange for his life.

“Don’t appear in front of me again!” Dustin said coldly.

“**Yes**, right away!” Troy immediately fled the room without an ounce of hesitation. He didn’t even care about

his dignity.

“Um.” Everyone was dumbfounded as they watched Troy flee the scene.

The top-notch warrior, an elite disciple from Boulderthorn known as Lightning Fist, had actually fled from

battle?

Everyone’s **jaws** dropped in disbelief. No one could have predicted this outcome.

Originally, they believed that Troy’s appearance would resolve the situation, but now the tables had turned

completely.

If they had not witnessed it firsthand, they wouldn’t even be able to believe it. A legendary warrior who had never been defeated in battle fled the scene in terror!

“How—How is this possible?!”

Oliver’s eyes widened in disbelief.

That was his incredible senior, Troy **Chapman!**

Chapter

As a disciple of Boulderthorn, Troy was a master at honing inner energy, with unmatched skills and extreme

talents. Oliver couldn't wrap **his** head around how this had happened.

He didn't **even** hesitate to kneel down and beg for mercy!

"What the hell is going on?!" Oliver wondered.

"T—

There's no way! It's impossible!" Tina couldn't stop shaking her head in shock.

That was the top disciple from Boulderthorn. How could he be defeated by a nobody?

In fact, she wasn't the only one thinking about it. Everyone in the room had the same idea.

However, the truth was right in front of them, and no matter how much they wanted to deny it, it wouldn't

change the outcome.

"Did you say that you would stand up for her too?" Dustin's gaze landed on Oliver.

"Punk! You're lucky that my senior's injury recurred today, otherwise, you wouldn't have been able to escape

so easily! Next time, you wouldn't be so lucky!" After finishing his sentence, Oliver fled the scene.

If Troy was no match for Dustin, then wasn't he just an easy target?

"Mr. Williams! Mr. Williams! Tina yelled at the top of her lungs. Yet, Oliver picked up the pace and ran even

faster, disappearing without a trace.

At that moment, she **was** frozen on the spot.

"As I've said, I'll pay you back tenfold for the damage you did!" A cold voice rang beside her ears.

Tina turned around and realized that Dustin **was** already standing behind her.

“I’m warning you! Don’t mess with me! I’m Edwin Hummer’s daughter! If you dare to lay a finger on me, you and your entire family, even your relatives, will suffer the consequences of crossing the Hummers!” Tina

shouted desperately.

“Sure, I’ll play this game with the Hummers. But before that, I will need to get my revenge first!” Dustin’s hand

shot out and grasped Tina.

A horrific, ear-piercing scream echoed through the entire hotel. The screams continued every few seconds.

When Julie arrived at the hotel all drenched, she saw Tina being tortured. She **was** completely frozen as she

stared in shock.

Earlier, when Dustin left the hospital, she felt that something **was** off. So, she immediately followed him. She

never thought that he could be so brave to go against Ms. Hummer in front of such a crowd.

At that **moment**, Tina **was** not **just** unrecognizable, all four of her limbs were detached from her body.

The gory scene filled with blood was extremely unsettling.

“Stop! **Stop** this instant! Dustin! Are you **out** of your mind? Hurry up and let go of Ms. Hummer!” Julie came running as she yelled.

Dustin ignored Julie completely. He just **looked** down at Tina, who was lying on the ground, with a final flicker

of life.

“I won’t kill you tonight, but that doesn’t mean I forgive you. In three days, kneel down and apologize to Dahlia! Otherwise, you will suffer the consequences!”

After finishing his words, he raised two fingers and thrust them into Tina's pressure points **all** over her body.

It was a technique he had developed himself, and it **was** deadly. The victim would slowly **die** in three days.

Moreover, he was the only one who could break the curse.

"Crazy bastard! You're a maniac! Now that you've hurt Ms. Hummer, you're not the only one who will suffer! We're all doomed because of you!" Julie saw Dustin, who **was** about to **leave**, and yelled at him once again.

Yet, Dustin did not even spare her a glance and kept walking towards the exit. The crowd made way for his

exit, not daring to stop him.

"Hurry! Secure the premise!" Suddenly, a shout was heard from outside.

A horde of towering fighters stormed into the room. Instantly, the men surrounded the entire room.

"Who dared to cause trouble at my place?!" A man with dark sunglasses and a smoldering cigar strolled into

the room, emanating a menacing and dangerous aura.

"This is great! Sir Zims is finally here! We can finally have the scene under control

"Sir Zims is the trusty right-hand man of the Hummer family. He definitely wouldn't let him off for beating Ms. Hummer into a pulp!

"Although he's quite skilled, he only has two fists! He wouldn't be able to take on hundreds of men no matter

how skilled he is!"

The crowd went wild once again **as** help arrived at the scene.

*Sir Zims! You're just in time! Dustin not only caused trouble, but he also beat up Ms. Hummer!" Julie quickly reported the incident to him.

"What? He dared to hit Ms. Hummer? Which bastard did this? If you have the guts, come forward! Let's see if I can tear you apart myself!" Mason's gaze narrowed, his blood boiling with anger.

"It was me." Dustin approached him slowly.

"You—!"

Before Mason could strike, his expression changed completely when he saw him. "M—Mr. Rhys? It's you?!"

Dustin simply uttered a single word, "Scram!"

"Yes Sir!" Mason nodded and stepped aside. **Once** again, the entire room **was dead** silent.

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Chapter 137

The rain **was** falling even harder.

Edwin was in the middle of a conversation with Fletcher at the Hummer Villa.

"Mr. Hummer, the first batch of Eternumax has been sold out. On top of **that**, we received a lot of positive feedback. A lot of people are interested in partnering with us in the long term. Now, we'll be able to mass produce this product!" Fletcher reported excitedly.

"That's the secret recipe for you, alright. Who would've thought it would have such great feedback right after its debut?" Edwin laughed joyfully.

He originally thought that it would take a while for people to warm up to the product. He didn't expect the opportunity to present itself so quickly.

At that point, he must strike the iron while it's hot.

“Speaking of which, **we** should be grateful to the Harmon family. Without their painstaking research all these years, we wouldn’t have this baby in our hands right now.” Fletcher grinned.

“Natasha was foolish to **dare** to fight against me! I’ll defeat her once and for all with Eternumax!” Edwin said

happily.

“Then I shall congratulate Sir Hummer in advance for your success!” Fletcher clapped.

“Alright, it’s getting **late**. Time to join Tina’s party. If I’m too late, she’ll certainly have some complaints.”

Just as Edwin stood up with a grin on his face—

An old butler ran into the room frantically and exclaimed, “Sir! Bad news! Ms. Hummer has been beaten up!”

“What? Beaten up? What on earth happened?!” Edwin frowned.

Who was brave enough to dare touch Edwin’s daughter?

“There was a kid who stirred things up at the party. He even beat Ms. Hummer half to death in front of everyone! Ms. Hummer **has** already been sent to Hummers Hospital. The butler reported in a hurry.

Hummers Hospital was under the Hummers’ supervision. It **was** also one of the top hospitals in Swinton. The doctors are all global elites in the medical field who pledged to serve the Hummer family.

“Go! To the hospital!” Edwin didn’t spare another second and immediately rushed to the hospital along with a

group of people.

However, as he cautiously stepped into the hospital ward, his **eyes** widened in disbelief at the Jarring scene that greeted him.

On the bed **laid** his own **daughter**, Tina, who was nearly lifeless.

Her face **was** utterly unrecognizable, a mangled and gory **mess**.

Her limbs were even worse, appearing as if they had been brutally torn apart from her body, her bones shattered and beyond repair.

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“Who?! Who did this?” Edwin roared like a crazed lion.

For all his **years**, no one dared **lay a finger** on his daughter.

“Sir Hummer, from what we’ve found, it seemed to be done by a guy named **Dustin**.”

At that moment, an injured bodyguard explained the earlier events to Edwin. After hearing his explanation, his expression immediately turned dark.

“That son of a b*tch again! He keeps ruining my day! I’ll cut him into pieces! Guards! Get me the best trackers and track him down, I want him captured alive!” Edwin clenched his fists and said between gritted teeth.

“Also, kill the entire Nicholson family! I want them all dead!”

“Yes, Sir!” After receiving orders, the group of people immediately scattered.

“Sir Hummer, that guy’s skill is quite unmatched. Not **anyone** could go against him.” Fletcher said. He’d been slapped by Dustin once. Until now, **he’s** still a bit traumatized.

“What are you trying to say?” **Edwin** turned around.

“From what I know, it would be best to summon the White Dragon guild. The members are all top-notch fighters. It shouldn’t be a problem for them to take on that **guy**.” Fletcher suggested.

“White Dragon guild? Don’t you think **it’s** overkill to use them against a nobody?” Edwin narrowed his eyes.

The White Dragon guild was Edwin’s secret weapon, and he wouldn’t use it lightly.

“Sir Hummer, this guy is not just a normal fighter. He has the Harmon family supporting him. To be safe, we must summon the White Dragon guild. It would be the best choice.” Fletcher advised seriously.

After pondering for a few seconds, Edwin finally made the decision. “Alright! Contact the White Dragon Guild immediately. Get me the best fighters!”

Whoever dared to lay a finger on his daughter would have to pay the ultimate price!

On the other hand, in Java Joys.

“What? Dustin stirred up trouble at the Hummer’s party? And he beat Tina into a pulp?” Natasha was

completely shocked at her sister’s words.

“Yeah! Oustin is insane! He beat her up in front of so many people! He even tore her limbs apart. He’s really on

another level!” Ruth said excitedly.

“He doesn’t seem like someone who’d do something irrationally. How could he do something like that?” Natasha was puzzled,

“Probably because of that girl! How could he hold back after that Nicholson was publicly shamed? That’s why he went to get revenge.” Ruth did not hide anything from her sister. After hearing the news, she shared every

single detail with her.

“No wonder.” Natasha nodded.

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“Sis, aren’t you mad at all?” Ruth was a little surprised.

“Why should I be?” Natasha asked.

“Dustin made such a grand move for that woman. It’s obvious there are **still** some lingering feelings between them. Are you not bothered by it?” Ruth was straight to the point.

“Dummy, they just got a divorce. Of course, there would be some lingering feelings. That’s inevitable. Also, if Dustin had not acted on it, he would **ve lost** my respect.” Natasha was unconcerned.

“Sis, I really don’t get what you’re thinking sometimes. I wouldn’t be able to let it go if a man I like **had** lingering feelings for other women.” Ruth scratched her head.

“After all, the ball is in their court. I believe that Dustin wouldn’t let me down.” Natasha smiled.

Dustin’s pride wouldn’t allow him to make the same mistake twice.

“I hope so. Rather than Tyler, I would much prefer **Dustin** to be my brother-in-law,” Ruth muttered.

“Alright, that’s enough. Nothing is set in stone yet. Tell the others to keep an eye on Dustin. If he’s **in** danger, make **sure** to help him immediately!” Natasha rolled her eyes and ordered.

“Okay!” Ruth nodded and immediately left.

They were both well aware that Edwin would not let this go easily.

It was inevitable for a war to happen...

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Chapter 138

After that big incident at the party, Dustin finally returned to East Swinton Hospital. When he entered the ward, he noticed that Florence and James had already arrived.

“Which evil bastard beat up my daughter to such a state? How could they be so cruel?!”

“Exactly! If I find out which bastard did this. I’ll tear them into pieces!”

Seeing the injured Dahlia, the Nicholsons couldn’t help but curse, feeling pity for her.

“Why are you here? **We** didn’t even contact you.” Suddenly, one of them noticed Dustin, who **was** standing at the door.

“I came to check on Dahlia’s injury.” Dustin walked into the room slowly, his face not showing a hint of expression.

“Get out! You’re not welcome here!” James roared, letting out his pent-up anger.

“Dustin! Tell us the truth. Does my daughter’s injury have anything to do with you?!” Florence glared at him.

“I don’t have the details about how she **was** injured. Perhaps you should ask Julie this question instead.” Dustin replied.

*Julie? Speaking of which, where is she? Didn’t she attend the party with my sister? Why isn’t she here?” James frowned.

“Could it be **that** Julie is injured too? Dustin! What exactly is going on **here**? Who hurt my daughter? And where is Julie?” Florence’s expression immediately turned dark.

“I think it would be best if you didn’t find out.” Dustin shook his head.

“If you have something to say, then say it! No matter who hurt my sister, I will make them pay!” James said furiously.

“That’s right! We won’t let them off easily!” Florence exclaimed.

“The person who injured Dahlia is Tina Hummer,” Dustin answered truthfully.

“Tina Hummer? Who’s that?” James had no clue.

“The daughter of the richest man in **Swinton**, Edwin Hummer.” Dustin replied.

“What?! Sir Hurrmer’s daughter?!” Everyone was stunned by this piece of information.

They exchanged glances, not knowing how to reply. Especially Florence and James, whose anger immediately disappeared.

They would've been yelling for revenge if it had been an ordinary person. Yet, when they heard the name Hummer, they didn't even dare to get angry.

"We had no grudges against the Hummer family. How could Ms. Hummer be so cruel to us?" Florence gulped.

"That's right! My sister was invited to the party. How did she cross Ms. Hummer?" James frowned, deep in

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thought.

The others were uneasy as well. The Hummer **family was** someone they would never dare to provoke. Even if

they were wrongly accused, they couldn't do anything about it.

"You won't **have** to do anything. In three days, I'll let Tina Hummer apologize to you all in person." **Dustin**

assured **easily**.

"Hey! Do you even know what you're saying? Do you know who Ms. Hummer is? Do you think that's something you can handle? **You'll** let **her** apologize? Look at yourself!" James **said**, unimpressed.

"Exactly! Do you have no idea who you are? You just know how to **brag** all **day** long! If you really had that ability, why would you let them hurt my daughter in the first place?!" Florence exclaimed.

It was obvious that they **did** not take Dustin's words seriously..

After all it **was** Edwin's daughter. A true billionaire. Even they were afraid of provoking them, let alone a

nobody like Dustin.

“You all **must** be the patient’s relatives.” **At that** moment, a nurse walked into the room

“We just received a notice that the patient shall be transferred to a VIP **ward** and receive better treatment. All

of this will be free of charge. Will you **guys** accept this offer?”

“Free of charge? Of course, of course. We most definitely accept.” Florence’s eyes sparkled **as** she nodded

fervently.

“That’s great, please follow me.” After a signal from the doctor, a few others came into the ward to help Dahlia

into the new ward.

Dustin stood still as he watched the people leave the room. It was his **order** to switch to a VIP ward.

Although he was not afraid of Edwin, it **was** still inevitable that he would seek revenge. This was his safety

measure.

A few moments after Florence and the others left the room, Julie **sprinted** into the ward.

“Aunt Florence! I **have** big news! I **just** saw

Before she could finish her sentence, she was stunned. Her eyes widened as her gaze landed on Dustin. “You!

Why are you here?”

“You’re just in time. I **have** something to ask.” Dustin approached her slowly.

“D—

Don’t come any closer! What are you trying to do? **I’m** warning you, slay back!” Julie retreated two steps.

backward in **fear.**

She could still vividly picture the scene earlier where Tina was brutally beaten up.

In her eyes, Dustin was a maniac!

“Why are you so **afraid**? Could it be that you’re guilty of something?” Dustin **said** lightly.

“You’re the **one** who should be guilty! I don’t have anything to hide. What’s the reason for me to be afraid of?” Julie declared, putting up a front.

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“Good. Then let me ask you, were you the one who framed Dahlia for stealing at tonight’s party?” Dustin’s

demeanor turned cold.

“Nonsense! We’re cousins, how could I **harm** her? I’m warning you, don’t accuse someone innocent!” Julie’s expression contorted into a panic.

“Accuse someone innocent?” Dustin laughed coldly.

“Then tell me, how did this end up in Dahlia’s bag? Who else would have access to her bag other than you?” He tossed a box in front of her with a pair of ruby earrings inside.

“H—

How would I know? It’s not me!” Julie’s eyes flashed with panic as she desperately clung to her lie.

“You better think clearly before you answer. Otherwise, you’d lose your chance.” Dustin said expressionlessly.

“What do you mean? Are you saying that you’ll lay a finger on me?” Julie shouted sternly.

“**You** have one minute left.” Dustin lifted a finger.

“What on earth are you trying to do? I’m not afraid of you!” Julie said as she backed away slowly.

“Ten seconds left.”

“Dustin! I’m warning you.” Before Julie could finish her threat, footsteps could be heard outside the room.

“Boss. I already got the information that Danlia is in this ward!”

“Good! You, keep a lookout. The others. follow me!”

After an exchange of words, a few assassins dressed in black immediately swarmed the room.

“Who is Dahlia Nicholson?” The leader scanned the room with a piercing gaze .

“She is.” Dustin pointed his finger at Julie.

The next second, with a sharp “Clang“, two swords were pressed against Julie’s neck.

“Bring her!”

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“What?” Julie’s mind went blank when a pair of swords were held at her neck. She was unable to process what was happening.

From the assassins’ forced entry to Dustin framing her, everything happened too quickly. When she finally regained her composure, she was already in danger.

“Rhys! How could you do this to me!”

Seeing as she **was** about to be held hostage, Julie panicked. “Wait, it’s a mistake! I’m not Dahlia, you’ve got the wrong person!”

“Do you think we are stupid? This man told us you are Dahlia Nicholson!” The assassins’ leader retorted.

“He’s spouting nonsense! Don’t believe him!” Julie said, cold sweat running down her forehead.

She never expected Dustin to exact his revenge on her in such a despicable manner!

“According to our intel, Dahlia is in this hospital room. If you aren’t Dahlia; why would you be here?” The leader

demanded fiercely.

“I—I was just passing by-!” Julie stammered.

“Fuck! How dare you lie to me? You must be tired of living!” Julie was violently slapped on the cheek by the

leader, making her ears ring.

“What are all of you doing? Take her away!” He ordered.

Some of his men immediately dragged Julie towards the door.

“It’s not me! It’s really not me! Rhys, **you** asshole, you framed me! Are you even human?” Julie burst into tears

and wailed loudly.

She knew that if she were to be taken away, she would definitely suffer inhuman abuse.

“Dustin! I’m sorry! Please save me, I’m begging you! I’ve learned my **lesson!** On account of Dahlia and Old Mr. Nicholson, you can’t sit back and do nothing! You have to save me!” Julie broke down and apologized

profusely.

At this moment, only Dustin could save her.

“Shut the hell up, you b*tch!”

Julie's cries for help got on the nerves of the assassin **leader**. He gave her a few more slaps on the face. Julie staggered and fell to the ground, **blood** flowing from her lips.

When Dustin felt that Julie had been punished enough, he spoke up, saying, "Guys, I'm sorry for the confusion. I've made a mistake, she is not Dahlia."

"What **did you say**?" When they heard this, the **assassins** froze.

*Punk! How **dare** you trick me?" The leader narrowed his eyes threateningly.

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"I guess you could **say** that." Dustin nodded.

"You bastard!" The leader **was** furious. He rushed towards Dustin **with his** heavy **blade** and swung it using his

full **strength**.

By the agility **and** power of his movements, the leader was obviously a martial artist. His skills were far superior to those of a normal person.

However, Dustin did not dodge. He blocked the attack with his bare hands and landed a kick on his opponent's abdomen.

The leader screamed in agony as he flew out the door.

"How dare you hurt our leader? You are dead meat!"

The other three assassins threw Julie aside as they turned to attack Dustin simultaneously.

However, before they could get close enough, Dustin **gave** all three of them a flying kick and knocked their heads together.

Without another **word**, they fainted on impact.

“Fuck, who is this monster?”

The last assassin, who was guarding the door, saw what happened to his teammates. Fearful for his life, he ran away as fast as his legs could take him.

Four of his friends were dead. He wasn't sticking around to find out what **was** going to happen to him.

“Dustin, you...” Julie's eyes were as wide as saucers.

She never **knew** that Dustin was such a good fighter. In the **blink** of an eye, he single-handedly defeated four assassins. She breathed a sigh of relief. Fortunately, Dustin was **around** to save her.

On second thought, she remembered that it **was** because of Dustin that she **was** mistaken for Dahlia.

Julie's anger blazed to life again.

“Confess to Dahlia regarding today's incident. Remember, there is no next **time**,” Dustin said with a condescending glare.

“I'll let you off today, Rhys! However, don't be too proud! Edwin will come after you now that you have beaten up Ms. Hummer! You will be **hounded** out of Swinton!” Julie gritted her teeth in anger.

“You must be sorely mistaken. It's not the Hummers” who will be coming after me, but me going after them. The Hummers' must issue a public apology regarding the assault,” Dustin said breezily

“Public apology? You must **have** lost your mind! What right do you **have** to demand an apology from the Hummer family?” Julie scoffed.

“Whatever, it's up to you whether to believe it or not. Dustin shrugged.

“Let's see how long you can fake it! Hopefully, you won't be wetting your pants in front of Edwin Hummer!” Julie scoffed **again** and turned around to leave.

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Dustin

couldn't care less about her. He dragged the leader of the assassins into the hospital room.

"Did Edwin send you?"

"What's it to you?" Through gritted teeth, the leader answered rudely.

"How many of you are there?" Dustin **continued** calmly.

"The White Dragon guild is full of skilled lighters and martial artists. Five of **us** were sent to scout ahead. If you **desire** to live, it would be best to surrender immediately!" The leader threatened.

"I've never **heard** of the White Dragon guild." Dustin shook his head.

"That's because you're being ignorant! The **leader** smirked.

"Punk, if I were you, I would flee Swinton right now. Otherwise, you will be sitting ducks when our guild master

arrives personally!"

"Really? I'll be waiting for him, then." Dustin smiled.

With a loud crack, **he** twisted the **assassin's** leader's neck. He died on the spot.

At this moment, a group of menacing **bodyguards** appeared at the end of **the corridor**.

Stephan **was** leading the way!

"Greetings, Mr. Rhys!" Stephan walked up to Dustin and bowed slightly..

"Ms. Harmon ordered us to assist you. If you need our help, just ask for it."

"Thanks for the kind thought, Mr. Chapman." Dustin nodded in return. "There are a few uncon

scious assassins. here who have been defeated. Please dispose of their bodies.”

“No problem.” Stephan gestured to his men, and they quickly carried the bodies off.

“By the way, what do you know about the White Dragon guild? Custin questioned.

“The White Dragon guild is regarded **as one** of the top three guilds in Swinton. Their guild members are mainly ruffians and scoundrels from the underworld. They take orders from Edwin and conduct illegal operations.

Their infamous reputation precedes them,” Stephan explained.

“**Oh**, I see.” Dustin nodded.

“The White Dragon **guild** has many skilled lighters, especially the guild master . Dracor Millroy. He is one of the best martial artists in Swinton. It is said that his skin is impenetrable to a sword or blade as he has **attained** the highest tier of martial **artistry**. The wise thing to do would be to **escape** instead of challenging him.” Stephan warned.

*Thanks for your advice. I know what to do,” Dustin replied nonchalantly.

He was curious to see what it would be like to spar against the **best** martial artist in Swinton.

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Chapter 140

The night grew dark as rain poured down. The **streets** were empty, as there was no one around.

Just then, a fleet of black Hummer vehicles drove in at high speed, splashing puddles of water. The vehicles

pulled up at the entrance of a hospital building.

As the car doors opened, a group of burly, muscular men got out.

One of them was smoking a cigar.

He was a large and muscular man with a beard, more than six feet tall at least a head above **normal** men. His arms and thighs were bulging with muscle.

“Guild master! That man is still inside, he never left.” The **last** assassin pointed to one of the floors of the

building.

He had been lying in wait for support to arrive as he spied on Dustin.

“I expected that you could handle this guy on your own. Why **do** I still have to be personally involved?” The bearded man narrowed his eyes with displeasure.

He was the guild master of the White Dragon guild!

“Guild master, don’t underestimate that guy. He took **us** down as easily as dominoes!” The assassin reported.

“Alright, surround the building. The earlier we get this settled, the earlier we can **rest**,” Dracor ordered

impatiently.

If it weren’t for Edwin’s orders, he wouldn’t have inconvenienced himself by coming down personally.

“Stop! Who goes there!” A group of bodyguards dressed in suits streamed out of the building. They were the

Harmon family’s men.

“What, was there a group of men protecting him? Alright, you boys can use them for practice.” Dracor

motioned to his men.

“Yes, guild master!” His disciples behind him grinned evilly **and** rushed up to fight the bodyguards. They were out for blood like a pack of wolves.

“Stop them!” The bodyguards were not to be outdone. They pressed forward as one to block the guild

members.

The scene erupted into chaos.

Although the bodyguards were well-trained, their fighting skills weren't on the same level **as** those of the members of the White Dragon guild.

After a while, the bodyguards were forced to retreat, falling under the pressure.

“Who dares to go against the Harmon family? An aggressive roar interrupted the fight as Stephan emerged with a few of his comrades.

Making his way through the crowd, the guild members were repelled backward by Stephan's internal energy.

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creating a space around him.

“Oh, is he a martial artist with internal energy? How dare you show off your tricks in front of an expert? Get out of the way!” Dracor had a cold smile on his **lips**.

Stephan threw fist after fist without stopping, forcing the guild members to fall back. They were no match for

him.

“Reckless bastard!” Dracor took a deep breath and released a surge of energy in Stephan's direction.

The attack sliced through the raindrops and zeroed in on him.

Fortunately, Stephan had a keen sense of danger. He noticed the attack coming and went into a defensive.

stance.

“Boom!” An explosive sound was heard as Stephan’s defense was shattered.

He was blown backward about 30 feet away, leaving deep tracks on the ground. Stephan was **flung** onto a wall like a ragdoll as he spat out a mouthful of blood.

“Weakling.” Dracor scoffed.

Dracor thought that he had finally met a worthy challenger. Unexpectedly, he couldn’t even withstand a single

blow.

“Y–You, who are you?” Stephan furrowed his brows and stared at the towering figure in front of him.

Due to the darkness, he couldn’t identify who the man was.

“How dare you beat up my men if you don’t even know who I am?” Dracor approached him menacingly.

Stephan finally recognized him when his bearded face was illuminated by the streetlights.

“You– You are Dracor Milfroy?” Stephan fixed his eyes on the man as fear spread across his face.

The nightmare he dreaded really came true!

“Since you seem to know me, we can settle this easily, Kneel down and beg for your life. If I’m in a good mood,

I might let you go.” Dracor laughed mockingly as if he was entertained by Stephan’s fear.

“Both of you, go and tell Mr. Rhys to escape. I’ll hold them back!” Stephan gritted his teeth and prepared

himself for a fight to the death.

“**Yes**, Sir!” The bodyguards behind Stephan ran into the building without hesitation. Their **mission was to**

protect Dustin and they were prepared to do it at the expense of their lives.

“Heh, do **you** think you could hold me back?” **Dracor smirked.**

“I’ll do my best to buy him some time!” Stephan was determined.

“Don’t blame me for your death since you were the one who asked for it! Dracor scoffed again.

He flew at Stephan like **a** streak of lightning.

“I’m going all out!” Stephan took a deep breath and faced Dracor squarely.

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Both of them collided directly into each other as another loud explosion was heard.

Stephan **was** thrown back like he had been hit by a truck, His body flew into the air and landed heavily on the ground with a loud thud. Blood spurted out from his mouth and nose. He did not even have the strength to stand up.

“Don’t overestimate your abilities!” **Dracor** taunted.

Compared to Dracor strength, Stephan’s internal energy and skills **were** feeble.

“Mr. Rhys, I did my best. I hope I have bought enough time for you to escape, Stephan muttered as he laid in the rain, despair in his eyes.

Dracor was on another level as he had already attained the highest tier of martial arts. In addition, he had trained his body to be as impenetrable **as** steel.

No wonder he was deemed the best martial artist in Swinton!

Stephan knew that he was no match for Dracor. He couldn’t even put up a good fight.

“It is an honor for you to die at my **hands!**” Dracor came up to Stephan and **stared** at him condescendingly, like looking down on a bug.

He lifted his leg to stomp on Stephan’s chest and finish him off.

At that moment, all the **glass** windows of the hospital building shattered simultaneously.

A dark figure swooped down **and** landed heavily on the ground. The tough cement crumbled beneath his feet and large cracks propagated from the spot where he landed, like a spider’s web that extended for miles.

“Who is it?” Everyone had bewildered expressions on their faces.

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“Who is it?” The sudden explosion caught everyone by surprise.

Initially, they thought someone had committed suicide by jumping off the building.

However, after a good look, they realized the figure who had jumped off the building was still standing tall. In **his** hand, he was holding a black umbrella as he **stood** in the **rain**, giving off an overwhelming and mysterious aura.

“Mr. Rhys! This man’s dangerous, run for your life!” Stephan screamed his lungs out.

that the White Dragon guild was here, why did he join the fray instead of escaping? Was he looking for

death?

“Punk, are you that Dustin guy?” Dracor sized Dustin up, noting his thin and frail build.

“Yes, it’s me,” Dustin replied.

“You got some guts for not running away from the sight of me, punk!” Dracor smirked.

“Why should I run? I was waiting for you,” Dustin said nonchalantly.

“Really?” Dracor raised his eyebrows.

“Interesting. It’s been a long time since I **have** last seen an arrogant punk like you.”

“Mr. Rhys, he is too powerful for you! With his impenetrable skin and overwhelming energy, even if **we** combine our attacks, we are no match for him! Go an

d get support from the Harmon family while I'll hold him back!" Stephan scrambled to stand up, using the last ounce of his strength to help Dustin escape.

"Mr. Chapman, it's alright. Leave the rest to me." Dustin smiled, touched by his resolution.

It was commendable that Stephan was prepared to die to protect him, **even** though he was ordered by

someone else.

"Mr. Rhys, you're still unaware of the situation. Not only is this man **the** guild master of **the** White Dragon guild, but he is also the best martial artist in Swinton! He is head and shoulders above both of us! **Just** escape while

you can!" Stephan urged.

Although Dustin was **a** martial artist **as** well, he could only harness internal energy.

On the other hand, as a high-level martial artist, Dracor already had the ability to manifest his **energy** externally.

In addition, he fortified his body to be as impenetrable as steel. Even among the high-level martial artists, he

was considered one of the best.

Defeating a **lower**-level martial artist like Dustin would be a walk in the park!

"Mr. Chapman, don't worry. I can deal with this," Dustin reassured him.

"Mr. Rhys, you are biting off more than you can chew! You are still young and trainable. If you survive, there is

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still hope for you to defeat him one day! However, the most important thing right now is to stay alive!" Stephan

was **getting** anxious.

Dustin couldn't help but feel frustrated. Were his words that unbelievable? He didn't even care if he went up

against a godlike opponent. Defeating a high-level martial artist was nothing.

"Shut your yapping! Today, both of you will die here!" Dracor snapped his fingers.

At his signal, his disciples swarmed all at once toward Dustin.

"Mr. Rhys, run! I'll hold them back!" Stephan gritted his teeth and **rushed** into the middle of the crowd. He had

to buy more time so that Dustin could escape.

Although Stephan was badly injured, he **was** still able to tackle a large number of men by mustering up

his remaining energy.

As Dracor's disciples were defeated one by one. Stephan's last-ditch effort angered Dracor.

"**What** a reckless idiot!" **Dracor's** expression darkened.

He leaped into the air and dove at Stephan with his palm open.

"Come at me with all you've got!" Stephan countered with his fists.

As Stephan's fist and Dracor's palm came into contact, a loud blast was heard as their energies repelled each

other.

Stephan flew into the air like a punching bag, blood spurting from his mouth.

Before his limp body crashed on the ground, Dustin caught him single-handedly and nullified Dracor's attack. He placed Stephan down and patted him on the back gently.

After that, Dustin stood up and walked confidently toward Dracor.

“Wait a minute, Mr. Rhys! I know you have some skills, but you are no match for Dracor! He is definitely not an opponent either you or I could handle! He **is** a monster! Quick, grab this opportunity to escape before it’s too late!” Stephan shouted frantically, ignoring the blood dripping down his face.

“Don’t worry, Stephan. On the contrary, he is no match for me.”

Heavy raindrops splashed on his umbrella as Dustin continued walking toward Dracor.

“Punk, you should have listened to his advice! Now, it’s too late to regret it! You lost your chance!”

Dracor laughed menacingly.

He dug his heels into the ground and shot out like an arrow in Dustin’s direction. He was planning to **use** his

momentum and crush Dustin with his body of steel!

“Mr. Rhys, be careful!” Stephan’s face turned **pale**.

Dracor was a high-level martial artist and one of the best in Swinton. Going squarely against an opponent of

his caliber **was** just looking for trouble!

Just as Stephan thought that Dustin would die on the spot, a miracle happened!

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Even though Dracor had smashed into Dustin’s body like a tank, he did not move an inch. He reached out, grabbed Dracor by the neck, and lifted him off the ground.

Dracor’s muscular body dangled in the air like a chicken awaiting slaughter, his feet kicking frantically.

However, he could not escape from Dustin's iron grip.

"Mr. Chapman, what were you saying just now?" Dustin turned to Stephan and asked nonchalantly, an umbrella in one hand and Dracor hanging helplessly from the other.

Dustin couldn't catch what Stephan had said to him just now because of the heavy rain.

Looking at the scene before him, Stephan was dumbstruck. Dracor was dangling helplessly in the air like a puppet.

Never in his dreams had Stephan imagined that the proud **and** arrogant Dracor Milfroy would be restrained by Dustin with just one hand.

Everything happened so quickly that Dracor **had** no chance to retaliate.

Besides, it had to be said that Dracor wasn't an average, run-of-the-mill fighter. He was a high-level martial artist with formidable energy!

How could Dustin single-handedly defeat a martial artist like him?

This was ludicrous!

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"Let me go..." Dracor flailed helplessly, his face red as he gasped for air.

At that moment, not only was he bewildered by the sudden twist of events, but he was also filled with dread!

He thought that he was a big fish in a small pond like Swinton. Who knew that he would end up sparring against a divine-level martial artist here?

A divine-level martial artist in his twenties? It was unheard of in all of South City. How could such an invincible lighter appear in Swinton?

“Fuck, this punk is incredible! Even our guild master was defeated by him!” The disciples of the White Dragon guild whispered among themselves in disbelief.

Seeing as their leader had been defeated, some of them slipped away as fast as they could.

“Dracor, seems like your disciples aren’t as loyal to you **as** you thought.” Dustin smirked.

“Who—
Who the hell are you?” Dracor gritted his teeth as his veins popped from the pressure.

He didn’t have the energy to struggle any further.

“That’s not important right now. Go and send this message to Edwin. Tell him to bring his daughter and apologize to me. Otherwise, I will have a personal chat with him!”

With that, Dustin punched Dracor in the stomach. Dracor spat out a mouthful of blood as his internal energy dissipated instantly!

“H—How could you drain my energy?” Dracor widened his eyes in fear.

“Why can’t I? You have lost fair and **square!**” Dustin swung around and threw him into the air carelessly.

“Guild master!” The remaining disciples ran up to Dracor and helped him up.

Although they were indignant, they kept a safe distance from Dustin.

“Today, I’ve lost. I admit my defeat. Boys, let’s go!” Dracor wiped **away** the blood from his face as he and his men left with their tails between their legs.

“Mr. **Rhys**—
Did you thrash Dracor Milfroy?” Stephan’s eyes were wide with shock and amazement.

“I told you. He is no match for me.” Dustin smiled easily.

He handed a gemiphen pill to Stephan. "Mr. Chapman, take this healing pill and have a good rest. You will recover from your injuries and be **as** good as **new** tomorrow."

"Thank you, Mr. Rhys!" **Stephan** popped the gemiphen into **his** mouth without hesitation.

After a few minutes, he felt a sensation of warmth spreading outward **from** his stomach. He could visibly feel the energy from the pill **healing** his wound from the inside out. His internal bleeding stopped, and soreness slowly disappeared from his limbs.

"Wow, this pill is incredible!" **Stephan** blinked in surprise at how fast his Injuries healed.

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"Mr. Chapman, sorry for the inconvenience. You should go back and have a rest now," Dustin said with a smile.

"Yes, sir!" Stephan nodded and made his way home.

With Dustin's overwhelming powers, his help was obviously unnecessary.

That night went by in a flash.

The next morning, in a VIP room at East Swinton Hospital.

"Mother, bad news! Something terrible has happened!" James rushed into the hospital room in a hurry, sweat pouring from his forehead.

"What's the matter? Why are you so out of breath early in the morning?" Half-asleep, Florence jumped out of her skin at James' sudden outburst.

Some other relatives who were resting in the room looked displeased at his disturbance.

"It's true!" James **was** gasping for air.

"I received news that the Hummers were going to boycott us, the Nicholson family! Half of the businesses in Swinton have us blacklisted and are unwilling to engage with our company!"

"What? Boycott **us**? James, are you joking? How could this be?" Florence was taken aback at the shocking news. She could not believe that was happening.

"Why would I joke about this?" James pulled a long face.

"Quine Group's stock prices have been plummeting since this morning. If this continues, we will **be** bankrupt in three days!"

When James announced this, the room erupted into chaos.

"How could this happen? Why would Mr. Hummer boycott us?"

"That's right, we have nothing against the Hummers. There's no reason for him to do this!"

Everyone **was** at a loss about this situation.

Edwin Hummer was one of the Mighty Three!

With his connections and influence, it would be as **easy** as pie to destroy the Nicholson family!

"James! Tell me exactly what happened! Did we do anything to offend Mr. Hummer?" Florence said anxiously as beads of sweat appeared on her forehead.

"It's **not** us, it's Dustin who offended him! I **heard** Dustin showed up at the Hummers' party last night and beat up Ms. Hummer. The Hummers are boycotting us for revenge!"

"That idiot **again**? Useless **bastard**! Why do we have to clean up **his** mess? Now the Nicholson family would have to pay for his deeds! Is there any justice left in the world?" Florence spat in anger.

"Why? We have already cut off ties with Dustin. Why would the Hummer family **go** after us? **This** isn't fair!"

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“That’s right! The Nicholson family has nothing to do with Dustin **any** longer. He should be punished for what

he had done!”

“There’s no use complaining. Let’s think about how to placate Mr. Hummer’s anger!”

The ruckus **started** up again as everyone had something to say. However, no one had any concrete **ideas about** how to solve this **issue**.

Dahlia, the backbone of the family, **was** still unconscious. With their status, no one of them had any right to

meet with Mr. Hummer.

“Is something the matter?” At that moment, Matt **walked** into the hospital room.

“Matt, thank goodness you are **here**! You **have** to help us, the Nicholson family is in a crisis!” Florence ran up

to him. Matt was her last hope!

The rest of them turned to Matt expectantly, nodding in agreement.

“Mrs. Nicholson, I will do my best to help. You have to tell me what’s going on.” Matt said comfortingly.

“It’s all Dustin’s fault! Here’s what happened— Florence did not hold back and briefly explained everything

that had occurred.

“I understand.” Matt nodded thoughtfully.

“Are you asking me to meet with Edwin and beg for the Hummers’ mercy?”

“Yes, that’s right! Aren’t you acquainted with Mr. Hummer? As long as you take our side, I’m sure Mr. Hummer

will relent!" Florence pleaded.

"Mrs. Nicholson, it's not that I refuse to help. However, Ms. Hummer is still unconscious after getting beaten up so badly. If I go to Mr. Hummer at this time, I'm afraid he would turn his anger on me." Matt replied

awkwardly.

"Matt! If you could help us through this crisis, you would be our family's savior! Aren't you interested in Dahlia? Both of you can register to be married immediately once she regains consciousness!" Florence

reassured him.

"That That doesn't sound like a good idea. I **don't** want to take **advantage** of his situation. Why don't we consider this again after Dahlia regains consciousness?" Mall **asked**.

"What's the big deal? Both of you are mutually interested in each other. It's just a matter of time before

getting engaged! Once we survive this **crisis**, both of you should get married as well!" Florence promised with

determination.

"Well I'll do my best." Matt nodded with a torn expression.

However, **on** the inside, he **was** elated.

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In an office of the Hummers Hospital, Edwin **was** resting with his eyes closed on a chair.

Suddenly, a knock was heard.

“Come in.” Edwin opened his eyes and **saw** Fletcher walk in with a grave expression.

“**What’s** wrong?” Edwin asked, worried.

“Sir Hummer, we received news last **night that** Dracor was severely injured.” Fletcher reported.

“What? Dracor was beaten up? Who was the perpetrator?” Edwin’s face twitched.

“It was Dustin!”

“Dustin again? How could that punk have such overwhelming powers?” Edwin frowned.

Dracor was his right-hand man. Being the best martial artist in Swinton, no one could withstand his attacks.

Merely the mention of his name was enough to strike fear into the hearts of his opponents.

Usually, Dracor could easily unravel any sticky situation that Edwin had assigned him to. How could such a

capable fighter like him fall into Dustin’s hands?

It was incomprehensible!

“Sir Hummer, Dustin told Dracor to send you a message,” Fletcher **continued** hesitantly.

“What is it?”

“Dustin insisted that Ms. Hummer had to apologize to him personally. Otherwise, he would pay you a visit!”

“That punk had the nerve to threaten me? He must have a death wish! Edwin slammed **his** fist on the table in anger.

He was the one who beat **Tina** up. Now, he expected the Hummers to apologize to him?

Dustin was going too far!

“Sir Hummer, please calm down. His abilities are far superior to any **of** ours, so it is best not to fight with him

head-on.” Fletcher reasoned with Edwin.

“Then should we just let him go?” Edwin demanded.

“Of course not!” Fletcher shook his **head**.

“Although Dustin is a formidable martial artist, he is but one **man**. We can use our influence to drive him out of

Swinton,”

“Continue.” Edwin nodded to Fletcher to continue.

“Eternumax, the medicine produced by **our** company, is sought after by many families, especially the Harmon family! We can use this to negotiate and get their cooperation. With their support, we can take Dustin on!”

Fletcher smirked.

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“That makes sense. If Natasha agrees to **abandon** him, dealing with Dustin all on one would be a piece of cake!” A smile played on Edwin’s lips.

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“That’s what I thought! Nonetheless, the prescription of Eternumax **is** still in our control. After we are settled with that punk, it would make things easier for us to turn against the Harmon family as well. Fletcher cackled gleefully.

“Good idea. I’ll contact Natasha right away!” Without any **delay**, **Edwin** took out his phone and dialed Natasha’s number.

“Hello, is this Ms. Harmon? I’m calling about a business deal.”

“Yes, yes! This is about the Eternumax!”

“If both parties could reach an agreement, this would be a huge boost to our wealth and reputation!”

“Regarding my conditions—
it’s very simple. As long as you turn your back on Dustin, we can be loyal business

partners!”

As the conversation continued, Edwin’s **expression** turned sour.

His face **was** livid when he ended the call,

“Sir Hummer, how is it? **What** did **Natasha** say?” Fletcher asked out of curiosity.

“She told me to get lost!” Edwin answered.

“What?” Fletcher **was** speechless at her reply.

“This woman must be blindly in **love** with that punk! What foolishness to forsake such a lucrative deal for a

man!” **Edwin** gritted his teeth **in** anger.

“Women tend to be emotional. She will **regret** it **once** Eternumax takes the world by storm!” Fletcher chimed in.

Edwin didn’t reply, as he had too many things on his mind.

These few days, nothing seemed to be going right for him.

“Sir Hummer, terrible news!”

At this moment, a doctor ran into the room hurriedly. “Ms. Hummer’s condition has suddenly taken a turn for

the worse!”

“What do you mean? She’s in danger? How could this have happened? Wasn’t she fine yesterday?” Edwin jumped up from his chair. He grabbed the doctor by the collar and roared.

“Ms. Hummer **is** suffering from **a** strange condition that can’t be cured medically. Y—

You would understand once you see it for yourself,” The doctor stammered.

“Show me!” Edwin growled.

He followed the doctor all the way to the intensive care unit. Tina was lying on the hospital bed. Her face was twisted with agony, and she appeared very weak.

“Tina, how are you feeling?” Edwin knelt beside her bed, his face filled with **worry**.

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“Dad—

I don’t feel so good, it hurts” Tina whispered weakly, as if her life was hanging on a thread.

“What the hell happened? Why would my daughter deteriorate into such a poor state?” Edwin glared at the

doctor.

“Sir Hummer, we have fixed the fractures on Ms. Hummer. Her injuries should be healed in a few days. However, she has other injuries that we can’t fix.”

“What other injuries?” Edwin furrowed his brows.

“Sir Hummer, please have a look.” The doctor removed the blankets from Tina’s body.

On her abdomen, there were a few purple bruises. It seemed like she was hurt by a heavy object. The size of the **bruises** was at least 3 inches long and slightly sunken inward.

“Isn’t that just a bruise? What’s there to be worried about?” Edwin asked, puzzled.

“Sir Hummer, this isn’t a normal bruise. It’s a symptom of a rare curse. The person who left the curse **has** blocked Ms. Hummer’s blood circulation. If this continues, the organs in her body will malfunction and die. According to my experience, Ms. Hummer’s life would be in serious danger!” The doctor explained gravely.

“What?! How could this be? Is there no cure?” Edwin was taken aback at the startling news.

“Unless the person who placed the curse lifted it, there’s no cure!” The doctor sighed and shook his head.

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“What do you mean it can’t be cured?” Edwin repeated.

“Are you telling me that only that Rhys punk can cure my daughter’s sickness?” He furrowed his brows as the

color drained from his face.

“You certainly need the right person for the right job, so we’ll have to track him down no matter what it takes.”

The doctor confirmed.

“I can’t believe this bastard! How dare he use such underhanded tactics!” Edwin growled through gritted teeth

as his eyes flashed with anger.

“What should we do now, Sir Hummer?” Fletcher asked.

They had failed to bribe Natasha, and Dracor was now in critical condition from getting beaten up. It seemed

like both civilized and uncivilized methods **had** failed to work. Dustin seemed to be a thorn in their side lately.

But most importantly, Tina's life was literally in that man's hands.

So, even if they had any countermeasures up their sleeves, they were still afraid of making the first move.

After remaining silent for a while, Edwin finally decided. "Call that punk and get ready to negotiate with him!"

"Yes, Sir!" Fletcher obliged. He then proceeded to hastily ask someone for Dustin's number.

After dialing the number, he swiftly handed the phone over to Edwin.

"Hello, who is this?" Dustin's voice came from the other end.

"Edwin Hummer speaking." Edwin greeted coldly while holding back his anger.

"Let me a

ask you one thing, kid. Did you harm my daughter in any **way**, or did you not?"

"So it's Sir Hummer on the line. Well if you're referring to the curse, then **yes**, they were from me," Dustin

replied dryly.

"You got a lot of f*cking nerve, boy! How dare you lay your hands on my daughter?!" Edwin roared while

gnashing his teeth.

"Why don't you ask your daughter about the things she's done? How would she have ended up like this if she hadn't pushed her weight around so much?" Dustin retorted indifferently.

"Hmph, you're the last person I want to talk to about this right now! You'd better cure my daughter right this

instant!” Edwin ordered.

“What **makes** you think I should do everything you ask right away? Don’t you think you’re being a little too cocky right now?” **Dustin** scoffed.

“So you want to bargain first, don’t you? Fine, we can do that! As long as you cure my little girl, I promise not to hold you accountable for anything else in the future! Edwin barked.

“Heh, that’s it?” Dustin sneered in reply.

“I’ll also lift the ban on the Nicholsons immediately so that the whole family can get back on track.”

“I’m afraid you’re still mistaken about what I truly **want**. I do not need these, Dustin replied.

“What do you want then?” Edwin growled.

“It’s simple. I just want your daughter to apologize to me,” Dustin said.

“What?! You want her to apologize to you?!” Edwin shrieked, his face turning cold in an instant.

“Is it unreasonable to ask for an apology from someone who assaulted you for no reason?” Dustin asked rhetorically.

“Who do you think you are, kid? How dare you request that a Hummer apologize to you? What makes you think you deserve the honor?” Edwin **roared** while burning with anger.

While he did not intend to pursue the matter, which was already out of the reach of the law in the first place, he felt that this man **was** full of himself for thinking that the Hummers **owed** him an apology!

“If you refuse to give me an apology. I’ll just save my breath then. However, you can’t blame me for not reminding you that your daughter won’t be able to hold on for much longer, Dustin said, then immediately hung up the phone after

“Does this punk think that he can push me around?!” Edwin bellowed.

Edwin **was so** furious, he almost smashed the phone in his hands onto the ground. Who did he think he was. exactly?

He was one of the Mighty Three, the richest man in his city, and was also known as an important figure in the Underground World,

Within his domain, it could be said that he was the one who called the shots and that he could get anything he asked for at the drop of a hat.

He couldn't remember the **last** time he had been humiliated like this.

What would happen to the Hummer's reputation if word got out that they visited the Nicholsons to offer an apology? Would they still have **any** dignity left after that?

"I feel it would be wiser to be the bigger person in this situation, Sir Hummer. We should agree to his terms first in order to **save** Ms. Hummer." Mr. Lawson advised from the **side**.

"If we agree to his terms now, won't any Tom, Dick, and Harry **gain** the right to shit and piss on the Hummer name from then on?" Edwin snapped in a booming voice.

"This is just one way to slow him down, Sir Hummer. Once we manage to **save** Miss Hummer first, **we** can still take our time in thinking up ways to get back at that punk," Mr. **Lawson** suggested.

Edwin fell silent after hearing that.

His suggestion was reasonable, but the prospect of giving up the reputation of the Hummers to lower **themselves** to offer an apology to others was an unbearably uncomfortable thought to him.

"Dad, it hurts It's so painful! Save me! Tina Hummer moaned **profusely** as she laid in bed.

Looking at his daughter's pain-stricken face, Edwin took a deep breath and finally decided to settle on a compromise.

He dialed

Dustin's number once again and spat into the phone. "I'll adhere to your terms, kid, but you'd better not play tricks with me!"

"The apology has to be sincere. If you insist on acting like this, then we have nothing else to talk about," Dustin said indifferently.

"How dare you—" Edwin stopped as the corner of his eye began to twitch.

"Fine, you win! I'll send someone over **today at** noon to give an apology in person!" He roared **while** forcefully holding back his anger.

"I'll be waiting." Dustin replied.

During noontime, inside a VIP ward in East **Swinton** Hospital, Dahlia had woken up a long time ago, and the redness and puffiness on her cheeks had already faded quite a bit.

Her hands were still wrapped with bandages, so she was advised not to move around too much for the time being.

When Dustin walked through the door with a fruit basket in hand, he noticed that members of the Nicholson family had gathered together and were discussing something.

Even old Mr. Nicholson, who had been living in seclusion, had shown u

1. up.

"The **nerve** of you to show your face here, Rhys! Do you have the slightest idea about the amount of damage you've caused us? Because of you, the Hummers banned us! Are you happy now that the Quine Group is on the brink of collapse?" Florence yelled at him the moment she laid **eyes** on him. She went from her initial state of calm to jumping to her feet and **spewing** expletives

The others remained silent but eventually started donning indignant looks on their faces. Even Dahlia was

frowning at him.

She received news of the Nicholsons' ban from the Hummers the moment she woke up, and the reason for that was that Custin had allegedly given Ms. Hummer a beating.

Although she knew that she herself was the person he had done it for. But his 'help' had ultimately sent the entire Nicholson family to the fiery depths of an inferno instead!

"Alright, alright, stop bickering already. We all know that Dustin did all that to stand up for Dahlia. While it was somewhat impulsive, I'd like to think that he did it with pure intentions in mind," Old Mr. Nicholson tried to calm everyone down.

"Are **you honestly** still speaking **on** his behalf when things have gotten to this stage, Dad? Do you only intend to stop when the family is in **shambles**?" Florence said through gritted teeth.

"Don't worry, I've already taken care of the problem with the Hummers, Dustin spoke up calmly.

"What do you mean you've taken care of it? What's your solution? If you were **that** capable in the first place.

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would the Nicholsons still be banned by now? You'd better scram right now. I don't want to see your face

anymore! Shoo!" Florence **screamed**.

In the middle of her rage, she grabbed the fruit basket from Dustin's hands and smashed it onto the ground.

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"That's enough! Now's not the time to point fingers. Since we're in a tight situation now, what everyone needs to do is help one another out and ride out the storm together, not grab each other by the throat!" Old Mr. Nicholson **yelled** after witnessing Florence's burst of rage.

“Easy for you to say. This is the Hummer’s ban we’re talking about. Who knows, all of us might go bankrupt in a couple of days and no longer have a place to call home in Swinton anymore!” Florence snapped in fury.

“That’s right! If it wasn’t for Dustin, who **kept** stirring up trouble and dragging us down with him, how could the Nicholsons even have ended up in this situation today?” James spoke, and the rest agreed with him.

“What’s going on, Dustin? I believe that you can enlighten all of us here?” Dahlia suddenly piped up. She was giving him a chance to explain himself properly.

“Tina was unruly and unreasonable, which is why I decided to put her in her place,” Dustin replied bluntly.

“See, everyone heard that, right? He beat up the girl first, so he was the one who instigated this whole thing in the first place. So, he’s entirely to blame for the ban on the Nicholson family!” Florence shouted even more fiercely.

“You’re a thorn in our sides, Dustin! You owe us an explanation for every affliction you’ve caused all of us!”

“I suggest kidnapping him and handing him over to the Hummers so that we can quell their rage!”

A bunch of chatter erupted from the crowd, and it could be seen that most of them were in favor of kidnapping him.

“You are too impulsive, Dustin! Do you even know who Ms. Hummer is? What **makes** you think you’re worthy of going head-to-head with her? Do you know how much trouble you’ve caused?” Dahlia scoffed with a frown.

“So what you’re telling me is that I should’ve just sat there and watched as you got brutally beaten up **and** humiliated?” Dustin sneered coldly.

It didn’t matter if Florence and the others didn’t understand, but if Dahlia still insisted on pinning the blame on him, then he’d feel that all his efforts were for nothing.

“Don’t you twist my words! I am trying to tell you to consider the consequences first before doing

anything! Not only did you get us into trouble, you even hurt your reputation in the process!” Dahlia retorted with a scowl

on her face.

“I’m not the type to dwell on the details. All I know is that I’ll get revenge on anyone who **crosses** me!” Dustin said in a cold voice.

“You guys heard it yourself! This kid is still as stubborn as ever! Thus, we must hand him over to the Hummers! “Florence instigated as she gestured at two of the younger **Nicholsons**.

The two immediately understood her intention and placed their hands on each side of Dustin’s shoulders.” You’d better be more cooperative with us, or else you’ll get what’s coming to you!”

Dustin frowned and was ready to pounce on them when Julie suddenly burst into the room with a panicked look on her face. “This is bad, Auntie! The Hummers have brought their men here to kill us all!”

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“What?!” A collective gasp arose from everyone in the room as the news startled them.

They thought it was already bad that the whole family got banned, but they never expected the Hummers to be this cruel.

They were already knocking at their doors. Were they trying to drive them into a corner?

“It’s over, it’s over! We’re dead meat this time!”

“How could this happen? Why can’t the Hummers give **us** a break for once?”

The crowd panicked and started jumping to their feet anxiously.

“It’s all because of that damn bastard! It’s all his fault!”

“**That’s** right! The Hummers must have come for Dustin, so let’s hand him over and we’ll be all right!”

Everyone in the crowd immediately turned their gazes to Dustin, causing a million laser-like glares to **land** on

him at the same time.

In their opinion, if they could sacrifice Dustin to save themselves, that would be the best course of action.

Just as the crowd was still in an uproar, a group of people from the Hummer family started boldly entering the

venue.

The leader of the procession was Tina, who was sitting in a wheelchair, Following behind her were a few representatives from the Hummer **family, as** well as a few escorting bodyguards.

At the time. **Tina** looked weak, as her **eyes** were half shut and half open. Both of her hands and feet were in casts, her entire face was bruised **and** swollen, and her features seemed to have been disfigured completely.

If someone were not closely acquainted with her, they would **have** a hard time telling between her current and

actual looks.

“M—Ms. Hummer?” The crowd let out a gasp.

Everyone from the Nicholsons was taken aback as they stared at the nearly paralyzed and disfigured Tina. Although they knew that she’d gotten her **ass** beaten, they didn’t expect it to be that **bad**. Her face had swelled up so much that it **almost** resembled a pig’s head.

If they hadn’t seen it with their own eyes, they wouldn’t have believed that the young, spoiled-to-the-core lady

of the Hummer family would even live to see such a **day**.

Wasn’t this Dustin fellow too much for doing that though?

“D—Dustin—

Don’t tell me you were the **one** who beat Ms. Hummer up **this** badly?” One of the **Nicholsons asked** shakily as he looked at the others in shock..

“Rhys! You’d better admit everything by **your** own choice later and not drag **us into this!**” Florence shouted as

she broke into a nervous sweat.

The situation **was** much direr than she **had** anticipated.

James went straight to the point. After walking three steps forward, he immediately fell to his knees with a

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loud “Thud” in front of the Hummers. The inertia generated by his fall caused his torso to slide forward by a

few inches.

“Ms. Hummer, this has nothing to do with us! It was Dustin Rhys who beat you up, so if you want to plot your revenge, please just plot it on his head. Please spare our family!” James pleaded in desperation.

Upon witnessing this, the majority of the Nicholsons unanimously approved of his actions on the inside. They admired him for his humble and responsible nature and thought of him as one of the good men in the Nicholson family.

He was probably the type to rush forward in the face of danger too. They were certain that the Nicholson family would continue to thrive and prosper, what with such an outstanding individual in the family.

“Huh?” A collective gasp arose from the people from the Hummers.

When they all saw James kneel on the floor, some of them exchanged glances with one another, completely dumbfounded by what had just happened in front of them.

Shouldn’t they be the ones apologizing? How come it’s the other way around now? What the hell was happening now?

“I suppose you must be mistaken about something, kid?” The butler of the Hummer family asked with perplexed look on his face.

Even though he had imagined countless horrible scenarios that could come out of this, this wasn't in his predictions at all

“Oh right, before I forget” before the butler could finish his sentence, James immediately assumed that the butler wasn't planning on letting them go.

He turned around and started flailing his hands in the air. “Someone, anyone! Bring Dustin to **me!** I'll get him to bow down to the Hummers and beg for their forgiveness!”

“Heh, I'll do it myself,” Dustin said, shaking off the two men before he trudged forward.

“Everyone! That's him! He's the one who beat her up- James shouted while pointing at Dustin.

When the Hummers finally saw what had unfolded in front of their **eyes**, their expressions changed dramatically and all of them fell to their knees with a loud ‘Thud“.

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“Huh?!” James’ jaw dropped to the floor looking at the representatives **from** the Hummer family kneeling toward him.

Everyone’s eyes were as big as saucers as they stared in disbelief.

Who would’ve thought that the high and mighty Hummer family would ever kneel toward them in their **lives?**

Were **these** mega–bigshots ever this humble before? What was wrong with them today? Were they sick or something?

“What’s happening? Didn’t the Hummers come to retaliate? Why are they all kneeling?”

“What are the Hummers doing? This isn’t some kind of reverse psychology tactic, right?”

“Something’s fishy here. I think this is part of their plan!”

As the Nicholsons continued to stare at the Hummers who were kneeling in front of them, not only were they not the least bit happy about this, but this even frightened them tremendously.

Some of their legs even gave out as time passed. That was because the scene in front of them **was too** overwhelming for them to handle.

To think that a mega bigshot would kneel for them? They **couldn’t** even see it happening in their dreams.

“Forgive me. Ms. Nicholson. The Hummers were the ones who were at fault last night. Thus, we are gathered here today for the young lady to offer **her** sincere apologies to you in person. I hope you can forgive **us**, Ms. Nicholson.” Aft

er Fletcher took the lead and spoke up, he immediately bent down and kneeled **on** the ground

with the utmost sincerity.

“Our sincere apologies, Ms. Nicholson!” The representatives from the Hummer family shouted. All of them kneeled in unison afterward, without much thought for their reputation.

Such a turn of events dumbfounded the Nicholsons yet **again**. So, it **was** true! The Hummers were apologizing

to them!

But the question now was, why?

“W—

why are you all? What is going on, Mr. Lawson?” Dahlia stuttered while lying on her hospital bed. She **was**

so antsy about the situation that she immediately got out of bed.

Weren’t they here for revenge? Why were they kneeling toward her?

“The Hummers aren’t unreasonable people. We admit our mistakes **when we’ve** done **wrong**, so we hope **that** you can forgive us for our trespasses, Ms. Nicholson, Fletcher replied with his **head lowered**.

“What are you talking about, Mr. Lawson? Please get up quickly! I’m afraid there **has** been a

misunderstanding. We’d already be glad if the matter **was** dropped entirely. **What** other reason do we have to accuse the Hummer **family** of?” Florence **apologized profusely** with a big smile after she came to her senses.

“Yes, she’s right! Please get up from the floor, Mr. Lawson!” The Nicholsons were still in a state of shock even

now.

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To them, it was already a huge relief that the Hummers were willing to let the matter slide. They wouldn't ever **have** the guts to coerce them into apologizing to them.

"As long **as** you continue to refuse to accept our apology, we'll continue kneeling like this until the **end** of time. Ms. Nicholson." Fletcher insisted stubbornly.

"Please get off the floor, Mr. Lawson. Let's just pretend none of this ever happened, alright? **Dahlia** spluttered, somewhat at a loss for words.

Even though Tina was the one who was at fault, she ended up being **the** one who suffered more severe injuries

than Dahlia.

While she was expected to recover in about three to five days, she doubted if Tina could even get out of bed by herself without resting in bed for half a month first.

This **was** the main reason she was so speechless when she heard that Tina, a member of the usually pigheaded Hummer family, was **even** going to apologize to her.

"Thank you, Ms. Nicholson, for being so kind to us!" Fletcher exclaimed as his face lit up with joy. He proceeded to give her a bow before gesturing for the representatives from the Hummer family to get up off the

floor.

"This is great. So it was a misunderstanding, after all. We should be fine now." Florence let out a long sigh of

relief.

Although she didn't know what had just happened, it was obvious that they managed to tide through this time

of crisis unscathed.

"That's right! Peace and harmony bring wealth, after all!" James grinned, even though his back was drenched

in a cold sweat.

Just when everyone thought that they were safe, Dustin suddenly spoke out, “Wait a minute. Tina **was** the one who beat Dahlia up, so it’s only fair that she apologize too,”

The crowd immediately burst into an uproar the moment they heard that. Some of the representatives from the Hummer family started exchanging glances with frowns on their faces.

Meanwhile, it felt as if the Nicholsons had been struck by lightning, as all of them remained frozen on the spot.

Was that man batshit **crazy**?!

The Hummers had **already** announced **that** they planned to drop the matter entirely, so why was it that this man still insisted on courting death on their behalf?

It was one thing to beat her up and cause such a huge disaster to happen in the first place, so why did he still insist on getting an apology out of Ms. Hummer when the Hummers had already decided to drop the matter?

The f*cking audacity of this bastard!

“Rhys! Have you been kicked in the head by a donkey? If you don’t know what to say, then shut up!” The moment she reeled back from her shock, Florence barked at him out of fear,

“You little shit! If you **want** to f*cking kick the bucket so much, why **don’t** you **keep** us out of this!” James

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cursed and felt like going up to him to throw hands.

“Some balls you got. Rhys! The Hummers let you off by the **grace** of their hearts, **and** yet you still **dare** to say that so shamelessly! Do you **want** to die so **badly**?”

To them, Dustin was a lunatic **who spouted** nonsense. Both parties **had** already reconciled with one another, so **why** bother stirring up trouble again?

What if this angered the Hummers? Then, who would be the one to take the fall?

“Is it not right to seek an apology from someone who beat you up? Am I wrong?” Dustin asked plainly.

“Shut the f*ck up, **Rhys!** You’re a nuisance. You’re going to get us killed!” Florence jumped to her feet **and**

cursed.

“Dustin! Please stop this, okay?” Dahlia pleaded as she broke out in a cold sweat too.

She hadn’t expected the man in front of her to spew such outrageous words from his mouth in their current predicament.

“Fine. I’ll shut up. I’ll leave the rest up to all of you,” Dustin replied. Without saying anything more, he retreated to a corner, by his own admission.

“I think his brain must have been fried, Ms. Hummer. Thus, you shouldn’t pay him any mind.” Florence immediately lunged forward to apologize, **as** she was afraid of offending the Hummer family.

“Yes, yes! This guy **is** a psychopath. He no longer has dealings with the Nicholsons.” James **was** also full of smiles as he feigned humility.

However, instead of feeling any sort of relief, the representatives from the Hummer family turned

extraordinarily gloomy instead.

After Fletcher whispered a few words to Tina, who was nearly fully paralyzed in her wheelchair, Tina gritted her teeth and finally opened her mouth to **croak** something.

1–I’m sorry...it **was** all my fault,” She said, out of breath.

The whole room fell dead silent the moment she finished.

Florence and the **rest** were even more shell-shocked, as their expressions immediately twisted into shock.

Did the spoiled young lady of the Hummers, the one who called all the shots in Swinton, actually just apologize?

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When Tina and her entourage left the scene, the Nicholsons still felt like they were in a daze.

They were still reeling at the fact that the high and mighty young lady of the Hummer family had not only pardoned their wrongdoings but was also the first to humble herself and apologize to them in person after getting her ass whooped.

It was truly unfathomable!

“What’s wrong with the Hummers today? Who knew that they could even be this humble?”

“I know, right? If I hadn’t pinched myself, I would have thought I was dreaming!”

“Could it be that Ms. Hummer genuinely realized her mistakes, and that’s why she came over to apologize in person?”

“Nonsense! You overestimate how righteous the Hummer family can be!”

The Nicholsons erupted into a flurry of discussion, and it seemed like it wasn’t about to die down soon.

“This can’t be Dustin’s doing, right?” Julie asked herself with a suspicious look; she felt uneasy on the inside.

Ever since last night’s beating session, Dustin had displayed a kind of calm that was uncommon in most people. As if he was confident that everything was going fine as planned.

So, either he was completely aware of the situation, or he was too good at hiding his emotions.

Then again, when she thought back to the fact that he'd been married to his cousin for three **years** and hadn't accomplished much over the years, she found it incredibly hard to believe that he was the guy who brought the Hummers to their knees.

Amid all the confusion, Matt Laney, who was dressed to the nines, suddenly strolled into the room.

"Huh, so everyone's already here. Just in time, too. I have good news for you all the ban by the Hummers **has** officially been lifted!" Matt announced the news with a big grin.

"I understand everything now! So, everything that happened just now was because of you, right Matt?" Florence probed, **as** she assumed she'd succeeded in connecting all the dots. Her gaze instantly perked up

too.

"That's right! How did I forget that we still have Matt here with us!" James exclaimed after coming back to his

senses.

"No wonder the Hummers apologized to us! So, after all, it was because Matt **was** secretly helping us behind

the scenes!"

"Exactly! Who **else** could be this capable apart from Mr. **Laney**?"

At that moment, all of the Nicholsons had starstruck looks on their faces.

So the reason why the Hummer family decided to offer an **apology** was that Matt had pressed them to do so.

behind the scenes.

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That's right!

That must be the case!

“What’s wrong? What just happened?” Matt asked around, confused.

To think that they just bombarded him with things he didn’t understand. Even if he had sharp wits, **he** was still unable to piece together everything that had happened yet.

“You don’t **have** to hide anything from us anymore, Matt. We all saw what you did. If not for you, how would Ms. Hummer even have apologized to us?” Florence said with a relieved look on her **face**.

“She apologized?” Matt repeated in disbelief, and his heart rate started to increase.

He knew exactly the kind of person Tina was. To think that an obnoxious woman like her had shown up at one’s door to apologize in person?

“Exactly, Matt! This time, not only did you tide the Nicholsons through our storms, you even managed to surprise our family. You are a great benefactor to our family!” James praised enthusiastically.

*Thank you, Mr. Laney! You saved our whole family!” The Nicholsons shouted as they stretched out their

hands to thank him **profusely**.

“Um—” Matt trailed off in confusion.

Immediately after reeling from his stupor, the ever-quick-witted Matt flashed a big smile. “No need to be so polite, everyone. It was just something easy to take care of, I didn’t even do much.”

Although he had no idea what the context behind this was, **he** felt like he should just accept the Nicholsons’ gratitude towards him.

After all, who would think of turning down another’s kindness?

“You’re too modest, Matt! If it weren’t for you, I’m afraid the Nicholsons might have ended up in shambles!” James continued boasting.

“Please, please, this is nothing.” Matt grinned and shook his head. His modest and courteous appearance was worthy of nothing but praise, after all.

“You got lucky this time, Rhys! I didn’t expect you to get **away** with this! What are you still standing there for? Hurry **up** and bow down to Matt and give him your thanks now!” Florence yelled **as** she shifted her sharp gaze

toward Dustin.

“You want me to bow down to thank him? On what grounds?” Dustin sneered out of the corners of his **eyes**.

“Hmph, you’d better not be ungrateful! You **were** the one who beat someone up and **caused** such havoc in the first place, so if it weren’t for Matt, who saved **your** ass, do you think that you could even be standing here

right now?” Florence retorted with a glare.

“That’s right! If it weren’t for Matt, you would have died a hundred times over for **beating** someone up by now!” James echoed in agreement.

“You guys give Matt too much credit. He’s not even remotely **as** capable as you think he is,” Dustin replied

with a cold expression.

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He was **even** impressed at the mental gymnastics they performed to get to this point. To think that they **dared** to prop him up and hail him as if he **were** a savior without knowing the full story yet.

And worst of all, Matt was just standing by and taking it all in.

“Hmph! Are you telling us that you’re more capable than Matt? Why don’t you look into the mirror and reflect on the kind of person you really are?”

“Yeah! People like you only know how to cause trouble and nothing else!”

“To think that there are people in this world who could be so heartless! Not only did he not thank his savior, he even talked shit about him! How disgusting!”

The Nicholsons berated Dustin. They despised people like him who were hellbent on repaying good with evil from the bottom of their hearts.

“Is it so hard for you just to thank someone, Dustin? If it weren’t for Matt, you might have been killed by now!” Dahlia suddenly piped up.

To her, Dustin **was** still being ignorant until the bitter end. Compared to Matt saving his life, **what** was a mere thank you?

“I would have if he **had** actually helped me. But he didn’t. In fact, not **only** did he not help me, he was the one

who started this whole fiasco in the first place!” Dustin replied flatly.

“What do you mean?” Dahlia frowned.

“I ran a background check and **found** out that Matt and Tina are lovers. Tina deliberately **targeted** you out of jealousy, thinking that you and he had some hanky panky going on behind the scenes. So, that **was** what led to the assault! In a nutshell, he’s the true culprit all along!” Dustin declared firmly.

“Bullshit! Rhys! Not to insult you or anything, but Matt is an upright guy. He’s not as bad **as** you say he is!” Florence cursed and jumped to her feet without waiting for Matt to respond.

“That’s right! I think you’re just jealous! You probably planted all kinds of evidence to frame him, knowing how much better he is than you!” James scolded.

“Oh, Dustin. Who knew you’d be so despicable!” The Nicholsons scoffed.

“Why do **you** always insist on causing havoc, Dustin? Can’t you be more mature and sensible for once?” Dahlia **spat** with a scowl

However, it was fairly obvious to her that he had done all of that as a result of his jealous rage.

“Don’t believe me? Just ask Julie. She was the **one** who saw it **all** last night!” Dustin defended himself **and** pointed at something.

Everyone’s gazes immediately shifted to see what he was pointing at.

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“What, me? When all eyes fell on her, Julie couldn’t help but be stunned and speechless for a while.

She was just here for the show, so why did she **get** implicated in this whole mess when she **was** just another

person in the crowd?

“Tell us everything you saw, and don’t try to hide anything, Julie. **I want** to see how **this** punk can **still** argue his way out of this!” Florence ordered as she crossed her arms.

“Yeah, Julie. Just tell us everything that’s on your mind. We must expose this punk for all his lies!” The Nicholsons spoke out in agreement.

“Um—But before Julie could say anything, she stopped herself.

Her response made the people in the crowd feel like she’d be a loose cannon.

This **was** especially true for Matt, **as he stood** there with his heart pounding out of his chest while **his** forehead

broke out in a cold sweat.

He’d **already** been scared shitless when Dustin spoke out the truth just now, so if Julie also knew something and exposed him for being the one who lied instead, he’d lose face!

“I believe you know what happened **yesterday** the best. Julie. So, it’s time to tell everyone the truth,” Dustin

added flatly.

“Stop this nonsense at once. Dustin! Save some face for yourself already.” Dahlia chided with a frown.

“There’s no need to be afraid, Julie. Your aunt here will back you up no matter what you say, so **just** tell us

what you saw!” Florence said, acting all protective all of a sudden.

“About last night Julie started and trailed off. After hesitating for a few seconds , she mustered up the

courage to continue with a firm gaze. “Yesterday night, I saw nothing and know nothing about the events that

went down. All I knew was that Dustin **was** the one who **beat** up Ms. Hummer!”

The moment she finished, Dustin froze on the spot. He didn’t expect Julie to completely flip the story on its

head in front of so many people like that.

“Did you hear that, Rhys? So, this is the whole truth! I can’t wait to see **how** you’re going to argue your way out

of this!” Florence shouted even louder than before.

“Not only do you not know how to be grateful, but to think that you even resorted to repaying good with evil, Dustin! You **really** are **shameless**! The **Nichols** **ons** spal and shook their heads. They stare at him with looks of

contempt and disdain.

Now **that** the evidence was conclusive, no amount of arguing could ever get him out of this mess.

“Ugh.” Dahlia sighed as a look of disappointment appeared on her face. She had given him so many chances to back down, and yet the **man** still insisted on being **as** stubborn as **ever**.

It **was** almost as if he wanted all of this to happen to **him**.

“I don’t think I’ve ever offended you, so **why** do you insist on slandering my **name**, Dustin? **It’s a** good thing

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that Julie has an upright character and helped me clear my name today. If not, I doubt if I could **even** recover from this!" Matt spat, feigning anger.

He'd been on tenterhooks the entire time, but he can't help but be secretly relieved now.

"You know exactly what you did. So stop pretending in front of me already." Dustin snapped before turning his gaze to Julie. "And as for you. I don't understand and why you're lying right now. I'm sure you know the kind of person Matt is very well. But if you insist on standing there and watching your cousin jump into a firepit, then I've got nothing else to say to you."

"Stop spouting nonsense! What did I **lie** about? It was clearly you who hit Ms. Hummer!" Julie insisted obstinately.

"Rhys! Now that your plan to slander has failed, are you resorting to threatening people? Do you honestly think that we're afraid of you?" Florence shouted in fury.

"Stop this insanity, Dustin! Stop making a fool of yourself already!" Dahlia cried. She only hoped that could see himself and the reality of the situation now.

Dustin

"Since you guys don't believe me, let's just pretend that I said nothing today. I'll be taking my leave **now**," Dustin shook his head as he decided not to argue with them any further. He **then** turned around to leave.

He never asked for any reward or even gratitude, but he felt disappointed **by** their response today.

"Hold it right there! You've slandered my name on multiple occasions, and yet you still think of running **away** without giving me **an** apology first? Aren't you being a little pretentious right now?" Matt ordered.

He had never liked Dustin, but to keep **up** his gentlemanly facade, he always tried to brush his ill feelings toward him aside.

So, now that the opportunity to take out his anger **had** come, he naturally didn't want to let it go so easily.

"You want me to apologize to you? What makes you think that you're worthy of it?" Dustin sneered.

"You're not allowed to leave if you don't apologize to me **today!**" Matt growled as he used his body to block

the doorway, his gaze menacing.

He had practiced martial arts for a few **years**, so he thought it would be a breeze to put an average man like

him in his place.

"Is that so? Then, I'd like to see if you can actually block my path. Dustin snorted coldly before pushing past

Matt and walking out of the **door**.

"Thinking of leaving? I'd like to see you try!" Matt shouted in rage as he grabbed Dustin's shoulder with one

hand and **shoved** him hard. He thought that he could teach him a lesson by doing **that**.

"You dare **lay a finger** on me?" Dustin said coldly **as** he turned around. He then proceeded to give Matt a heavy

slap on his face, the sheer force of which sent Matt flying into the air.

Two teeth could even be seen flying out of **his** mouth.

"Y— you actually dare to hit someone at this moment, Rhys?" Florence **gasped** in horror. She didn't think Dustin

would be so bold **as** to assault **someone** in public.

"An animal! He's an animal!"

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“Matt saved your life with good intentions, and yet you still did this to him! You’re worse than a dog!”

Everyone started cursing at Dustin angrily. Everything would’ve been **fine** if he hadn’t laid a finger on **Matt**, but now that he **had**, everyone no longer held back their verbal assaults.

“Are you out of your mind. Dustin? Why are you **beating** people up **now**?” Dahlia scowled. She quickly went to help Matt up from the floor.

To think that he’d turned his embarrassment into anger and had even resorted to beating people up in public. This **was unheard** of!

“Can’t you see that he **was** the one who threw hands first? Dustin retorted with **a grimace**.

“He merely grazed you, so why did you **have** to return the favor so harshly?” Dahlia probed with an icy glare.

“So, are you telling me that it’s fine if he does it? But when I do it back, I’m committing the greatest sin **in** all of humanity?” Dustin snickered.

“You’re clearly just trying to force a point here! I hereby order you to apologize to Matt right now!” Dahlia

glared.

“What if I don’t want to?” Dustin frowns **slightly**.

“Then, I’ll make you!” Dahlia shouted. With that, she slapped him in the face in a fit of rage.

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“Slap!” A crisp noise sounded as Dahlia’s hand landed heavily on Dustin Rhy’s face.

Due to the excessive force she applied behind the slap, the wounds on her hand that had just healed got torn open again, causing a stream of fresh blood to flow down her fingers.

Dustin touched the side of his face that burned from the slap and merely stood right where he was with a

neutral expression on his face.

He could take all the misunderstandings and contempt from other people, but he refused to accept the fact that his ex-wife had just slapped him on behalf of another man.

“Why? Why do you insist on being this way?” Dahlia said through gritted teeth as her eyes filled with tears and immense disappointment overtook her.

She couldn’t understand for the life of her why Dustin had become the person he was today. He was close- minded, full of jealousy, and a gossipmonger; he was even repaying kindness with evil now.

All kinds of **bad** attributes were concentrated in the body of this man. She wanted this slap to serve as a **wake-**

up call to him!

“Hmph. Do you want to fight **me**, kid? Aren’t you a little too young for that?” Matt couldn’t help but sneer at him

as he witnessed the two of them turn against each other.

Although he had just lost two teeth, he couldn’t help but feel somewhat triumphant on the inside when he saw

Dahlia slap Dustin to stand up for him.

“That was a good slap! He deserves to be slapped!” Florence cheered as her eyes **lit** up.

“That’s right! If you don’t teach him a lesson, are you still considered human at that point?” James parroted

out loud.

“Ha—” Dustin suddenly let out a tired sigh after a long time of silence.

After getting married for three years, the two had barely quarreled, let alone thrown hands at one another. Thus, this would be the first and last time this happened!

“That slap just now was for everything I’ve ever done to you in the past. From now on, you and I don’t owe each other anything anymore,” Dustin said quietly. Dustin took a deep breath before calmly turning around to

leave.

There was **no** anger, no complaints—just an unexpected feeling of quiet indifference.

“Huh?” Dahlia gasped in shock **as** she stared at his defeated back. She’d been rendered speechless for a while.

“Knock, knock.” Just then, they all heard a knock on the door.

It turned out that Mr. Fletcher, who had taken his leave earlier, had returned.

“Huh? Where did Mr. **Rhys** go?” He asked as he scanned the **room**.

“Why are you looking for that punk, Mr. Fletcher?” Florence asked in surprise.

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“Oh, Sir Hummer told me that he hopes to dispel all the **bad** blood the Hummer family has with Mr. Rhys, so he specially requested me to send him a gift,” He replied.

“A gift?” Everyone looked at one another in confusion.

“You have got to be kidding us, right, Mr. Fletcher? How is that punk worthy of receiving a gift from Mr. Hummer himself?” Florence asked in disbelief.

“What do you mean “how is he worthy”? Don’t you know that he was the reason why the Hummers decided to lift the ban against the Nicholsons? And that he was also the one behind the apology? Mr. Fletcher replied,

dumbfounded by their reactions.

“What?” A collective gasp could be heard in the room the moment he finished his sentence. The crowd was dumbfounded and filled with disbelief.

They didn't hear him wrong, right?

The person who had saved the Nicholsons and coerced the Hummers to give a public apology **was** Dustin? The trash that they'd scoffed at and despised? H—how was this possible!

“Y— you've got to be joking, right, Mr. Fletcher? Are you telling us that Dustin was the one who saved us?” Florence asked with widened eyes, she found this fact difficult to accept.

“Who else do you think it was?” Mr. Fletcher asked seriously.

“No, that's impossible! Wasn't Matt the one who helped us? How was it that trash Dustin instead?” James shouted in alarm and shook his head so vigorously it looked like a rattling drum.

“Matt Laney? He's nothing more than a washed-up member of some family, so how capable can the man be? Obviously, not enough for the Hummers to lower their heads.” Mr. Fletcher scoffed before shooting Matt a look

of disdain.

Hearing that, every head in the crowd turned to look **at** Matt simultaneously. For a moment, Matt's cheeks turned bright red, and the atmosphere became extremely awkward.

His reaction immediately proved that what Mr. Fletcher said was true.

“How could this have happened? Could it be that I've misunderstood him?” Dahlia muttered to herself after a

bolt of realization hit her.

With that, she instantly rushed out of the room and chased after **Dustin** in the direction he seemed to have left

1. in.

When she chased **him** to the gate, she looked at the figure about to get into the car. She immediately ran up to him and grabbed him by the sleeve.

“Dustin! Wait. I misunderstood you just now, I **was** too impulsive. I had no idea that you did all of this for us. especially the part where you had to carry so much **on** your shoulders. But why didn’t you explain it to us? You were obviously the one who saved everyone, so why didn’t you clarify it with **us**?” Dahlia cried while biting her lips. Her face **was** twisted in **pain**.

“What use was there to explain everything? When have you ever believed me?” Dustin shot back as he shook his head. There was no greater sorrow **than** death, and he had been completely let down by her.

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“You should’ve made it clear to me at the very least. How can I believe you when you don’t tell me anything?”

Dahlia complained angrily.

“I don’t care if you believe me or not anymore. We’re done here. **Let** go of me.” Dustin retorted **as** he broke away from her grasp with force. His gaze toward her made her feel like he was looking at a stranger.

“What do you want from me, Dustin? Can’t you just stop being so impulsive all the time? Can’t you just ask yourself if there’s anything wrong with you? After all, you were the one who went out and beat up people who disagreed with you. If not for luck, do you think you could’ve gotten out of there unscathed? All I’m asking is for you to be more mature and sensible. Am I wrong for wanting that from you?” Dahlia shouted as his words

struck a nerve inside her, causing her emotions to go out of control.

“Yeah, you’re right. It was all my fault. I totally deserved that slap, don’t I?” Dustin said coldly.

“You-

” Dahlia wanted to say more but stopped herself. For a moment, she was at a loss for words.

“You’ve always been this arrogant and self-righteous woman to me, Dahlia. You were never one to admit your mistakes first. This has proven to be true on multiple occasions, especially when you just need to put a bit more thought into something or perform a simple background check to get the desired outcome. But as usual, you prefer to do nothing and only listen to the words you like to hear. This is why even now, you still have zero

faith in me.

“Haven’t you noticed? You’ve been living in your little bubble all this time, and you shut yourself off from anyone who tries to get near you. I admit, I tried my best to get to you back then, but now I’ve decided to stop trying. I’ve decided that this will be the last time I ever help you. I wish you all the best in your future

endeavors.”

With that, Dustin got in his car and sped off.

Meanwhile, Dahlia looked as if she had been struck by lightning, and she stood quietly in place and did not

say anything **for** a long time.

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“I’m sorry... I’m so sorry! I had no idea that things would ever turn out like this!” She lamented to herself.

“I just wanted you to succeed too. My only wish was for you to get **ahead in life**. I really had no idea that you’d suffered this much. I was wrong; I was the one who was wrong all along! From the day of our divorce until now, I knew that I was the one who was in the wrong all along! I remember telling you that no one would be able to make me fall in love again, but in reality, there was already someone there all along.

“And that person **was** you! But knowing that in mind, do you know why I gave you **up** again at the last second? That’s because Dustin, can’t you see that I’m still hopelessly in love with you?” She painfully admitted.

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After staggering back to her ward, Dahlia felt as if her **soul** had left her body.

She had a dead expression on her face, and her eyes were dull. She **didn't** realize that her bandaged hand was still dripping with blood.

She remembered Dustin's disappointed gaze on her before he left, and it felt like a knife that kept stabbing at her heart. She knew that the two of them had grown further and further apart.

In the past, she had **always** been career-oriented, **as** she was determined to carve her own path, which is why she ignored and sacrificed many things along the way.

However, since the day of their divorce, she slowly started to realize something. It turns out that there are things in life that were more important than one's career. However, it was a shame that she only realized **this**

now.

"Honey, I just heard that- Florence said as she burst into the room upon seeing Dahlia enter inside moments

before.

"I just heard that it **was** that Rhys kid who was the one who laid hands on Ms. Hummer and used her life as bait to get the Hummer family to apologize to us. He was merely using underhanded tactics the entire time!"

"That's right! This Dustin guy, to make a name for himself, committed such heinous and shameless acts

without a care for his reputation at **all!** James echoed.

Initially, they were shocked to find out that Dustin **was** the one who had helped them behind the scenes, but after digging for more details, they realized that

it wasn't that the Hummers were scared of Dustin, but that it was Dustin who used despicable means to get them to do what he wanted, which was why they came and

apologized in person.

So although it seemed as though he was a force to be reckoned with, in reality, he had merely backed them

into a corner!

"Mom, can you all just leave, please? I just want to **be** alone for now," Dahlia responded flatly, she didn't even

flinch at the news.

"Honey, even if we've misunderstood Dustin, **so what?** The matter still stands that he's the one who's at fault

here. He was just making up for his mistakes. We don't owe him anything!" Florence continued.

"I'm tired, Mom. I **just** want to rest now. Please go outside," Dahlia requested again.

"But honey..." Florence whined.

"Just leave me alone!" Dahlia yelled sternly.

Seeing the scowl on her face, Florence said nothing more and proceeded to usher everyone out of the room.

"Who would've thought that the biggest contributor to the matter would be Dustin, while the person who

surprised us the most was Mr. Laney."

*Fucking bigshots! To think we let him scare us like that. It's already a good thing that we didn't disturb him

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for anything!"

“And as for Matt. I suspect that he’s so blinded by love for Dahlia that, to win her over, he resorted to trickery and lies,” Florence explained.

“If you ask me, a man like this who risked his life for love and even put his reputation on the line is truly worth giving yourself to for life!”

“All of you should learn from him from now on!”

After their session of mental gymnastics, everyone turned from discussing how despicable Matt was to putting him on a pedestal instead.

But the thing was, many of them seemed to agree with this.

Back inside the ward, Dahlia sat frozen on the bed with an empty gaze for a long time. She had no idea how much time had passed since the first tear started dripping down her face and when her shoulders started shaking profusely.

Finally, not able to withhold her emotions anymore, she cradled her head between her knees and violently broke down in tears!

She didn’t shed a tear when the company was in danger. She shed no tears when somebody brutally humiliated her. She also didn’t cry when she was beaten up or tortured in a variety of ways.

This was the first time she had ever cried this hard and this heartbreakingly.

Over at the Hummer Villa, Tina was sitting in her wheelchair with a look of resignation and anger.

“Dad! The Hummers have never suffered such great humiliation before! You must avenge me no matter what!” She ordered with gritted teeth.

“Of course, we have to take our revenge, but you shouldn’t underestimate this punk either. Thus, we must be fully prepared if he stirs up havoc again.” Edwin said seriously. He definitely wouldn’t let anyone who dared to lay a finger on the Hummers go that easily.

“Isn’t Mr. Lawson proficient in mystic arts? Why don’t we just have him use the most powerful mystic arts on Dustin so that he gets tortured half to death?” Tina suggested, her voice full of resentment.

“It’s no use. Not only is he a powerful martial artist, but he’s also equally proficient in poison. He even managed to break the venomous mystic arts I used on

the Harmons, so I'm afraid I can't do anything toward him at the moment." Fletcher, who was standing at a corner, answered.

"Then what should we do? If we **don't** cut him into pieces, I don't think my hatred toward him is ever going to subside!" Tina shouted with a fierce gaze.

"There's no need to rush things. Just hold it in for a few more days. I've already informed your brother about this matter. After he clears customs in a few **days**, he'll make his return **to** Swinton, and that's when he'll exact your revenge on you. When that time comes, I doubt if the punk can make any waves, no matter how strong he is!" Edwin said as he narrowed his eyes.

What he was most proud of in his life was not his status **as** the richest man in Swinton, but rather the fact that

he **was** the father of an excellent individual named Joshua Hummer.

Joshua grew up practicing martial arts and was so talented that at the **age** of 15, he was able to defeat all **of** his challengers in the entirety of Swinton.

When he **was** 18, he had the honor of joining Boulderthorn and **was** trained under Clement Lincoln.

Now at the age of 25, he was already in the top ranks and dubbed to have a promising future. Not to mention that he **was** also known as one of the top ten young martial arts masters in the province..

In no time, he was even expected to surpass Tyler, who was regarded as a natural talent!

"Perfect! Then, I will let Dustin live for a few more days. Once Brother returns, I will make sure he'll be begging for his life once I'm done with him!" Tina laughed maniacally.

To Tina, her brother was a god who had the power to do anything for her.

No matter how difficult the task was, he could get it done as if it was a walk in the park. Thus, wouldn't it be a breeze to deal with a mere martial artist this time around?

"Sir Hummer, since Joshua is scheduled to return, then we shouldn't **fear** Dustin anymore. I propose that our main target now be the Harmon

family **instead!** The production of Eternumax is being rushed and is **taking** shape now, so now should be the ideal time **for** us to launch our attack.” Mr. Lawson suggested.

“Good idea! Schedule a press conference to announce our new pill in three days then. Since Natasha is willing to give her face away. I’ll make sure she never recovers from this! Edwin proclaimed as he balled up one of his hands into a fist. He had balled it up so hard that one could hear his fingerbones crackle.

At best, Dustin was just a stumbling block, while Natasha was a thorn in **his** side.

He must get rid of both of them as soon as possible!

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Back at the Peaceful Medical Center, Dustin downed glass after glass of wine without stopping, trying to numb himself with alcohol.

Although he was expressionless, inwardly he couldn't help feeling frustrated. Maybe he should finally let go of his past relationship and move on.

"Doctor! Doctor!"

Just as Dustin felt a little tipsy, a hurried knock was heard at the door. When he opened the doors, two beautiful young women were standing outside.

One of them was dressed completely in white and looked like an angel from heaven. The aura she gave off

was pure and innocent.

The other woman **was** fully dressed in a black bodysuit that showed off her curves. She had prominent features that made her appear tough and masculine

However, she was bleeding profusely from the injury on her abdomen. Her face **was** drawn and pale from

excessive blood loss.

"Excuse me, is the doctor in? My friend **is** severely injured and needs immediate treatment!" The woman in

white said in distress.

"I am the doctor, come in." Dustin showed them in.

"Thank you so much! Claudia, let's go inside." The woman replied gratefully and turned to her **friend**, the

woman in black.

“Wait a minute! Sheila, I smell alcohol on him. He must **be** a drunkard, I don’t trust this guy!” Claudia Doyle

furrowed her brows.

“But you lost so much blood. If you don’t receive treatment as soon as possible, you might die!” Sheila Murray

spoke with a worried expression.

“It’s fine, I can hang on a little longer until support arrives. Anyway, I’m not going to entrust my life into a drunkard’s hands!” Claudia gritted her teeth in determination.

Her injury wasn’t superficial. Even skilled doctors would have difficulty treating her injury, let alone a doctor

who seemed to be drunk.

“Sorry to interrupt, but will the support you mentioned arrive within 30 minutes?” Dustin asked indifferently.

“It’s none of your business!” Claudia retorted.

“Alright then, just letting you **know**. According to experience, with the amount of blood you lost, you will be

dead in 30 minutes.” Dustin **gave** Claudia a quick glance and came to a diagnosis.

“Nonsense! Do you think I will be convinced by **your threats**? I am well-acquainted with fraudsters like you!” Claudia hissed.

“It’s up to you to believe it or not. However, If you **are** going to die, don’t die at my doorstep. I don’t want to

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have to clean up your mess.” Dustin waved them away.

“You-!” Claudia’s body jerked suddenly as she spat out a mouthful of blood.

“Suit yourself.” Dustin decided to close the door on them.

“Wait! Please wait!

Sir, I apologize on behalf of Claudia for being disrespectful. Please don't hold it against her. However, you seem like a good person. I beg you, please save Claudia! We will definitely repay your kindness!” Sheila stopped Dustin from closing the door.

“Sheila, why are you begging him? Even if I die, I will not let him treat me!” Claudia said stubbornly.

“Lady, it's not that I'm not willing to save her. She's the one who refused to be treated by me. If she does survive this injury, you really need to get her brain checked. Maybe that's why she's being so retarded.” Dustin shook his head.

“You bastard!” Claudia clenched her jaw in anger. She tried to stand up to give Dustin a piece of her mind when she suddenly lost consciousness and fell to the ground in a heap.

She might have fainted from Dustin's provocation instead of from her injuries.

“Claudia!” Sheila anxiously tried to pull Claudia up from the ground, but she did not have the strength.

She turned to Dustin and pleaded, “Please help Claudia, I'm begging you! I have the money to repay you. As long as you are willing to save her, I'll give you anything you ask for!”

Tears ran down her cheeks. Sheila was a pitiable sight.

Dustin was weak to a woman's tears. He sighed and nodded. “Alright, on account of your sincerity, I'll save her

this time around.”

He grabbed Claudia's collar, lifted her like a sack of potatoes, and carelessly chucked her onto the bed. Sheila suspected that Dustin was paying Claudia back for her insolence earlier.

“**Miss.** take off her clothes. I will stop the bleeding.” Dustin instructed her.

Sheila nodded eagerly. “Okay!”

In a few minutes, she had undressed Claudia, exposing her body completely. Dustin turned back and had the shock of his life.

“Miss, I didn’t mean for you to strip her naked. At **least** keep **her** underwear and **bra** on!”

“Huh?” Sheila blushed beet red and quickly put Claudia’s underwear back on.

She was too anxious just now and misunderstood Dustin’s Instructions. Thank goodness Claudia was unconscious. It would have been extremely awkward if she weren’t.

Dustin breathed a sigh of relief. Although he briefly caught sight of Claudia’s figure, It **was** obvious that the woman lying on the bed had a curvaceous body.

The superficial wound on Claudia’s **abdomen** wasn’t too serious. Dustin sewed her up and dressed the wound

to prevent more blood loss.

For her **internal** injuries, medication would be needed.

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“Alright, she is out of danger now. I’ll give her a prescription, and she’ll be fine after a few days,” Dustin said as he quickly wrote out a prescription for Claudia.

“Thank you so much!” Sheila replied gratefully.

As Dustin handed the prescription to Sheila, he accidentally touched her hand .

He **raised** his eyebrows. “Miss, your condition seems to be worse than your friend’s!”

*I’m fine, it’s just a chronic illness.” Sheila smiled wryly.

Since she was young, she had always suffered from the cold. For her illness, she was accustomed to taking

multiple medications a day.

“You—

” Dustin was going to probe further before Sheila got distracted by Claudia, who was regaining

consciousness.

“Claudia, are you awake? How are you feeling?” Sheila asked, delighted at her unexpected recovery.

“Sheila? Where am I?” Claudia looked around suspiciously.

“This man saved you, he is a skilled doctor. With just a few stitches, your wounds had stopped bleeding!” Sheila gushed.

“No one asked for his help!” Taking a **look** at her bandages, Claudia muttered under her breath.

“Claudia! He saved you out of kindness, how could you be so rude?” Sheila said, annoyed.

“Sheila, you’re too naive. There is no knowing what is in a man’s heart. Many things are not what they seem. Who knows, maybe he saved me with an ulterior motive!” Claudia said cynically.

“You’re mistaken. I believe he is a good person!” Sheila was obstinate.

“Miss, your words are like music to my ears. Unlike some, who have no sense of gratitude.” Dustin said

sarcastically.

Claudia opened her mouth to retort before she was interrupted by the ruckus outside. Loud stomping and gruff voices could be heard on the other side of the door.

“Boss, their tracks end right here. They must be hiding inside!”

“I’ll teach them to run from me! Boys! Surround the medical center. Make sure that even a bug can’t escape!”

The doors of the center were violently busted open.

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A resounding crash **was** heard as the doors to the center were busted open.

Without hesitation, seven **masked** assassins swarmed into the center.

“Shit! They caught up to us!” Claudia cursed.

They **were** ambushed by these **assassins**, who wiped out their team of bodyguards.

Only Claudia and Sheila managed to break through the siege and escape. Claudia thought that they had shaken off the pursuit. Unfortunately, the assassins were relentless.

“Sheila, I’ll hold them back. You have to escape through the back door!” Claudia whispered.

“If I escape, you will definitely be killed, I am their target, so they will not hurt me. I’ll let them take me as a

hostage.” Sheila’s face was pale.

“Sheila! As your personal bodyguard, my duty is to ensure your safety. Listen to me!” Claudia stood in front of Sheila resolutely, protecting her.

“There’s no need to argue. We will be taking the both of you!” A bald **man** laughed evilly as he walked in.

Unlike the other assassins, this man wasn’t masked and emitted a murderous aura.

“Thor **Garcia?**” Claudia’s **eyes** narrowed.

Thor Garcia **was** one of the Four Scoundrels, infamous for conducting illegal raids and providing hitmen s ervices in exchange for money. They were excellent martial artists and money — grubbing lunatics. Their names struck fear into everyone who heard of their re putation.

“Oh, my! What an honor for Ms. Doyle to recognize me!” The bald man said with a mocking smile.

“Thor Garcia! Regardless of how much you were compensated for this assign ment, I will double it if you let us go!” Claudia offered.

“Ms. Doyle, I may love money, but I’m more interested in your value. As long a s I capture both of you, money will naturally roll in!” Thor laughed,

“There will be terrible consequences if you harm us in any way!” Claudia warn ed him again.

“Don’t worry, I’m not going to harm both of you. I just need your identities for a deal. It would be better for you not to retaliate. Otherwise, I can’t guarantee your safety. Get them!”

Thor smirked and gestured to his men. The **assassins** behind him leaped for ward to capture them.

“Sheila, run!” Claudia shouted as she rushed forward, ignoring her weakened condition.

Her movements were quick as lightning, and her attacks were ruthless. Even t hough she was severely injured. she single— handedly fought against the group of **assassins**. It was obvious that her skills **were** top—notch as she put up **a** good fight.

“Having such formidable internal energy at such a young age, It is no wonder t hat you are from a martial arts family. I’m **envious** of your natural talents. How ever, it’s a shame that you’re still lacking in terms of

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experience.” Thor narrowed his eyes.

When Claudia was distracted by the assassins, Thor saw an opening and sneakily attacked her from behind.

Blood spurted out from her mouth **as** she was thrown backward and crashed against a table.

*Claudia!” Sheila cried.

“That’s a despicable move!” Claudia gritted her teeth and glared at Thor.

“Despicable or not, it doesn’t matter when I am the **last** person standing.” Thor scoffed, without an ounce of

shame.

“Wait a minute! I’m your real target, aren’t I? I’ll go with you! However, you must let Claudia and that man go!” Sheila spread her arms wide with her back towards Claudia.

“Ms. Murray, you are in no position to negotiate with us.” Thor laughed.

“If you refuse, I’ll kill myself! Then, you will have nothing to show for your efforts!” Suddenly, Sheila pressed **a** knife to her neck. The determination in her eyes was blazing as she glared at Thor.

“Stop, Ms. Murray! Don’t be so reckless!” Thor was caught by surprise.

This young lady was precious cargo. If any harm came to her, he would be in huge trouble!

“I’ll repeat myself. Will you agree to let them go?” Sheila increased the pressure on the knife, and a trickle of

blood flowed down her neck.

“Alright, alright! I’ll do what you say! As long as you leave quietly with us. I’ll let them go!” Thor nodded hastily.

“Sheila, stop it! What are you doing?” Claudia screamed. She scrambled to stand up but failed due to her

severe injuries.

“Claudia, this is the best solution right now. You **need** to stay alive. Besides, they **won’t** hurt me.” Sheila

squeezed out a forced smile. She knew what they were here for. At the very least, she wouldn’t be in

immediate danger.

“Ms. Murray, time is running out. Let’s get moving!” Thor showed her to the doors.

Holding the knife to her neck, Sheila walked in silence. The assassins were lined up in two **rows** as they eyed

her fiercely.

“Stop right there! Are you going to leave just like that?” Dustin, who had remained silent all this while, spoke

1. up.

“What? Are you trying to be a hero?” Thor turned to him and growled. Anyone who tried to stop him would be beaten into a pulp until he begged for mercy!

“You kicked my doors down, destroyed my furniture, and **now** you are leaving without any compensation? How shameless could you be?” Dustin said nonchalantly.

Everyone was dumbstruck at **his** request. No one expected Dustin to ask for compensation at this juncture.

“Punk! Are you f*cking kidding me? How dare you ask for compensation? Don’t you know who I am?” Thor cackled.

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“I don’t care who you are. Even if the emperor himself turns up, no one is allowed to leave without paying!”

Dustin demanded.

Thor and his men roared with laughter at Dustin, thinking that he had lost his mind.

“Stop talking any further! You are no match for these men!” Sheila motioned to Dustin.

“Do you have a death wish? These men will murder you without a second thought. How dare you ask them for

money?” Claudia frowned.

Did this man have a screw loose? Wasn't he aware of how dangerous a situation he was in?

“Murder? Shouldn't they pay up for causing damage to the property regardless?” Dustin reasoned.

“You-!” Claudia choked on her **saliva**.

What nonsense was this man spouting? She just told him that Thor **was** a heartless murderer.

How could this man **be so** persistent about getting compensated?

Was it worth it to lose his life over **mere** pennies?

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After catching his breath, Thor wheezed. “Punk, you have some guts! It's been a long time since I last saw a reckless fellow like you!”

“Shut up and pay up already!” Dustin demanded impatiently.

His mood was already ruined. These men needed to be taught a lesson for creating a mess on his property.

“You really have a death wish! Boys, break his limbs! Let's see whether he dares to talk back after this!” Thor smirked and gestured to his men.

“Yes, boss!” Without a second thought, the assassins swung their weapons at Dustin, with the intent to harm him.

“Hey! You said you would let him go!” Sheila shrieked.

“Ms.

Murray, I did agree to not kill him. However, he seems to be dissatisfied with us. It would be rude to not teach him a lesson!” Thor had a cunning smile on his face.

Suddenly, they were interrupted by the cries of pain from the assassins.

Before the assassins could rush up to Dustin, they fell over one by one, as if they had been struck by lightning. All of the assassins were paralyzed and unable to move.

After careful inspection, Thor realized that there were silver needles pierced into their necks!

“How could this be?” Thor’s lips trembled as a chill ran down his spine.

He knew what these silver needles were used for. They could be used for acupuncture or as a hidden weapon.

However, he had never seen a technique where multiple hidden needles could be simultaneously shot at the same time.

“How could this guy execute stealth attacks with hidden needles?” Claudia was secretly shocked as well.

Needles were one of the hardest weapons to master, compared to other hidden weapons. Not only did it require deadly accuracy, but perfecting its technique required persistent and grueling training.

“Punk! Who the hell are you? How dare you poke your nose into my business?” Thor narrowed his eyes as he drew his sword.

“Give me my compensation,” Dustin insisted stubbornly.

“Bastard!” Thor was furious.

Without warning, he threw a fistful of dust into Dustin's eyes. After that, he pulled out his sword and rushed toward Dustin, using the dust as a smokescreen.

Thor had used this tactic many times. When his opponent was taken by surprise, he would stab them with his sword. Stronger men than himself had fallen for this sneak attack.

However, Dustin did not dodge. With a wave of his hand, the dust cleared immediately.

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Dustin flicked two needles from his fingers, which flew swiftly and pierced into Thor's knees, causing him to

scream in pain.

Thor's legs crumpled from under him, and he crashed to his knees. His heavy sword fell to the ground with a

clang.

"H—How could this be?" Thor widened his eyes in horror.

How could Dustin's aim be so accurate when the dust was obstructing his vision? What's more, his legs

became as heavy as lead after Dustin attacked him with needles.

"The only skills you have are the tricks up your sleeve. Your fighting abilities, on the other hand, aren't that

impressive." Dustin remarked condescendingly.

An oppressive aura pressed on Thor's body as he gasped for air, cold sweat dripping down his forehead.

"Don't be reckless! I have nothing against you, there's no need for you to kill me!" Thor pleaded for his

life.

He thought that he had a perfect plan in place. Who would have expected a troublemaker to turn up and make

everything go awry?

“I didn’t have anything against you before this, but now I have,” Dustin said as he inserted another needle into

Thor’s neck. With a jerk, Thor’s limbs were paralyzed.

Inside Thor’s sleeve, there was a poisonous arrow that shone with an eerie light. Thor had planned to attack

Dustin with that arrow!

“Miss, you can deal with these men. Do whatever you want with them!” Dustin patted the dust from his clothes and sat down on a chair nearby. This young lady had a good heart, so he didn’t mind extending a helping hand.

“Wow, you’re an amazing fighter!” Sheila exclaimed with delight. She had almost lost hope.

Who knew that the doctor of this medical center was also a master of hidden weapons? He single-handedly

finished off all the assassins!

“What’s so great about using hidden weapons? There’s no honor in stealth attacks!” Claudia scoffed.

Being born into a family of martial artists, she had no respect for people who engaged in sneak attacks and

underhanded methods.

To be fair, she was a victim of Thor’s sneak attack which caused her to be severely injured. As Claudia thought of this, anger burned within her.

Claudia picked up the sword from the ground and held it to Thor's neck. "Speak! Who sent you?"

"I don't know. Being a hitman, I am employed to kill, steal, and destroy. As long as they pay up, we don't care for whom we work," Thor replied with difficulty.

"How dare you lie to me!" Claudia sliced the tendons on his arms and legs.

Thor screamed in agony, large beads of sweat rolling down his face. "...I really don't know. In terms of

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business deals, I receive instructions from a superior. I'm just following orders!"

"You are making things difficult for me. I have little patience. If you make me wait any longer, say goodbye to your jewels." Claudia placed the sword at Thor's crotch.

"Please don't! I'll tell you everything!" Thor screamed as he grimaced in pain.

"The person who employed us to kidnap Ms. Murray is..." Before Thor could finish the sentence, he suddenly convulsed on the spot, spitting out blood that was black in color.

After a few seconds, he was as dead as a doornail.

"Is he dead?" Claudia was taken aback by the strange occurrence.

Wasn't he fine just a minute ago? How could he die so suddenly?

While she mused over his death, Thor's abdomen visibly swelled up.

Something seemed to be crawling under the surface of his skin.

A spider emerged from his belly button, followed by a whole swarm of spiders, crawling all over Thor's

lifeless body.

It was a revolting sight to see.

“What are all these spiders doing inside his body?” Sheila staggered backward in shock.

At that moment, Dustin smirked. “Interesting. Having the ability to activate venomous curses from

afar, the person who employed Thor to kidnap you must be very powerful!”

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“Venomous curses? How could you be certain? Are you familiar with curses?” Claudia asked, puzzled.

“I know a little.” Dustin nodded.

“Only shady, wicked characters would learn the art of venomous curses. As expected, you are not a good person! Speak up, who are you?” Claudia lifted the sword and pointed it at Dustin.

“Claudia! What are you doing? He is our savior!” Sheila quickly stood in front of Dustin to protect him.

“Sheila, get out of the way. This man is being suspicious. I must investigate him thoroughly.” Claudia’s

eyes glittered.

“Before you investigate me, I recommend that you get your head checked.” Dustin rubbed his temples.

“Don’t you know that curses can be used to heal? Of course, many nefarious villains use curses for their

own benefit. However, not everyone is as bad as you imagine. It depends on the user’s character. Besides, the martial arts families aren’t as innocent as you make them out to be. Crimes such as pillaging, corruption, and rape are rampant within the martial arts circle as well!”

“Don’t spout nonsense! In my opinion, you are just quibbling!” Claudia denied.

“Quibbling? Look at what you are doing now. Do martial artists like you treat their saviors in such a disrespectful manner? Are you going to bite the hand that fed you?” Dustin chuckled.

“You...” Claudia was at a loss for words.

“Claudia, stop accusing him! If he is really a bad person, why would he save us?” Sheila frowned.

“Who knows, maybe he has an ulterior motive!” Claudia insisted.

However, her tone was much softer now that she had calmed down. She knew for a fact that logic wasn't on her side.

Suddenly, a loud car horn was heard outside the medical center. More than 10 Hummer vehicles stopped outside the doors of the medical center.

As the car doors opened, a swarm of bodyguards appeared and surrounded the center immediately.

“Finally, the support team is here!” Sheila laughed with delight.

“Sheila! Claudia! Are you alright?” A handsome young man stepped into the room.

He was tall and well-built, with a sharp gaze. His noble aura was not that of an ordinary person.

“We are fine, thanks to this man who saved us,” Sheila replied cheerfully.

“Oh, really? Sheila, you can only know a man's face but not his heart. You should stay away from any strangers when you are out and about.” Xavier Horst sized Dustin up, his gaze was judgmental.

“Huh? What do you mean?” Sheila frowned.

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“Nothing, I'm just giving you some advice,” Xavier said with a smile.

He motioned to his men to clean up the scene.

“Sheila, let’s not waste any time. We should head back home immediately. Aunt Lily is waiting for us,”

Claudia urged.

Although the support team had arrived, this place wasn’t completely safe.

“Thank you so much for your help, I’ll be sure to repay your kindness. Goodbye for now,” Sheila thanked

Dustin warmly and turned to leave.

“Miss, your chronic illness has been suppressed for a long time, it might get **out of** control soon. You

should get it treated early to prevent any life-threatening complications.” Dustin blurted out.

When he touched her skin, he noticed that her body temperature was lower than normal. Upon closer

inspection, he could roughly infer that the illness troubling her wasn’t a common ailment.

“Hmph! Nonsense!” Claudia curled her lip in disbelief.

“Thank you, I will be more careful!” Sheila smiled brightly and waved goodbye.

Xavier felt a little jealous when he noticed Sheila being so friendly to Dustin.

After Sheila got into the car, he glared at Dustin. “A word of advice for you, punk. Stay away from Sheila if

you know what’s good for you! Otherwise, be prepared for the consequences!”

With that, he strode out of the center. In his opinion, beggars like Dustin did not even have the right to

converse with him.

“What a lunatic.” Dustin shook his head and continued drowning himself in alcohol.

Evening, at Fallridge Haven.

Sheila was eating her dinner while telling her parents everything that had happened.

“Dad, Mom, I’m telling you, that man was so amazing. Just two flicks of his wrist, and all the bad guys were killed!” Sheila described the situation eagerly.

She even acted out a scene for her parents.

“Really? I never thought that a small place like Swinton would have such a talented young man. I would like to meet him one day.” Her mother, Lily Doyle, smiled affectionately at her daughter.

Her father, Caden Murray, banged on the table. “Hmph! How dare you disobey me! Haven’t I warned you? Do not go out and explore without permission! You were lucky that nothing terrible had happened.

If you weren’t, you could have died today!”

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“Dad, it’s just an accident. Those bad people were too sneaky. They poisoned and attacked us when we weren’t prepared, and that’s why Claudia fell into their trap. Otherwise, no one could have hurt me!” Sheila

pouted.

“In the martial arts world, winning is everything. No one cares about honor in combat! Anyway, you are not allowed to leave Fallridge Haven without permission!” Caden continued in annoyance.

“Alright, alright. I won’t go out anymore. Please don’t be angry at me!” Sheila pouted coquettishly.

“That’s more like it. I had enough of *you* today, now go and lie down on your emerald bed. You need

more rest!” Caden ordered.

“Okay.” Without another word, Sheila quickly left and ran to her room.

‘Because of her illness, she and her parents would travel to Fallridge Haven every year to regain her

health. Once her condition improved, they would only leave.

“Lily, when will the Gozoraberry arrive from Stoneray Valley?” Caden spoke up.

“I think it will arrive soon. Why do you ask? Is it urgent?” Lily replied.

“Sheila’s illness has been acting up more frequently. The sunburst emerald bed at Fallridge Haven seems

to be not having as much of an effect these days. We have to think of other solutions,” Caden said gravely.

“How could this be? Isn’t she getting better?” Lily frowned.

“Don’t worry too much about it. I have asked Malcolm Shane, the miracle doctor, to have a look at

Sheila’s condition. Once he arrives, he will definitely have some idea on how to treat her illness.” Caden

forced a smile.

“Let’s hope so.” Lily nodded thoughtfully.

Her daughter’s rare disease had been troubling her all her life and seemed to be incurable. She hoped that this time, her daughter could be fully healed.

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The next morning, Dustin was awakened by someone knocking on his door. He opened the door to see Hunter at his door.

“Mr. Anderson, what brings you here so early in the morning?” Dustin yawned.

“Good news, Mr. Rhys!” Hunter exclaimed with excitement. “The rare herb that you’re looking for, the Gozoraberry, I know where we can find it!”

“Gozoraberry? Are you sure?” Dustin’s interest was piqued.

The Gozoraberry was rare and hard to come by. As with all other rare herbs, it was invaluable. If he could get his hands on the Gozoraberry, then he would only need three more precious herbs to make the Longevitum!

“Of course, I’m sure! The Gozoraberry used to be a treasure from Stoneray Valley, but recently, someone bought it at an exorbitant price. And that person happens to be staying at Fallridge Haven!” Hunter nodded.

“Oh? Who is it?” Dustin raised a brow.

“It’s Caden Murray!” Hunter said.

“Caden Murray? What does he need the Gozoraberry for?” Dustin’s eyes narrowed. He had never met Caden, but he used to have some connections with the Murrays.

“I heard that his daughter has some sort of disease, and he needs the Gozoraberry to cure her of that.”

“His daughter... Is it Sheila Murray?”

“Oh, you know Miss Murray?” Hunter was a little surprised.

“I guess so. I just met her yesterday.” Dustin nodded.

“Mr. Rhys, how do you think we should go about this?” Hunter inquired.

“I absolutely need to get my hands on the Gozoraberry. I guess we have no choice but to make a trip to Fallridge Haven today!” Without any time to waste, Dustin got himself ready and got into Hunter’s car.

The Gozoraberry was very important to him, and those precious herbs were usually hard to come by. If this berry passed him by, he knew he would never come across another.

Hence, he had to act on it right then and there.

30 minutes later, Dustin found himself in a lounge in Fallridge Haven.

Caden Murray was seated in the middle of the lounge, and he looked down his nose at Dustin and Hunter. As he had long been in a position of power, he carried an intangible air of authority about him. Even a person like Hunter, who had been through a lot, could not help feeling a sense of inferiority.

The Murrays were a family with a military background. Caden's father, Christopher Murray, was a general who had fought in numerous battles and had a myriad of meritorious achievements.

As his first-born son, Caden was also a high-ranking military officer who was of great influence in the army.

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"Mr. Anderson, what is the purpose of your visit today?" Caden asked.

"Mr. Caden, to be honest, we are here for the Gozoraberry." Hunter did not beat around the bush.

"The Gozoraberry? Mr. Anderson, seems like you are very well-informed on the matter. But I have a use for the Gozoraberry, so I'm afraid I can't help you." Caden lifted his gaze.

"If you are planning to use the Gozoraberry to cure your daughter of the disease, I think that it would not be

necessary, as the Gozoraberry is merely a temporary remedy that will not completely cure her of it. It would

not be of much help," Dustin stated bluntly.

“What? And who might you be? It’s not your turn to speak here.” Caden glowered at him.

“Mr. Murray, this is Dustin Rhys, he’s a friend of mine. He saved your daughter yesterday,” Hunter hurriedly explained.

“Oh, so you were the one who helped Sheila yesterday?” Caden’s expression eased up.

“Name it, what are you asking for as compensation? Money? Or goods?” In his eyes, Dustin was clearly here to ask for something in return.

Of course, the Murrays had money to spare, so he wasn’t very bothered by it.

“I want the Gozoraberry.” Dustin cut straight to the chase.

Caden made a face when he heard that. “Young man, if it were riches or jewelry that you were asking for, I

would agree to it in a heartbeat, but the Gozoraberry is the one thing that I cannot give you. I need it to cure my daughter of a disease!”

“I just told you that the Gozoraberry would not be able to cure Sheila of her disease. However, I am able to do

just that,” Dustin promised.

“You can cure her? And why should I trust you?” Dustin was starting to get on Caden’s nerves.

This rascal did not know his place. Did he think he could do as he pleased, just because he had saved his daughter once?

“Has your daughter been suffering from chills ever since she was young, and does she get a terrible bout of

viral infection every month or so?”

“So what if she does?” Caden raised his brows.

“That’s because Sheila has Polarfrost. Over the years, a venom called Havask
a has formed within her body,

and the venom can only be temporarily suppressed
by medication. However, that will not eradicate the

disease from within her. To do so, we will need to take a
different approach by improving her circulation and

thus raising her metabolism,” Dustin expounded.

“Hah! Utter rubbish! Polarfrost? That sounds downright
ridiculous, and I’ve never even heard of it before!” Caden roared, upset.

“It doesn’t matter that you’ve never heard of It before. Just let me meet Shella
and I can prove my point,” Dustin requested.

“That would not be necessary. I can handle my daughter’s situation myself. I d
o not need any help. Please,

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show yourself out!” Caden ordered.

Wasn’t it just plain absurd for a random fellow
to just show **up** out of nowhere and claim that he was able to cure his daughte
r of a disease that had plagued her for over 20 years?

And what’s more, it was a disease that even the top medical experts in the nat
ion were helpless against. What made this young man think that he would be
able to eradicate it?

“Mr. Murray, it would not do Sheila any good
to wait any longer. I hope you will consider my proposition,”

Dustin reminded him.

“Get out!” Caden slammed his fist on the table, enraged.

“Since you do not trust me, Mr. Murray, then I’ll be taking my leave. Right, I have a pill with me here. You can give this to Sheila when the virus attacks again. It will keep her safe for the time being.” **And** with that, Dustin

took out a red pill and placed it on the table before he turned to leave.

He knew that no matter what he said, he would not be able to change Caden’s mind, because it was

impossible for a person of his status to easily trust someone whom he knew nothing about.

“Mr.

Murray, Mr. Rhys here is not an ordinary person. I wish you all the best.” With a slight nod of his head,

Hunter turned to leave too.

“Hmph! They have no idea what they’re rambling on about!” Caden’s expression was one of disdain.

How dare an insolent young man run his mouth in front of him? How pompous!

“Caden, who were those two gentlemen?” Lily Doyle walked out from behind.

“Nobody. Just two annoying rascals who are not worth **our** time,” Caden answered offhandedly.

“Can this pill really cure Sheila of the disease?” Lily picked up the red pill from the table and studied it meticulously. She heard what Dustin had said before he left and couldn’t help feeling curious.

“Hah! That’s rubbish. Just throw it away.” Caden dismissed it with a wave of his hand. He refused to believe

that a single pill would be able to save anyone.

Just as they were conversing, a member of the house staff came running in and exclaimed in a fluster, “Sir,

Ma’am, come quick! It’s Miss Sheila! She just passed out!”

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“What? How did this happen?” Caden’s expression clouded over as he leaped up instantly.

“I—

I don’t know! I found her out **cold** when I went to wake her up this morning.” The maid was in an anxious

mess.

Before she could finish her sentence, Caden and Lily had already bolted out the door and rushed to their daughter’s room. However, the sight that greeted them when they entered frightened them.

Sheila laid unmoving on the Sunburst emerald bed, which originally radiated heat off its surface, but was then covered in a thin sheet of ice.

Her face was completely devoid of any color whatsoever, her limbs were cold and rigid, and there was frost building up on her brows and hair. There were even wisps of white mist coming off her body.

At first glance, she looked like she had just been brought out of an ice cave of some sort.

“Sheila!” Lily panicked and threw herself on her daughter, rubbing her arms and breathing warm air on her in an attempt to warm her up.

“This is bad!” Caden’s expression was as dark as night as he went up to Sheila and felt **for** her pulse, only to find it barely there. Even her breath was faint. She looked like she would not last another day.

Caden did not have the luxury of time to consider this any further. He immediately channeled his internal energy over to Sheila.

Soon, the frost around her started to melt. But Sheila’s body remained cold and rigid, and she still wasn’t coming around.

“Lily, quick! Call Dr. Shane! Get him here pronto!” Caden hurriedly instructed.

Though his internal energy was sufficient to keep his daughter’s pulse going, it was not going to hold up for much longer.

“Okay!” Without a moment to waste, Lily called a number straight away.

However, her face fell after a short conversation. “Dr. Shane is on his way here, but he reckons that he can only reach here by nightfall.”

“By nightfall? That’d be too late!”

Caden frowned. “Inform Claudia about this. Get her to find all the doctors available in Swinton. I want all of

them here!”

“Alright!” Lily went out to make another call.

Before the hour was up, Claudia, though distressed, had arrived with a group of doctors in tow.

Some of them were heads of departments, some were professors, and some were experts in their fields. But every doctor in the whole of Swinton, who was even the least bit well-known, was present.

“Whoever saves my daughter will receive a handsome reward from us, the Murrays!” Caden cut right to the

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chase and promised them what seemed like a great temptation.

“Be at ease, Mr. Murray, we will do our best!” The doctors were all motivated by the promise.

When they heard that it was the Murrays they were helping out, they figured that the opportunity for their big

break had come. Everyone knew the Murrays’ status.

If they could cure Shelia of whatever disease she had, they would not only make a name for themselves, but

they would also make acquaintances with the Murrays.

By then, not only would they have gained fame and earned favor from the Murrays, but they would even walk

away with a huge sum of money. Of course, they were going to go for it!

However, when they eagerly went in to check on Sheila's condition, one by one their brows furrowed and a

troubled look took over their faces.

They realized that whatever Sheila was suffering from was indeed strange. She was icy cold all over, with cold

air coming off her. It was beyond anything they'd ever seen or heard.

For a brief moment, nobody dared to take any action.

"Doctors, there are so many of you here, please don't tell me that there's nothing any of you can do?" Caden

grimaced at them.

"Well..." They all looked around sheepishly and kept quiet.

"A bunch of rubbish!" Caden's expression darkened. Though he had not held much hope that they would be

able to cure his daughter, the outcome was still infuriating.

"Uncle Caden! Sheila's in really bad shape!" Claudia exclaimed.

They looked over to find that Sheila, who was still lying on the emerald bed, was getting colder with each passing moment. Her breath was also extremely feeble.

"Oh no! Her condition has taken a turn for the worst!" Caden's brows were tightly knit.

The channeling of his internal energy to Sheila could only help for so long. It would not be able to cure her.

“What do we do? Sheila is going to be alright, won’t she?” Claudia panicked.

They had grown up together, and their relationship was like that of sisters. Naturally, she did not wish for anything bad to befall her.

“Caden, why don’t we give this a try?” Lily took out a red pill.

It was the pill that Dustin gave them. She had not been able to bring herself to just throw it out, so she kept it in her pocket the whole time.

“Are you kidding me? How can this help Sheila?” Caden made a face.

“Just give it a try. We do not have any better options, do we? Who knows, it might just work!” Lily’s expression

was solemn.

If she had a choice, she **would not** put her daughter’s life at risk too. But the situation was dire, and the doctors were helpless. Dr. Shane was still on his way, and they had no other options. She had to resort to

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every possible way to save her daughter.

“What if it’s poisonous?” Caden hesitated.

“Since he dares to come up to us, he must have a certain level of confidence in what he’s doing. And I think that it is not likely he’d spike the pill with any sort of poison, after all, I do not believe that anyone would do something as imprudent as going against the entire Murray household,” Lily expounded.

Caden fell silent.

He took a glance at his daughter, who was icy cold all over, and he clenched his jaws. Then, with a decisive

nod, he said, "Alright then! Let's give it a try."

Lily drew a deep breath before she took the pill and fed it to Sheila.

The pill was quick to dissolve, and it slid down Sheila's throat. As soon as it reached her stomach, the pill

began to work its wonders.

The effect was almost immediate as the cold air around Sheila began to dissipate, and a moment later, **wisps** of warm breath began to escape her.

At the same time, the frost that had formed on her brows and hair melted away rapidly.

Her body, which had been rigid with coldness, began to warm up and eased up, and a healthy hue of redness crept up her countenance. Even her breath grew steady.

"It works!" Lily's eyes lit up with excitement.

Though they did not know what the pill was made of, its effects were apparent. It did indeed rid their daughter of the coldness within her.

"Could it be possible that the rascal was telling the truth?" Caden's eyes widened in disbelief.

He had thought that Dustin was just a scammer who was **out** to cheat him of his money and demand an

unreasonable sum.

It had never occurred to him that the pill, which he had considered trash and almost thrown away, would save his daughter in their time of need!

"Uncle Caden, Aunt Lily, where did this pill come from? It's miraculous!" Claudia was amazed.

"Claudia, do you remember the rascal who saved the both of you yesterday?" Caden asked.

“Of course I do! Who knows where he came from. He might be dangerous!”

“He was the one who gave us the pill.”

“What?” Claudia’s eyes widened in shock.

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After getting to know the whole situation, Claudia was not the only one who was surprised. Even Lily was astounded too.

Had she known Dustin’s identity, she would not have let Caden drive him away so easily. After all, he had helped her daughter!

“It’s fortunate that nothing serious happened. Had we thrown the pill away, Sheila would have been in grave danger!” Lily shuddered to think of what could have happened.

She considered herself lucky that she still had the pill with her, or the consequences would have been unimaginable.

“Sheila is safe for the time being, but the coldness within her has yet to be completely eliminated.”

After checking on Sheila, Caden ordered, “Claudia, go to the medical center and get Dustin here.”

“But Uncle Caden, you don’t really believe that the fellow can cure Sheila, do you?” Claudia’s expression was one of disbelief. She had a preconceived notion that Dustin wasn’t a trustworthy person.

“I’d just like to see what treatment plans he has to propose,” Caden clarified. Of course, he did not think that a youngster in his twenties would have any mind-blowing medical skills.

But

the fact was that the pill he gave them proved to have phenomenal effects, so he was curious as to where he got the pill from.

“Claudia, listen to your Uncle Caden. Sheila’s condition is of utmost importance. We should get him here to see what information he is able to provide us,” Lily urged.

“Alright.” Claudia nodded reluctantly.

Over at Peaceful Medical Center, Dustin made himself a pot of tea when he got back. He poured a cup for himself, **and** another for Hunter.

Hunter took his tea respectfully.

Dustin and Hunter had known each other for years, but they had never had tea together before.

“Mr. Rhys, didn’t you say that you need the Gozoraberry? Have you given up on it already?” Hunter asked curiously when he saw how laid back Dustin was.

“Of course not! I’m just waiting for the right opportunity.” Dustin sipped on his tea.

“The right opportunity?” Hunter found it difficult to understand what Dustin was implying.

“According to what I observed yesterday. Sheila will be experiencing another bout of attacks soon. And this time, it will be much worse than it had been before. No one in Swinton will be able to help her.” he said calmly.

“So that’s why **you** left them with **the** pill? So that they will come to you of their own accord?” Hunter quickly understood.

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“That’s right. Actions speak louder than words. It’s much more practical to prove myself with actions than to try and convince them with words.” Dustin nodded.

“And what if, by any chance, Caden did not take you seriously and threw the pill away?” Hunter mused aloud.

“Then he would be sending his daughter to her grave with his own bare hands.” Dustin shook his head.

If he really acted so rashly, then he would have no one else but himself to blame.

Just as they were conversing, a black Hummer pulled up at the entrance. Claudia strode in with her head held

high.

“Come with me, Dustin!” She commanded.

“Follow you? Where to?” Dustin continued to sip on his tea leisurely.

“Don’t play the fool with me! Of course, we’re going to Fallridge Haven!” Claudia frowned.

“Whatever for? We’re not welcome there. In fact, we were driven out just a while ago! I wouldn’t want to go

back there and bring trouble on myself.” Dustin shook his head.

“You!” Claudia gritted her teeth. How she wished she could beat him up then and there.

“That was a misunderstanding. We won’t drive you out anymore.” She suppressed her anger.

“Even if you won’t drive us away, we’re still not going. What do you take us for, making us come and go as you

wish?” Dustin took another sip of his tea.

“What exactly do you want?” Claudia was so angry that she was itching to hit someone.

“Sure, I can go over, but under one condition.”

“And what is that?”

“It’s simple. I want the Gozoraberry.”

“The Gozoraberry? That is meant to be used on Sheila. I cannot promise you that.” Claudia glowered.

“If you won’t agree to that, then we do not have a deal.” Dustin continued calmly, “I’ve said it once, and I’ll say

it again: The Gozora berry will not cure Sheila of her disease. If you can’t make the call, then get me someone

who can.”

“Hmph!” Claudia huffed angrily as she whipped out her phone to give Caden a call and brief him about

Dustin’s condition.

A while later, she nodded and looked Dustin in the eye.

“Uncle Caden has agreed to your condition. If you can cure Shella of her disease, then the Gozoraberry is yours,” Claudia said coldly,

“Deal!” Dustin smiled.

He got into Claudia’s car, and they made their way to Fallridge Haven, leaving Hunter astonished and in awe.

“As expected of Mr. Rhys! He has every move under his control!” Hunter thought to himself.

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When Dustin returned to Fallridge Haven yet again, he noticed that a group of doctors had gathered around, and they were mostly people who were influential and of high status in Swinton’s medical field.

“You’ve finally returned, young man! Please, come in!” Lily greeted him enthusiastically the moment he entered.

It took him a moment to get over his discomfort.

“You said you could cure my daughter of her disease. Do you mean it?” Caden asked solemnly, as stern as ever.

“Of course. Surely I would not have come if I did not have the confidence to cure her. I just hope that you will make good on your promise, Mr. Murray.” Dustin smiled lightly.

“Of course, I will. But you’d best deliver your end of the promise,” Caden answered frostily.

“We’ll see **in** a bit.” Dustin did not bother to explain much more. He quickly went forward to the emerald bed to check Sheila’s pulse.

Just as he predicted, she suffered from the rare disease of Polarfrost. It was an unusual condition that only came around once in a century.

People who suffered from such conditions had the potential to achieve great heights if they practiced a special form of martial arts, as it would greatly enhance their powers.

However, the problem was that people who suffered from the condition usually had very short lifespans.

The Polarfrost within them was like a great vortex that continually absorbed the coldness of the universe, so much so that the body was unable to take it.

New-born babies would usually die prematurely before they hit the age of one.

Fortunately for them, the Murrays were filthy rich, so Sheila had made it to this day from all the medication

and herbs that she consumed.

However, the coldness that she had been absorbing all these years had reached a tipping point, and all the medications which had served to suppress it before were no longer effective.

“How is it? Can you cure her?” Caden asked skeptically.

“It’s a bit tricky, but I can do it.” Dustin nodded.

“Alright then, I’ll let you have a go. But bear in mind, if anything happens to my daughter, I’ll see that you pay for it severely!” Caden threatened.

“Don’t worry, I know what I’m doing.”

Just as Dustin took out a needle and was about to apply it, a roar sounded at the door.

“Hold **it!**”

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“Stop whatever you’re doing!” The voice bellowed.

Xavier Horst strode in imposingly and shouted, “Uncle Caden, we do not know this man! We cannot let **him** put Sheila’s life at risk!”

“I understand that you’re worried for Sheila, Xavier. But we do not have any better alternatives now. He is our only hope.” Caden shook his head.

“Who says we have not got any better alternatives? See who I brought!” Xavier gestured dramatically and directed everyone’s attention to the entrance.

In came a podgy old man dressed in a loose green robe. He made his way in confidently.

“Dr. Shane?” There was an instant uproar when everyone caught sight of him.

The doctors’ seemed to have transformed into eager fanboys who met their idols. Their level of excitement was off the charts.

This was, after all, the world-renowned miracle healer, Dr. Malcolm Shane!

His expertise in acupuncture was one of a kind, and all these experts and professors were considered nothing compared to him.

“Dr. Shane?” Caden and the rest of them were initially astounded, but then it quickly turned into elation.

They were expecting him to arrive by nightfall, so it was a pleasant surprise that he managed to get there so soon.

“Didn’t you say you were delayed, Dr. Shane?” Lily asked inquisitively.

“Aunt Lily, I heard that Dr. Shane was held up by traffic and couldn’t make it here soon, so I flew a chopper

over and picked him up from where he was. Fortunately, we’re still in time!” Xavier explained.

“That’s brilliant! How smart of you to think of that, Xavier! I’m proud of you!” Caden smiled. No doubt Dr.

Shane’s presence calmed his nerves.”

“Thank you, Uncle Caden. Only doing what I should!” Xavier nodded modestly.

“Dr. Shane, we have no time to lose. Please save my daughter!” Caden cut to the chase and brought him to the

emerald bed on which Sheila laid.

“Mr. Murray, didn’t you agree to let me cure her? What is the meaning of this?” Dustin was not happy with the

turn of events.

“Young man, I appreciate your good intentions. However, since we have Dr. Shane here, I will not put my daughter at risk. You may take your leave now,” Caden said.

“Mr. Murray, this isn’t right. You were the one who requested my help to cure your daughter, and now you’re backing out on your promise? This really isn’t right.” Dustin’s eyes narrowed.

“What do you mean it isn’t right? Do you really think that someone like you can compare to Dr. Shane?” Xavier

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asked with disdain.

“Young man, I have the freedom to get whomever I please to cure my daughter. And as compared to you, I’d much rather trust Dr. Shane here, with the task,” Caden said frankly.

Had he not been at his wits’ end, he would never have asked this rascal for help.

“It’s alright that you got someone else to cure your daughter, Mr. Murray, but the Gozoraberry that you promised me...”

Caden cut him off mid-sentence. “You didn’t do anything, why should you have the Gozoraberry? Do you think you deserve it?”

“So you’re going back on your words?” Dustin frowned.

Dustin was not a short-tempered person, but ungrateful people like Caden never failed to get on his nerves.

“Young man, cut the nonsense. Isn’t it just the money you’re after? Guards, bring him 2 million dollars!”

On Caden's orders, his guards soon came back with two cases of cash. "Here, take this as your payment for helping Sheila. From now on, we're square."

"Don't you hear that? Take the money and leave. Now!" Xavier roared.

"Hahahaha!" Dustin suddenly broke out in laughter. But his eyes were cold and icy.

"What a good strategy you have there, Mr. Murray. How unfortunate for you though, you're being overly optimistic. Do you really think that Malcolm Shane can cure your daughter?"

A commotion broke out the moment he said that.

"You rascal! Have you any idea what you've just said? This is Dr. Shane we're talking about! There have not been conditions that he has been unable to cure thus far!"

"That's right! What an insolent young man! If Dr. Shane can't cure her, do you think that you can?"

"Where did this scoundrel come from? What cheek he has to doubt Dr. Shane!"

Chapter 159

The doctors gathered around to reprimand Dustin.

"Young man, may I know from whom you learned your skills? How dare you brag in front of everyone?" Malcolm gave him a once over, obviously displeased.

In all the years he practiced his medical skills, he had never once been doubted. Much less by a rascal who was still wet behind the ears!

"Hah! You overestimate yourself! How dare you put on airs in front of Dr. Shane? You're really asking for it!" Xavier said in a hostile manner.

"Young man, I do not know where you got the confidence to doubt Dr. Shane, but I would

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"There's no need to drive him out. Let him stay and watch. Since he doubts my skills, I'll show him what I'm capable of!" Malcolm stood with his hands behind his back.

"As expected of Dr. Shane! He carries himself with such dignity and confidence!" The doctors flattered him excessively.

As Malcolm has spoken, Caden did not go against his wishes and allowed Dustin's presence.

"I'm so sorry to have made you come here for nothing, buddy. If Sheila ends up fine, I'll try to talk to Caden about the Gozora berry and see if you can have it." Lily brought Dustin to one side and apologized sincerely.

This was the man who had saved her daughter. Lily knew that she owed it to him, and would like to repay him if she could.

"I'd appreciate that, Mrs. Murray," Dustin's expression eased up.

There was finally someone who spoke sense in the family.

"Dr. Shane, let's not wait any longer. Please proceed." Caden waved him over.

Malcolm nodded and sat down beside Sheila's bed, checking her pulse.

A short while later, he announced confidently, "If I'm not mistaken, the patient is weak and has poor circulation due to the coldness within her, and now, the toxins within her body have accumulated. Once the coldness and toxins in her body are expelled, she will be just fine."

"And I presume you have the means to do that, Dr. Shane?" Caden asked expectantly.

"Though it's a little tricky, it's no big deal for me. I shall perform an acupuncture therapy to expel the coldness and toxins from her body!" Malcolm smiled lightly.

He then took out several needles and swiftly inserted them into Sheila's skin on her nape, her navel, below her knees, on the base of her feet, and on her back.

His movements were so swift and executed with such ease and skill that his audience was left in awe.

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By the time his needles were all in place, wisps of cold air slowly came out of Sheila's limbs.

"And for the last one!" Malcolm produced a needle that was thicker and longer **than** the rest and inserted **it** straight on top of Sheila's head.

Soon, a great deal of mist emerged from all over Sheila's skin.

For a brief moment, everyone in the room was surrounded by an eerie chill.

"Alright, the coldness is now expelled. It won't be long now before the patient comes around," Malcolm

declared confidently.

"No wonder you're a world-renowned miracle healer. Your acupuncture therapy is just plain magical!" Caden exclaimed excitedly. His gloom and anxiety from earlier on were swept away in an instant.

"That's right! With Dr. Shane around, any disease or condition can be easily handled!" Xavier was all smiles.

"Hey, you! Do you admit defeat?" Claudia raised her chin at Dustin in a provoking manner.

"How dare he doubt Dr. Shane? He doesn't know where he stands!" Claudia thought to herself.

Dustin shook his head as he looked at her with contempt.

"Sheila suffered from Polarfrost! That was a rare condition that only came around app

roximately once in a century! How could it possibly be so easily cured?" He thought to himself.

While everyone was overjoyed, Lily noticed something amiss. "Hey, hasn't the coldness been expelled? But why does Sheila look even paler than before?"

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“What?”

Everyone turned to look.

Sure enough, they found her just as Lily said. Sheila, whose condition seemed to have improved a while ago, now looked much paler than before, and more frost had formed on her brows and hair.

From the way things looked, not only had her condition not improved, it even worsened.

“Dr. Shane, whatever is going on?” Caden’s brows knitted together tightly, his expression stern.

“This is most peculiar. Technically speaking, she should be fine after the coldness has been expelled.” Malcolm found Sheila’s condition very strange. She had been fine just a while ago; how did her condition worsen in just the blink of an eye?

“What do we do now, Dr. Shane?” Caden questioned persistently.

“Don’t be anxious. Let me give it another try.” Malcolm didn’t give up just yet. He used the same technique to rid Sheila of the coldness within her.

But the results were the same. In just under three minutes, Sheila’s condition went back to square one. It was as though the coldness within her was never-ending. It was truly bizarre.

“What’s going on?” Malcolm was baffled. It was then that he finally realized the severity of the situation at hand.

“Dr. Shane, it is true that you have amazing needling skills to get rid of the cold, but what you did was just a temporary solution. It will not eradicate the root cause of the issue,” Dustin spoke up.

However, that elicited some dissatisfaction from the onlookers.

“That’s nonsense! Who are you to doubt Dr. Shane’s skills?” Xavier shot him a murderous glare.

“Exactly! You’re just a rascal who’s still wet behind the ears! How dare you speak out of turn so shamelessly?” The crowd was outraged.

Dr. Shane was considered a legendary figure in the medical field! They would not tolerate a random kid

criticizing him freely!

“If you do not trust me, then go ahead and try as many times as you wish.” With that, Dustin held his tongue and said no more.

“Oh no! Sheila’s pulse has disappeared!” Lily cried out suddenly.

The crowd turned to look and noticed that she was in very bad shape.

“Dr. Shane! Quick! Save my daughter!” Caden lost his cool and urged Dr. Shane forward.

Malcolm dared not waste another second and immediately applied more needles to Sheila’s pressure points to rid her of the coldness and steady her pulse.

However, the results were not satisfactory, to say the least.

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The Polarfrost seemed to always come back no matter what he did, and Dr. Shane was finally rendered

helpless.

In all the years he had practiced medicine, he had never seen such a peculiar condition.

“I’m truly sorry, but—
I’m afraid I won’t be able to help with this condition.” After a bout of effort to save Sheila,

Malcolm could only shake his head in resignation.

“What? You can’t help?” Everyone was bewildered when they heard that. Nobody had expected him to say

such a thing.

If such a legendary figure could not help her, then who could?

“Please, Dr. Shane, think of something! You must save my daughter! Right! I have a Gozoraberry! Will that help?”

“Caden panicked.

“Gozoraberry?” Malcolm’s eyes lit up but quickly dimmed again.

“No doubt the Gozoraberry is a precious herb with properties to expel coldness and improve circulation, but

with how things stand right now, it wouldn't be of much help anymore."

The coldness within Sheila seemed unending, and simply expelling it didn't seem to do the trick.

"Then what should we do? Is there really no hope for my daughter?" Lily was almost in tears.

If even Dr. Shane can't help them, is there anyone in this world who could?

All of a sudden, she caught sight of Dustin.

In that instant, she seemed to have found a lifeline. "Buddy! Didn't you say that you were able to cure Sheila?"

Please, I beg of you, save my daughter!"

"Mrs. Murray, it's not that I don't want to save her; it's just that some of you do not seem to want me to help!"

Dustin said helplessly.

"Young man, it was a mistake on my part earlier on. If you can save my daughter, the entire Murray household would be eternally grateful to you!" Caden's expression was a mix of emotions.

He was not one to easily yield or admit his mistakes, but for the sake of his daughter, he saw no other choice.

His final hope lay with Dustin.

"Uncle Caden! You don't really believe this rascal, do you? Even Dr. Shane can't cure her, how is it possible that this scoundrel can? Don't be fooled by him!" Xavier lost his composure.

"Well, if I can't cure her, do you think you can? Dustin gestured for Xavier to go ahead.

"You!" Xavier had no words to refute. He was adept at fighting, but he knew next to nothing about saving and

rescuing others.

“Buddy, please try your best to save her. No matter what the outcome is, we can take it!” Lily looked at him with resoluteness, her mind made up and ready to face any consequences.

“I can help her, but when I’m done, I hope Mr. Murray will deliver on his end of the promise.” Dustin

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approached Sheila, who was still unconscious on her bed and helped her sit up.

With just one hand, he applied needles at 13 different pressure points on Sheila’s body. His technique was extraordinary.

When the 13 needles began to rotate on the spot in the pressure points, he gave Sheila a strong smack on the back.

Sheila wavered, her head jerked upwards, and she spat several white crystals, which landed on the ground with a resounding thunk.

The crystals were a murky white color and gave off a bone-chilling mist.

“The coldness has crystallized?” Malcolm’s expression was one of disbelief.

No wonder his acupuncture served no purpose. It turns out that the coldness that Sheila’s body had been absorbing over the years had crystallized!

Those crystals were like a source of evil that emitted an endless stream of coldness. And that was the reason he wasn’t able to remove the source of Sheila’s condition!

Just as the crowd stared on with uncertainty and suspicion, Dustin produced a bamboo cylinder and poured

out of it a small, red beetle.

“Hey! What’s that?” Lily was shocked and immediately stopped his actions.

“This is a fiery beetle. It’s a type of venomous insect that feeds on coldness and produces warmth. Once it

enters Sheila's body, it can regulate and balance out her energy," Dustin explained.

"A venomous insect?" Everyone's expression changed.

To them, venomous insects were considered evil and dangerous.

"You—

You're going to put this insect into Sheila's body?" Lily felt her skin crawl.

"Don't be alarmed. As I've said before, the mystic arts can be used to heal too. This is the perfect example." As Dustin spoke, he proceeded to put the fiery beetle into Sheila's mouth.

Everyone looked at each other, and for a moment, they were at a loss.

Malcolm, however, had a thoughtful expression.

He had heard of using the mystic arts to heal diseases, but he had never seen anyone actually perform it. Could it be possible that this rascal was really able to work miracles?

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Everyone watched wide-eyed as Dustin administered the fiery beetle.

The moment it entered Sheila's body, the effect was immediate. The cold air around her began to dissipate, and in less than three minutes, her body had gone from icy cold to being at a regular temperature.

She gained color in her cheeks, and her breathing steadied.

Then, under the disbelieving gaze of the crowd, she whimpered and came around.

"She's awake?" Astonishment was evident on the crowd's faces.

The fact that a rascal like Dustin was able to cure Sheila of her condition when even Dr. Shane was unable to was beyond them.

It was shocking indeed!

"H-How is this possible?" Xavier's eyes widened, bewildered.

How could an unknown doctor possess such skills?

"How did he do it?" Claudia was equally amazed and terrified.

She struggled to come to terms with how something she had always thought was evil had healing properties.

"I never knew that the mystic arts had such amazing effects!" Malcolm's eyes lit up as he marveled at Dustin's skills.

His unconventional means of healing were undoubtedly a groundbreaker.

Malcolm, who had initially thought that he no longer had any room for improvement in the medical field, finally found new hope.

"Sheila! How are you feeling? Are you experiencing any discomfort?" Caden and Lily were both happily surprised.

They had not held high hopes, to begin with, and they were more than pleased to be met with such a miracle.

“Dad, Mom How weird. I no longer feel the coldness within me. It’s as though it has vanished!” Sheila patted herself all over, a surprised expression on her face. She had never felt so warm before.

“That’s great! That’s absolutely great! Thank you, thank you so much for saving her!” Lily was so ecstatic that she was about to bow to Dustin to thank him.

“Mrs. Murray, please, there is no need to bow!” Dustin reached out to hold her up. He was not used to such unbridled expressions of gratitude.

“Was it you who saved me, kind sir?” Sheila was delighted to see Dustin.

It had just been a day, and they had met again! Was it not fate?

“Sheila, it’s all thanks to Mr. Rhys here that you’re still alive! If not for him, you might very well still be unconscious,” Lily remarked.

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“Thank you, kind sir!” Sheila bowed deeply.

“You’re welcome. After all, I get paid for saving you.” Dustin smiled.

“So is my daughter completely cured, young man?” Caden asked cautiously.

He had consulted many experienced and well-known doctors regarding Sheila’s condition, and all of them had expressed that the condition could only be suppressed, not completely eradicated. So he had to be sure.

“I wouldn’t say that she’s completely cured of it, but she won’t be bothered by it for the next 10 years,” Dustin guaranteed.

“Why is it only for 10 years? Can’t you get rid of it completely?” Caden frowned.

“It’s Polarfrost. It can’t be eliminated so easily. Unless you are able to get some extremely rare herbs that can improve her circulation and metabolism, the only solution is to use the fiery beetle to extend her life, and a fiery beetle only has a lifespan of ten years,” Dustin clarified.

“10 years is good enough. At least it will give us more time to find other means of solution.” Lily smiled.

It was already a pleasant surprise that her daughter’s life had been prolonged by 10 years. She dared not ask for much more.

“Mr. Murray, now that your daughter’s life is not on the line, is it time you deliver your end of the deal?” Dustin went straight to the point.

“It’s the Gozoraberry you’re after, isn’t it? Please proceed to the lounge. I’ll be there in a while,” Caden said lightly.

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Caden gestured to the butler, who immediately got the message.

“This way, please, Mr. Rhys,”

“Sure.” Dustin nodded and followed the butler to the lounge. He took a seat and waited. It was a long wait.

It wasn’t until he finished his third cup of tea that Caden appeared with several men in tow.

“I really appreciate you saving my daughter, young man. Here’s a ten-million-dollar check. Consider this your pay.” Caden sat down and motioned to one of his men, who presented a check to Dustin.

“What? Thank you for your kind intentions, Mr. Murray, but this isn’t what I want.” Dustin stared at the check, puzzled.

“It doesn’t matter whether you want it. What matters is that this is what I’m paying you for a job well done.”

Caden sipped on his tea.

“What’s that supposed to mean?” Dustin’s eyes narrowed.

“Don’t you get it? The Gozoraberry isn’t yours. All you’re getting is the money.” Caden spelled it out in plain

words.

“Mr. Murray, we had a deal. I cure your daughter, and you give me the Gozora berry. Why are you going back on your words?” Dustin’s expression darkened

What was the meaning of all this? Were they turning their backs on him once they no longer had use of him? Had he just been taken advantage of?

“The Gozoraberry is not only a precious herb used for healing, but it is also remarkably beneficial to practitioners of martial arts. Don’t you know that, young man?” Caden suddenly asked.

“So?”

“It would be a waste of precious resources to give you such a valuable treasure, so I made the decision to give it to someone else,” Caden justified himself.

“You gave it to someone else? Who?” Dustin’s brows furrowed deeply.

“Who else but me?” Xavier made his way in haughtily. He had in his hands a small, red, wooden box that held

the Gozoraberry.

“Hey, buddy! Uncle Caden’s given me the Gozoraberry. It’s mine now!” Xavier patted the box smugly with a

Sneer.

“So what if the rascal stole the limelight today? Ultimately, I’m the one who benefited from it! At the end of the day, he’s just a lowly peasant!” Xavier thought

“Caden Murray! You are an influential person with high social standing, and you carry the honor of the Murray family with you! How could you go back on your words and betray someone who has helped you? Are you not afraid that you’d be ridiculed?” Dustin slammed his hand on the table and stood up. He was truly angry.

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He could understand Caden's previous change of mind, as it was a matter pertaining to his daughter's health condition.

Malcolm had a reputation for having great expertise in his field, which naturally made him more deserving of trust on Caden's end. But now, it was a different case altogether.

Caden was going back on his word after Dustin had saved Sheila! That was downright outrageous!

"Ridicule? Hah!

Who'd dare to ridicule me? Do you really think that a few words from you would be able to tamish the Murray family's reputation? You're really thinking highly of yourself!" Caden scoffed.

He looked at Dustin as though he were a fool.

"Are you really going to disregard your honor?" An icy glint flashed in Dustin's eyes.

"Cut the crap! Take the money and scram, or I'll get my men to throw you out!" Caden ran out of patience.

How dare this peasant go against him?

"What? Are you threatening me now?" Dustin lifted his gaze.

"So what if we're threatening you? I'm warning you, Rhys! You better get out of here now, or I'll make you!"

Xavier roared.

At that, a group of well-trained guards rushed in bearing malice.

It seems like they came prepared.

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“Hahaha!” Dustin was so infuriated that he laughed out loud when he saw the guards rush in.

Anyone would have assumed that such a prestigious family would at least put in some effort to uphold their reputation. Who would have guessed that they would act so shamelessly?

Not only did they go back on their word, they even betrayed someone who had offered them help in their time

of need! And now that things didn't go their way, they resorted to violence and threats. How tyrannical and

despicable!

“Caden Murray! Are you about to repay kindness with ingratitude?” Dustin's gaze frosted over, and an imposing air came over him.

“Young man, you'd be smart to back off now. Ten million dollars is enough to last you a lifetime. You better not get greedy!” Caden warned.

People in his position were only interested in what benefited them. Naturally, he would place connections with

the Horst family above an unknown doctor like Dustin.

“Am I being greedy, or are you the one taking advantage of me? Do you really think that I'm an easy target

whom you can mess around with however you please?” Dustin retorted sharply.

“Uncle Caden, let's not waste time on this scumbag! Just throw him out and get rid of this eyesore!” Xavier got

impatient.

He was green with envy at how Sheila had called Dustin 'kind sir. She had never addressed him as such!

"I'll give you one last chance, lad. Take this money and leave, and I'll pretend that nothing has ever happened today." Caden gave his ultimatum.

"And I'm giving you your last chance too. Give me the Gozoraberry, or you'll be sorry!" Dustin threatened

authoritatively.

"Hah! You're really making things hard for everyone, aren't you?"

Finally, Cader could hold it in no longer. He exchanged a look with Xavier. "Throw him out! Do whatever you like. Just make sure that he doesn't die."

"No problem! Tie him up and throw him out! Break his legs if he resists!" Xavier sneered as he waved the

guards over.

"Yes, Sir!" The guards rushed up at his command.

"Insolent bastards!" Dustin seethed. He met the guards head-on.

With just a few simple swings of his arm, he delivered slap after slap to the guards' faces.

was a

They cried out as they were sent sprawling across the lounge. None of them was a match for Dustin.

"Huh?" Caden and Xavier were surprised at what they saw. They had not expected that a mere doctor like him would be so skilled in combat techniques!

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"So it turns out that he's a practitioner of the martial arts! No wonder he has the guts to behave so pompously!

“Xavier scoffed as he slowly took off his coat.

“It’s been a long time since I’ve loosened up. Well, let’s have some fun today, shall we?” With that, Xavier got ready to attack.

“Hold it right there!” Lily, Sheila, and a few other people burst in hastily.

“Caden, what’s going on? Dustin saved Sheila! Why are you guys attacking him?” Lily questioned.

*This is none of your business, Lily. Bring Sheila back to her room to get some rest.” Caden frowned.

He had brought Dustin to the lounge because he didn’t want his wife and daughter to see what they were doing.

But in the end, they still caught wind of things and came over.

“Is this because of the Gozoraberry, Caden? We made Dustin a promise! Why are you backing out on your words? If word got out, how do you think it’s going to affect our reputation?” Lily got the picture the instant she saw the red box.

“What would a woman know? Get out!” Caden was ashamed, but he lashed out at Lily with his frustration.

“Dad! You’ve always told me to be an honest person, but what are you doing now?”

Sheila took a step forward and demanded, “Dustin just saved my life, but not only are you not grateful towards him, but you’ve also resorted to using violence against him. Since when were you so unreasonable?”

Caden’s expression changed when he heard her words. He couldn’t care less about what others thought about him, but he couldn’t disregard how his daughter saw him.

He had always kept his dirty deeds hidden from his daughter. It was unfortunate that he was caught red-

handed today.

“Sheila, Uncle Caden had nothing to do with this. I was the one who wanted the Gozoraberry.”

Xavier stood up to take the blame. I’m just one step away from advancing my skills to the next level, and a Gozoraberry is exactly what will give me the extra push to help me progress. That’s why I shamelessly requested it from Uncle Caden.”

“Even so, you should not have resorted to violence!” Sheila scowled.

“Sheila, you don’t understand! I had planned to buy the Gozoraberry from him for 10 million dollars, but not only did this fella here reject my proposal, he even insulted me! I really couldn’t take it!” Xavier argued

indignantly.

“I don’t care! Since you’ve agreed to give Dustin the Gozoraberry, then you can’t just back out at the eleventh hour!” Sheila reached out, snatched the box from Xavier’s hands, and passed it to Dustin.

“You...” At a loss, Xavier could only look to Caden helplessly.

Caden looked none too pleased, but in the end, he only shook his head. He had an image to keep in front of his daughter, so they could only let it slide.

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“Dustin, I’m really sorry that you were startled. My father wasn’t in the right state of mind for a while back. there. I apologize on his behalf for offending you. I hope you’ll find it in you to forgive him.” Sheila said apologetically.

Seeing the sincerity in her gaze, Dustin was appeased. It was true that Caden was despicable, but he had to admit that Lily and Sheila were both very understanding and reasonable.

“Mr. Rhys, please have the Gozoraberry. From now on, the Murrays are indebted to you!” Lily said.

“Please do not feel indebted to me. All I ask is that Mr. Murray would not take revenge on me,” Dustin remarked lightly.

“No, he won’t! My father’s not like that!” Sheila shook her hand and turned to look at Caden, throwing him a threatening glance.

Caden had no other choice but to nod. “What happened today was just a misunderstanding, please don’t take offense.”

“If that is the case, thank you. I have other arrangements made, so I’ll be taking my leave now.” Dustin turned

to leave.

“Dustin, will we meet again?” Sheila suddenly asked.

“We’ll leave that to fate.” Dustin walked out the door with a wave.

Before he got out the door, he heard a low voice by his ear saying. “You’re lucky Sheila came in the nick of

time, you scoundrel. She just saved your sorry ass!”

“You’re the one who lucked out that Sheila came when she did. Otherwise, you’d be a dead man by now.”

Dustin left with a scoff.

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When Dustin returned to Peaceful Medical Center, he found a silver Bentley parked right at the entrance.

He walked in to see a lady with a beguiling face. Her shapely figure and enchanting temperament, matched with her bewitching smile, made her nothing less than a top-tier seductress.

“What brings you here, Ms. Harmon?” Dustin was slightly startled. Though they were already familiar with each other, he still found her stunning every time he saw her.

“Why to see you, of course. You’re such a busy person, and you rarely ever come to see me. Surely you can’t forbid me from coming here to meet you?” Natasha said begrudgingly.

“That’s not what I meant. Right, how’s it going with Immortunol? Are its effects as expected?” Dustin changed the topic awkwardly.

“It’s much better than expected! I’ve come here especially to thank you. Immortunol has way better effects than Eternumax. I believe that once Immortunol is launched, the big bucks will start rolling in in no time.” Natasha smiled.

“Is that so? That’s great!” Dustin smiled too.

“Here. Have a look at the contract.” Natasha pulled out a document from her bag and handed it to him.

“What contract?” Dustin looked at her quizzically.

“You came up with the prescription for Immortunol. I can’t take advantage of your labor. Let’s just take this as a collaboration between us. All future profits from Immortunol will be split evenly.” Natasha pushed the

contract toward him.

“I don’t think there’s a need for that, Ms. Harmon. I have no use for Immortunol. I’d be happy just knowing that it’s of help to you.” Dustin shook his head.

“Are you daft? You’re rejecting money? I’m giving it to you, so just take it. I might lose sleep over it if you don’t.

Natasha rolled her eyes.

“Well, alright...” Dustin saw no way around it when she put things that way. He could only nod and sign the

papers.

“Oh, that’s right, I have another present for you,” Natasha suddenly exclaimed

“A present? What is it?” Dustin was curious.

“Close your eyes first.” Natasha looked like she was hiding a secret.

“Oh.” Dustin closed his eyes without giving it too much thought.

The next second, he caught a whiff of a pleasant fragrance.

All of a sudden, he felt warm lips on his..

Dustin froze instantly. He was so stunned that he felt like he’d been struck by lightning. Had Natasha just

stolen a kiss from him?

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He reflexively pulled back, but a pair of arms were hooked around his neck, and he failed to break free.

The alluring fragrance at such close proximity caused his mind to go blank.

At the same time, a Mercedes-Benz had just pulled up at the entrance. The car door opened, and out came a beautiful woman with an elegant bearing.

It was Dahlia. She had come to apologize to Dustin.

She had mulled things over for an entire day and night and came to the conclusion that she should apologize to him. It would be hard to bring herself to say it, but it was absolutely necessary.

So she drew a deep breath, mustered up all the courage she had, and pushed the door open.

“Dus-” She had barely opened her mouth to call out to him when she saw a scene that she likely would not

forget.

She froze on the spot for a moment.

After some time, Natasha, whose cheeks were flushed, finally let go of Dustin when he ran out of breath.

Though she was a strong and independent woman, this was the first time Natasha had ever done something like this, to steal a kiss from another person.

“That’s my first kiss. It’s my gift to you.” Natasha smiled charmingly, her eyes full of tenderness and affection. She looked immensely seductive with her flushed face.

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Dustin ran his fingers over his lips, savoring the fragrance that still lingered. He blushed.

How embarrassing to have a kiss stolen in broad daylight!

“Hmph!” A disdainful scoff came from the door.

When Dustin looked up, all he saw was a familiar figure walking away indignantly.

After she got in the car, Dahlia stepped on the gas and disappeared down the road in the blink of an eye.

“Was that—Dahlia?” Natasha asked teasingly.

“Looks like it.” Dustin nodded blankly.

“Aren’t you going after her to explain what she just saw?” Natasha lifted a brow.

“What’s there to explain? We’re divorced! It’s not like I’m cheating on her.” Dustin stood his ground.

“You’ve got a point there.” Natasha smiled.

“You’re mine now, why would you need to explain to anyone else?” She thought to herself.

As they were conversing, another car pulled up at the entrance.

The car door opened, and in came a paunchy man. It was Malcolm Shane. He took in his surroundings as he entered.

“Hey, isn’t this Dr. Shane? Why is he here?” Natasha was amazed.

Dr. Malcolm Shane was a big name across the nation, and he was considered one of the best in the field of acupuncture. No matter where he went, he was always highly sought after by the rich and powerful.

“Mr. Rhys! So it’s true that you’re here!” Malcolm’s gaze quickly fixed on Dustin the moment he came in the door. He beamed brightly.

“Dr. Shane, it’s such an honor to have you here. May I know what brought you here today?” Dustin was puzzled.

“Mr. Rhys, the treatment you performed with the venomous insect was truly an eye-opener! It’s also the reason I’m here today. I’d like to seek your advice and guidance on the matter. I hope you can impart some of your wisdom.” Malcolm humbly sought knowledge from Dustin.

Even Natasha was astounded.

The great Dr. Shane, a leading figure in the medical field, was here to seek advice and knowledge from Dustin? Were her eyes playing tricks on her?

She knew how proficient Dustin was in his medical skills, but to have Dr. Shane ask for his guidance was still a shocker.

“Dr. Shane, you’re flattering me. You’re my senior, with many more years of experience under your belt. I’m not fit to offer you any advice, but I’ll do my best to help you wherever needed.” Dustin waved his hand repeatedly.

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For someone of Malcolm's stature to come to him for advice was enough proof of his sincerity.

Any other person in his position would never find it in them to humble themselves enough to seek guidance from someone like Dustin.

"Don't be modest, Mr. Rhys. Your medical skills are one of a kind. I'm ashamed of my inadequacy, especially regarding methods of the mystic arts. I really admire it." Malcolm hesitated.

"If you're interested in that, I have a book here that might be of help."

Dustin went to a drawer and pulled out a yellowed ancient manuscript. "This manuscript here records various methods of how the mystic arts can be used for medical purposes. You can study it if you wish."

"Awesome! I'm really grateful, Mr. Rhys!" Malcolm was elated. He took the manuscript and started flipping through it.

The more he read, the more excited he got. The knowledge recorded was so profound and unfathomable that he completely lost himself in it.

"Dr. Shane, Dustin gave you a book, are you not going to return the favor?" Natasha teasingly prompted. Dustin might be generous, but as his future wife, she could not let people take advantage of him.

"Ah, right! I nearly forgot."

Malcolm patted himself all over and finally produced a set of golden needles. "Mr. Rhys, these golden needles are made of mystical gold. They're exceptionally durable and impervious to fire and water. I've had them for 10 years. They're considered rarities, I hope you'll accept them."

"Um-

"Thank you, Dr. Shane!" Before Dustin could reject them, Natasha had already received them with a smile.

Golden needles made of mystical gold! These are the objects of countless doctors' dreams! They were practically a treasure! She saw no reason to reject them!

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Malcolm was surprised that Natasha actually accepted the needles so readily. Was she not going to at least

act modest by declining his offer?

“Before I forget, Dr. Shane, since you have a keen eye for valuables. I have something I’d like you to help me evaluate.” Natasha requested after accepting the golden needles.

“Oh? What is it? Please let me have a look,” Malcolm said confidently.

“Here.” Natasha showed him a green pill.

Malcolm took the pill from her and nodded with satisfaction after having a good look at it. “This crystal clear pill has a bright luster to it, and it gives off a distinct fragrance. From the looks of it, it’s quite remarkable!”

“What good judgment, Dr. Shane!” Natasha gave him a thumbs up.

“This pill is called Immortunol. It can enhance a person’s beauty, promote longevity, and has anti-aging effects. If you’re not worried that we’ve spiked it, you may give it a try, Dr. Shane.”

“So what if it’s spiked? What fear have I of poison?” Malcolm smiled proudly and swallowed the Immortunol

right then and there.

The moment he popped it in, he felt a cool and refreshing sensation enter his bloodstream, reaching his limbs.

For a moment, Malcolm felt a charge running through him. He was instantly rejuvenated as an inexplicable

sense of clarity washed through his entire being.

The palpable feeling that all his exhaustion had been swept away caused him to feel much more energized.

And most importantly, it was not just a momentary sensation. After the medicinal constituents entered his

bloodstream, they continued to fuel him with vitality.

He was sure that if the pill was taken for an extended period, it would significantly transform a person.

“Brilliant! This is downright brilliant! It’s a treasure in itself!” When he perceived just how exceptional

Immortunol was, he had nothing but praise for it.

“Young lady, where did you get this Immortunol from? Do you have more of it? Would it be possible for you to

sell me a few?” Malcolm’s eyes lit up.

He rarely got so worked up over things, but he really could not hold back his excitement. The effects he

experienced from taking Immortunol were too amazing!

Even the Vitalitum that Dr. Watkins gave him could not compare to this precious pill!

“Dr. Shane, Immortunol is still in the production stage. We’re not ready to sell it to the public yet, but if you like

it, I can give you some.” Natasha smiled.

“Hahaha! What a generous young lady! If you don’t mind me asking, who is the genius who produced

Immortunol? I would really appreciate it if you could introduce me to him.” Malcolm beamed happily.

“Dr. Shane, the brain behind it all is right in front of you.” Natasha smiled suggestively.

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“Do you mean, Mr. Rhys is the one who produced Immortunol?” Malcolm’s eyes widened.

It was important to note that healing skills and producing pharmaceutical products were two different skill

sets.

Though they might look like branches from a similar field of study, the fact was that there was a world of

difference between the two.

Being adept in medical skills didn’t guarantee that one had the skills to produce medicine, and vice versa.

His difference in expertise from Dr. Watkins was the greatest example of that. He was proficient in medical skills, whereas Dr. Watkins was adroit in producing medicine.

It was extremely rare to find someone who was seasoned in both fields, and all the existing masters were at least in their seventies.

To have a youngster in his twenties be so skilled in both fields was unheard of. It was unimaginable!

“I just lucked out and found a prescription formula, that’s all.” Dustin smiled.

“You’re being too modest, Mr. Rhys. Even with a prescription formula, it would be no easy feat to produce such superb medicine. You have exceptional talent, Mr. Rhys! It’s an honor to have met you today, and I’m deeply impressed!” At that, Malcolm bowed deeply to Dustin.

He was so skilled in both treating patients and producing medicine at such a young age. He was truly a genius!

“You flatter me, Dr. Shane.” Dustin immediately reached out to hold him up.

“I wonder if you’d be interested to collaborate with us. Dr. Shane?” Natasha asked out of the blue.

“Collaborate? How so?” Malcolm’s curiosity was piqued.

“You’re a giant in the medical profession, and that makes you a symbol of authority. If you’d be willing to promote Immortunol, I’m sure that it would boost sales.” Natasha explained with a smile.

Malcolm had connections, and he was also a person of high importance in the medical industry. To have someone like him endorsing Immortunol would guarantee a steady stream of high-ranking officials and

nobility chasing after it.

“You really have a mind for business, young lady. But tell me, why should I agree to it?” Malcolm wasn’t one to be fooled.

“As long as you agree to it, not only will we give you Immortunol for free year-round, but you will also get priority supply to it. You’ve just had a taste of it, you should know very well how effective it is. You’d be saving a lot of lives by agreeing to it. This is an incredibly meritorious and beneficial deed! As someone of your high moral standing and reputation, surely you wouldn’t want such a precious treasure to go unnoticed, am I right?” Natasha coaxed persuasively.

“It really does sound like a good deal. Alright, I’ll work with you just this once then.” Malcolm nodded thoughtfully.

After all, he had received the ancient manuscript from Dustin. This was the least he could do to repay him.

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“Thank you, Dr. Shane! We appreciate it. Oh, Immortunol will be officially launched in two days. Please come and give us some moral support then!” Natasha smiled.

“Sure!” Malcolm agreed heartily, unaware that he had agreed to something that he might regret in the future.

Over in a mansion with a lake view.

“How is it, Mr. Wangle? Do we have the results yet?” Quentin stood up to welcome the white-browed man.

He had lost sleep for the past two days because of Eternumax. After much consideration, the best way out was to join forces with the Hummers’.

“Mr. Harmon, Sir Hummer has agreed to join forces, but only under one condition.” The old man picked up a cup of tea and drank it hastily.

“What condition?” Quentin asked impatiently.

“Sir Hummer hopes that you’ll take this opportunity to put pressure on Natasha from all sides and force her to step down from her position,” Mr. Wangle explained.

“Hahaha! That is exactly what I intend to do!” Quentin laughed aloud.

He had always been overshadowed by Natasha, ever since they were children, so the family had never placed

any importance on him.

Now that Eternumax had been lost, the family bore their grudges. If he grabbed hold of this opportunity to

recover the family’s losses and prove his worth, there was a high chance that he might take over Natasha’s

position!

“Mr. Harmon, the Hummers’ have agreed to join forces, but we still need money to buy Eternumax. How many boxes are you planning to purchase?” Mr. Wangle queried.

*The more the better, of course! Put in all the money we have on hand, and if that’s not enough, then go around

and borrow some more!” Quentin decided boldly.

“Isn’t that a little too risky?” Mr. Wangle doubted his decision.

“How is it risky? We have the market research report for Eternumax, and it shows very promising results! Countless millionaires are after it. So if we stock u

p on it now and sell it at a high price in the future, we'll surely make a huge profit!" Quentin laughed exuberantly.

The return will always be proportionate to the investment made.

By then, his worth would have increased ten to twentyfold. Wouldn't he be the one to call the shots in the

family?

Even Natasha Harmon would have to submit to him then!

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Chapter 167

Two days later, the Hummers' held the official press conference for the launch of Eternumax at the Hillview Hotel.

News about it had spread for several days, and with the Hummers' unceasing effort to promote it, there was a great deal of discussion surrounding it. Such an amazing drug with beautifying properties that could also improve longevity drew the attention of countless people.

So the press conference, which was grandly decorated, bustled with activity. There was a never-ending stream of guests that made their way in.

Right around noon, a silver Bentley pulled up at the entrance of the Hillview Hotel. When the car door opened, Natasha slowly made her way out of the car, her arms around Dustin's.

As always, she was the center of attention wherever she went. It was hard for anyone to take their eyes off her shapely figure and alluring face.

Dustin, who was clad in a three-piece suit, seemed to have gone through a thorough makeover. He looked handsome and suave, and carried himself with great poise.

“Natasha, why are you here?” Quentin and Mr. Wangle caught sight of them and approached.

“If you can be here, then so can I.” Natasha answered nonchalantly.

“We’re here because we received an invitation from Sir Hummer. Did you receive an invitation too?” Quentin asked with a faint, sardonic smile.

Of course, he knew that Edwin would never have given Natasha an invitation.

“I’m not here for Edwin’s press conference, so naturally, I do not need an invitation.” Natasha shrugged.

“If you’re not here for the press conference, then why are you here?” Quentin didn’t quite get the idea.

“Oh, it totally slipped my mind to inform you that I’m having a press conference for a new drug launch today too. Same day and location as Edwin Hummer’s, but his is on Basement Level 3, while mine’s on the third floor. I’ve made sure to steer clear of him.” Natasha dropped the shocking news on him.

“What? You’re having a press conference too?” Quentin was startled.

He had sent men to keep an eye on Natasha for the past few days, and they had not reported any action on

her end.

Why was she suddenly having a press conference? And at the same date and location as Edwin’s! Was that

not a blatant sign of provocation?

“Natasha Harmon! What exactly are you up to? You have nothing to your name, so where on earth do you get your courage to challenge Edwin Hummer?” Quentin was equally shocked and suspicious.

“This isn’t something that you should be worried about, Quentin. If you’ve got time to spare, you should consider more for yourself,” Natasha said casually.

“What’s that supposed to mean?” Quentin frowned.

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“I heard that you’ve purchased Eternumax in bulk, and plan to resell it at a higher price to earn some quick

cash?” Natasha asked.

“So what if I have? You can’t forbid me from making money just because you refuse to do so!” Quentin argued.

“Just because we’re from the same family, I’d advise you to do yourself a favor and sell off those Eternumax at a low price before the press conference starts. If you don’t, you’ll lose everything you have before you even

know it!” Natasha smiled profoundly.

“Utter nonsense! Eternumax is selling like hotcakes right now! There are a whole lot of people out there who

are willing to pay good money for it and yet are unable to get their hands on them! I think that’s just your

jealousy talking!” Quentin scoffed.

“It’s up to you to heed my advice.” Natasha couldn’t be bothered to tell him more. She hooked her arm around Dustin’s, and they both made their way into the hotel.

“Hmph! She really doesn’t know where she stands!” Quentin sneered as he watched them leave. From the way he saw it, Natasha was simply trying to complicate the situation in a final attempt to save herself.

As time went on, more and more people of the elite class entered Hillview Hotel. The Hummer’s press conference was filled with distinguished guests and was brimming with activity and excitement.

The Harmons’ press conference, however, painted a completely different picture. It was one of desolation and emptiness, with hardly any attendees. Apart from the staff and several bodyguards, there was basically no one else present.

But Natasha wasn’t bothered by the low turnout. She sat there with Dustin, leisurely sipping on wine.

“Natasha! What are you up to?” Two people rushed in. It was Jessica and Ruth.

“Why would you hold a press conference so suddenly without any prior preparation! Are you messing around?” Jessica demanded the moment she walked in.

“I know what I’m doing.” Natasha said calmly.

“You know what you’re doing? What do you mean you know what you’re doing? Have you seen the Hummers’ press conference? The place is jam-packed with people! And look at what you have here? Not a person in sight! If word

got out about this, what would people out there think about us Harmons?” Jessica exclaimed out of frustration.

Not only was the prescription formula for Eternumax stolen, but Natasha was also publicly challenging the Hummers at such a critical moment when she should have kept a low profile and laid low for the time being!

Wasn’t she just inviting humiliation upon herself? How ridiculous!

“Natasha, I don’t get it. You have always been one to make plans in advance and are always in control of the situation, why have you made such a foolish move today?” Ruth was puzzled.

Since they had Immortunol, all Natasha needed to do was advertise and give it some publicity, and they would easily be able to go against the Hummers!

So out of everything that she could have done, why did she pick the course of action that was most arduous and least promising?

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“Let’s not get all worked up. Here, have a seat and something to drink. You’ll find out soon enough.” Natasha was still full of confidence.

“Hmph! I’d like to see what tricks you have up your sleeves! Jessica huffed as she sat down.

Right now, all she hoped for was that nobody would show up. At least then, no one would spread the news. about this. If any word about the press conference got out, Harmon Pharmaceuticals would end up as a laughing stock.

“Hmm Is this the Harmons’ press conference? Why don’t I see anyone here at all?” Just then, an obese elderly man walked in, his face full of doubt.

“Dr–Dr. Shane?” Jessica was so astonished.

Dr. Shane was a person who rarely appeared in public. What was he doing here?

After all, Dr. Shane was someone who would even disregard a prime minister’s invitation if he so wished.

“Dr. Shane, what brings you here?” Jessica immediately got up to welcome him.

However, he did not even spare her a glance and walked right past her.

He jogged enthusiastically over to Dustin with a huge smile on his face. “Mr. Rhy! You’re here too! That ancient manuscript that you gave me was absolutely wonderful. It’s just that there is some information in there that I’m struggling to grasp. Do you think you could shed some light on them, please?”

Jessica was struck dumb on the spot.

A legendary figure in the medical field, the great Dr. Shane, was actually seeking advice from a poor fellow like Dustin. What? What on earth was going on?

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Chapter 168

Jessica was frozen on the spot and struggled for words when she saw how humbly Malcolm was seeking guidance from Dustin.

She had never once thought that the arrogant and haughty Dr. Malcolm Shane had such a side to him.

And most importantly, the person from whom he was modestly seeking advice was the boy toy, Dustin Rhys. It was mind-boggling indeed.

“I don’t think I’m fit to give you any advice, Dr. Shane, but I’d gladly help whenever I can. We can both share our thoughts. Dustin smiled.

“Sure, we can do that. Now, have a look here...” Malcolm took out the ancient manuscript and immediately dove into it. He started pointing out some of the areas that he had trouble understanding.

“Oh, this is actually quite simple. Take this for example: Put a hundred different insects into a jar, and let them fight among themselves. After a month, open up the jar, and by then there will only be one remaining insect. The rest of them would have been eaten up by this surviving insect, and this will be the poisonous insect that you’re after. Such a poisonous insect is usually used to cure other poisons in a method known as counteracting poison with another poison.

“As for this, it tells us how to neutralize the poisonous insect’s venom. So what you need to do is smoke the licorice herb until it turns black, then combine it with some soybeans and extract the juice. Once the patient consumes the juice, it will neutralize the venom of the poisonous insect. But of course, this is only applicable to the venom of common poisonous insects. And this here. Dustin spoke eloquently on all the topics that Malcolm had questions about, and he managed to give him all the answers he needed.

After hearing what Dustin had to say, Malcolm felt enlightened. “Hahaha! You really are talented! I’m so impressed, and I’ve learned so much from you today!”

Malcolm was practically dancing with joy. He looked nothing like an expert or a person of status.

“What-
..” Jessica watched bewildered. Was this really the haughty Dr. Shane who was constantly contemptuous of others? With how he was behaving, he looked more like a schoolboy!

Also, what was this mystic art that they were going on about? Would a renowned doctor like Dr. Shane

actually take interest in something like that?

“Dr. Shane, if you have any other questions, you can discuss them with Dustin some other time. As for now, we need to talk about the press conference.” Natasha interrupted them when she saw how excited they were over their discussion.

“Oh, right... Malcolm realized that his behavior was slightly inappropriate.

He nodded and said, “Just let me know what you need me to do, young lady.”

“There’s nothing you need to do. Just sit up there on the stage, and if you see anyone you recognize, you may greet them,” Natasha replied with a smile.

“Is it that simple?” Malcolm could not believe his ears.

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“Yep, it’s that simple.” Natasha nodded.

“That’s no problem at all!” Malcolm went and took his seat on the stage and continued reading through the ancient manuscript.

“Natasha, so what if you managed to invite Dr. Shane here? Do you think this will suffice to go against Edwin Hummer?” Jessica asked in all earnestness.

Though it was true that she was awestruck by Malcolm’s presence, that did not mean that he had the means to help the Harmons win his battle against the Hummers.

In the end, what mattered most in this competition between the two families was the quality of their product.

“We’ll find out soon enough.” Natasha did not explain any further. With a glance at her wristwatch, she turned to Dustin and nodded. He immediately got the signal and pulled out his phone to make a call.

At the same time, over at the Hummers' press conference...

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Looking at the crowd in the hall, Edwin couldn't help but smile broadly.

As expected, everything was going smoothly. Once the product launch was done by today, Eternumax's reputation would be spread far and wide!

When that time came, his aim wouldn't be limited to Swinton but to market Eternumax throughout the thirteen cities of the South!

"Sir Hummer! Congratulations on your launch!" Quentin and his men came up to Edwin, whose face was beaming.

"Oh, it's Mr. Harmon. Please, have a seat," Edwin said pleasantly.

"Sir Hummer, Eternumax is really a precious herb! Everyone has been talking about how great it is. Look at the crowd here after hearing about its effects! It's already become so popular that people are coming in droves!" Quentin flattered.

"If the product is good, customers will naturally return. Mr. Harmon, you also stocked up quite a bit, it seems like you're going to make a big profit this time." Edwin smiled.

"It's all thanks to you, Sir Hummer. We're all working together to get rich!" Quentin laughed heartily.

"Oh, by the way, have you heard any news from Natasha?" Edwin asked suddenly.

Quentin's lips curled into a playful smirk. "Speaking of which, there is a bit of news. I just heard that Natasha was going to hold a press conference at the same time and place as you."

"Oh? Is she trying to provoke me? But how come I didn't know about this?" Edwin was surprised.

“Not only you, but I don’t think anyone in Swinton knows about it. I’ve already checked into it, and her press conference has no one in attendance! What a joke!” Quentin sneered.

“If there is no one there, then what’s the point of her holding a press conference?” Edwin asked.

“She probably was frustrated by you, that’s why she intentionally pulled this stunt to try and stir up trouble. But now it seems like it’s just backfiring on her.” Quentin replied.

“Heh! I never expected Natasha to resort to such a foolish move. Does she really think that she can restore

everything just by relying on the Harmon family’s reputation? How naive!” Edwin shook his head.

In his heart, he couldn’t help but look down on Natasha. Natasha Harmon, the so-called queen of the business

world, didn’t seem so impressive after all.

“Sir Hummer, how about we go over and witness the mockery for ourselves?” Quentin extended an invitation.

“I have many important guests coming later, so I can’t leave for now. You go ahead, and please say hello to Natasha for me,” Edwin replied calmly.

“Okay, I’ll go have some fun then. I’ll let you know the details later,” Quentin said and left without further ado.

Soon, Quentin and Mr. Wangle arrived at the Harmon family’s press conference. When they walked in, they

found the hall empty, with only a few people present.

“Cousin, I didn’t expect you to really hold a press conference. But why is no one here? What the hell are you doing?” Quentin teased as he walked in.

“Did you not come here? Aren’t you a human?” Natasha replied coldly.

Quentin’s lips twitched, but he continued sarcastically, “I see it’s really empty here. Should I bring some friends over to liven up the atmosphere?”

Despite his words, the sneer on his lips could not be concealed.

“Thank you for your kindness, but it’s unnecessary. My guests will arrive soon,” Natasha smiled faintly.

“Cousin, I think you shouldn’t be too stubborn. How can you compete with Edwin with such a poor showing? In my opinion, I think you should just admit your defeat,” Quentin said with a smirk.

“Well, it seems like you’re having a lot of fun!” Ruth piped in angrily.

“Ruth, I’m doing this for your sister’s own good. Rather than making an embarrassment of ourselves, we should stop our losses while we can. Like me, I’ve bought a ton of Eternumax so that I can make a fortune later.” Quentin said confidently.

“You bought the Eternumax? How many did you buy?” Ruth was surprised and asked tentatively.

“I invested all my money and took out many loans to purchase the stocks. This time, I’m going to make a killing!” Quentin raised his chin proudly, waiting for them to rain praise on his intelligence and prowess.

After hearing this, Ruth slapped her forehead and sighed. “It’s all over!”

Eternumax was complete garbage!

It was pure stupidity for Quentin to buy so much Eternumax, moreover with money that he didn’t have!

What an idiot Quentin was!

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Chapter 170

“What do you mean? Can’t you speak more clearly? I’m about to make it big!” Quentin rolled his eyes.

With the popularity of Eternumax, making a fortune was in the bag. These guys really lacked business acumen!

“Sis, did you not remind our cousin not to buy Eternumax? Ruth turned her head and looked at Natasha.

“I did remind him, but he didn’t listen. I couldn’t do anything about it. Natasha shrugged.

“While there’s still time, quickly sell all your Eternumax, even if it’s at a low price. It’s better than getting nothing back.” Ruth advised.

“Sell at a low price? Are you talking nonsense? This is an opportunity for me to multiply my net worth by ten times. How could I give up so easily?” Quentin frowned.

“Cousin, I don’t think you can increase your net worth by that much. You are more likely to go bankrupt. Don’t you know that my sister has developed a new drug called Immortunol?” Ruth shook her head helplessly.

“What Immortunol? I’ve never heard of it.” Quentin sneered.

“Immortunol has the same benefits as Eternumax, but its medicinal properties far surpass those of Eternumax. Besides, it’s even cheaper. Just think about what would happen once this drug hits the market.” Ruth analyzed.

“Hmph! Nonsense! There’s no such drug in this world that can compare to Eternumax. Do you think I’m stupid?”

Quentin didn’t believe it at all..

“It’s true! I’ve tried it myself!” Ruth insisted anxiously.

Quentin interrupted coldly. “That’s enough! Ruth, I always thought of you as an innocent child who would never lie. I did not expect that you would lie to help your sister!”

“Hmph! If you don’t believe me, then forget it!” Ruth snorted and turned away without another word.

It’s impossible to change his mind. She had said everything she needed to say, and if he refused to listen, it was not her fault.

“You guys are better off thinking about how to bring more people here to liven up the atmosphere instead of worrying about my affairs. Look at this press co

nference, it's as empty as a ghost town. What an embarrassment!" Quentin's face was cold as he spoke sarcastically.

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"Who said we don't have any guests? Look, there they are!" Natasha suddenly pointed her chin toward th

door.

The others followed her gaze. Several people dressed in luxurious clothing walked in, turning around as if they were looking for something.

"Excuse me, is Dr. Shane here?"

"We heard that Dr. Shane has developed a medicine called Immortunol, which could maintain youthfulness and increase longevity. Is it true?"

"Of course it's true. Look, Dr. Shane is sitting on the stage." Natasha smiled and stood up.

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"Oh?" The group looked closely and their faces lit up with joy.

"It's really Dr. Shane! It seems like we've come to the right place!"

"You're right! I didn't believe it at first when I heard the rumors, but it turned out to be true!"

They spoke excitedly to each other. After all, it was extremely difficult to meet a highly skilled expert like Dr. Shane, who was often elusive and rarely seen.

"Dr. Shane?" Quentin was startled and turned back in surprise.

On the stage, there was a fat old man who was reading a book.

He hadn't paid much attention before, but upon closer inspection, he realized that the old man was none other than the famous miracle doctor, Dr. Malcolm Shane!

What's going on? Did Natasha actually invite Dr. Shane?

Quentin mulled it over as more guests streamed in. People were crowding into the hall to see the renowned

Dr. Shane.

Many of them were initially skeptical and curious; however, once they saw that it was really him, their hearts

were convinced.

Even without saying a word, just having Dr. Shane sit there was the best advertisement for Immortunol.

“Is it possible? Could Immortunol really be better than Eternumax?” At first, Quentin was able to remain calm.

but as more guests arrived, he couldn’t help but feel nervous.

After a short while, the empty hall had become lively.

“It’s about time, let’s begin,” Natasha ordered the butler to bring out all of the Immortunol that had been

prepared.

With a smile, she stepped onstage and stood beside Dr. Shane.

“Ladies and gentlemen, the highlight of our press conference today is this new drug, Immortunol! This is a miraculous medicine jointly developed by Harmon Pharmaceuticals and other medical experts, including Dr. Shane. Not only does this medicine improve one’s longevity, but it also has anti-aging and health-promoting benefits, making it suitable for people of all genders and ages. As for its effects, you’ll know after trying it. Your opinion is what matters.” Natasha did not waste time and briefly introduced the Immortunol before having the butler distribute it to all of the guests.

Without question, each person who was present in the hall received a pill. When everyone took the Immortunol, the entire hall erupted in excitement.

“Oh my god! The effect of Immortunol is amazing, isn’t it?”

“You’re right! Just after taking one, my whole body is filled with energy! I have never felt so young!”

“My goodness! Honey, your face seems to be whiter and more radiant; even your dark circles have disappeared!”

Everyone was enthusiastically discussing the mind-blowing effects of the drug.

Initially, many had turned up due to Dr. Shane’s reputation. However, now they were completely convinced by the apparent effects of the Immortunol!

“I don’t believe this drug could be so incredible! Seeing everyone’s positive response, Quentin scoffed angrily and stuffed an Immortunol into his mouth.

At that moment, he was dumbstruck.

The indescribable sense of warmth spread throughout his body, strengthening his muscles and boosting his energy. This drug was really out of this world!

“H— how could this be?” Quentin widened his eyes in disbelief. He had initially thought that Natasha was just bluffing.

He didn’t expect that in just a few days, Natasha had actually developed a new medicine.

In addition, the effects of Immortunol far exceeded those of Eternumax!

Realizing this, Quentin suddenly turned pale and turned to Mr. Wangley.

“Mr. Wangley! Hurry up and sell the Eternumax at a low price! Sell them all! Don’t leave a single one! If we don’t sell them right now, we’re done for!”

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Chapter 171

At the Hummer family's press conference, the once bustling hall began to slowly empty out.

Initially, everyone was talking about Eternumax, but gradually the conversation switched to another topic.

"Hey, have you heard? The Harmon family also held a press conference to launch their product, Immortunol. They partnered up with Mr. Shane, and its effects are incredible! It's said to be the best supplement ever developed!"

"Is it true? Can it compare to Eternumax?"

"Eternumax is garbage compared to Immortunol! To tell you the truth, my friend's great-aunt just ate one pill of Immortunol, and she jumped out of her wheelchair!"

"Are you exaggerating?"

"Don't believe me? Let's go and see for yourself!"

As news of Immortunol spread, more and more people left to gather at the Harmon family's press conference. In contrast, the number of people at the Hummer family's conference dwindled. Gradually, Edwin finally realized that something was wrong.

"Butler, what's going on? Why did the number of our guests suddenly decrease so much?" Edwin asked.

"I don't know, it's strange." The butler was puzzled by the situation.

"What are you standing there for? Go and find out!" Edwin snapped.

"Yes, sir!" The butler dared not hesitate and ran out in a hurry.

He returned after a moment, sweating profusely. "Sir Hummer! Something terrible happened! Natasha is holding a press conference to launch a new product."

t called Immortunol. Those missing guests have all gone over to their conference!”

“What? We’ve been going all out on marketing and promotion. How could Natasha have the ability to steal my clients?” Edwin’s face darkened.

“It’s because of Dr. Shane! It’s said that Immortunol was developed by the Harmon family and Dr. Shane, so people are flocking to it!” The butler wiped away his sweat.

“Dr. Shane? Let’s go and take a look for ourselves!” Edwin frowned.

At this moment, he couldn’t suppress his curiosity any longer.

Eternumax was the result of years of research by the Harmon family, and it was top secret. Even if it was Dr. Shane, he couldn’t develop a new medicine comparable to Eternumax in just a few days!

When Edwin arrived, he was shocked by the scene before him. He realized that the Harmon family’s press conference was far more lively than his own.

All the bigwigs and celebrities had turned up. Most importantly, everyone who had tried Immortunol gave it high praise.

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Edwin was curious and stopped a young man, who was passing by. “Young man, did you try the Immortunol?”

“Yes, I did. What’s wrong?” The young man nodded.

“What do you think of the effects of the medicine?”

“What do I think about it? Of course, I feel like I’m on top of the world!”

“Is it really that powerful? How does it compare to Eternumax?”

“Eternumax? No one would eat that now!” The young man chuckled.

Edwin froze, his eyes twitching frantically. Unwilling to accept it, he asked several more people in succession.

They all said the same thing.

“Impossible!”

“How could a new medicine like Immortunol compare to Eternumax?”

Edwin frowned deeply, still unconvinced.

As he looked around at the people praising Immortunol, he couldn't help feeling a little annoyed.

After thinking for a moment, Edwin whispered a few words to his butler, who nodded and left immediately.

As time passed, the conference at the Hummer family gradually quieted down.

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Chapter 172

Meanwhile, the atmosphere at the Harmon family's press conference became increasingly lively.

Just when Natasha thought that everything was going smoothly, a scream suddenly rang out from the crowd.

Everyone turned to look. An old man had suddenly collapsed to the ground, convulsing and foaming at the mouth. Within moments, he was unconscious.

“Dad! What's wrong with you? Please get up!” Cried a middle-aged man next to him, panic-stricken.

“I'm a doctor, let me take a look!” A bald man quickly stepped forward to check the old man's breathing and pulse. With a sigh, he shook his head. “He's already dead.”

“Dead?” Everyone was shocked by the news.

“How could this happen? He seemed perfectly fine just a moment ago.”

“Who knows? He looked energetic: it’s so strange that he died suddenly.”

“Could it be a heart attack?”

Whispers and murmurs of suspicion filled the air.

“It can’t be! My dad couldn’t have died! We made sure he had regular checkups, and he was always healthy!”

The middle-aged man sobbed.

“It looks like he might have been poisoned. Did he eat anything earlier?” The bald doctor asked.

“We didn’t eat anything today. The middle-aged man trailed off before suddenly remembering something.

Wait! My dad took Immortunol earlier, and now he is dead! The medicine must be toxic!”

“Toxic?” Everyone was shocked to hear this. After all, they had all taken the same medicine earlier.

“How could this be?” Natasha frowned.

Having such an incident during the press conference was not a good sign. Regardless of whether the old man’s death was related to Immortunol, it would have a huge impact on Harmon Pharmaceutical’s reputation.

Once the label “toxic” was attached to Immortunol, it would not be able to sell at all.

“It’s all because of you! It’s all your fault! You killed my father by selling fake medicine! You owe me his life!” The middle-aged man stood up and roared at Natasha.

He rushed forward to attack her but was stopped by the Harmon family’s body guards.

“The cause of your father’s death is not clear yet. Whether it is related to Immortunol still needs further investigation,” Natasha said sternly.

“There’s nothing more to investigate! Everyone saw it clearly just now. My father was healthy before he took your medicine. After taking it, he suddenly died!” The man shouted.

“My father was killed by you! You wicked businesswoman! You look my father’s life!” He kneeled beside the body, crying bitterly.

1/2

“My poor father, you died in vain! I’m sorry that I couldn’t avenge your death. I hope that they will get divine retribution from the heavens!”

It was a heart-wrenching sight that moved everyone to tears.

At that moment, everyone turned to Natasha. Their gazes had changed from ones of respect to ones of scorn.

“Natasha! I never knew you were such a despicable person. For the sake of profit, you would actually sell fake medicine!” Quentin jumped to his feet and accused her loudly.

“Stop talking nonsense. Immortunol is not poisonous. Natasha frowned.

*Then how do you explain the old man’s sudden death after taking your medicine?” Quentin pressed.

“Natasha was at a loss for words.

“The old man’s death has nothing to do with Immortunol,” Dustin spoke up. He had been watching from the side all along.

“Who are you to say that the medicine is not at fault?” Quentin retorted coldly.

“I can show you that the medicine had nothing to do with his death. If you don’t believe me, I can ask the old man personally.” Dustin stepped forward with a calm expression.

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Chapter 173

“Ask the old man?” Quentin first looked stunned, then his face darkened.

“Punk! Do you think I’m an idiot? The old man is already dead; how could you ask him anything?”

“He may be dead, but his body is still warm. Coincidentally, I have a way to bring the dead back to life.” Dustin smiled faintly.

“Nonsense! Do you think you’re a god? Bring the dead back to life? Why don’t you say you know how to fly?” Quentin sneered.

“Who is this young man? How dare he speak so arrogantly?”

“Yeah! Even Dr. Shane wouldn’t dare say that he could bring the dead back to life. This kid is really too

conceited!”

“In my opinion, he just wants to show off in front of Ms. Harmon and impress her.”

In response to Dustin’s words, the people around him were filled with scorn.

The old man was already dead, how could he bring a dead person back to life? Wasn’t he spouting nonsense?

“Whether it’s nonsense or not, we’ll find out soon enough.” Dustin didn’t explain further and walked up to the

old man.

“Hey! What are you doing? I’m warning you—don’t mess around with me! My father’s body is still warm, so no one can touch him. I’ve reported this to the authorities, and the police will be here soon!” The middle-aged

man looked wary.

“Don’t be so agitated, I just want to take a look at your father. Maybe I can give you the justice you deserve!”

Dustin said.

“I don’t even know who you are, why should I let you examine him?” The middle-aged man shouted.

“Mr. Rhys is the chief physician of Harmon Pharmaceuticals. If your father really had an accident because of ingesting Immortunol, we are willing to take full responsibility,” Natasha spoke up.

Although she didn’t know what Dustin was going to do, she supported him unconditionally.

“If he’s a doctor, then let him take a look.”

“If it’s really Immortunol that killed him, we can testify for you!”

Many others chimed in as well.

Dustin piped up when he saw the man’s hesitation, “What, do you want your father to die under such vague

circumstances?”

“Alright! I look forward to seeing what tricks you can play!” The middle-aged man gritted his teeth and stepped

aside.

Dustin squatted down and examined the body briefly. “There’s no breath or pulse. It seems like this old man is truly dead. Since the deceased is foaming at the mouth, it appears to be a case of death due to poisoning.”

1/3

Chapter 173

“Listen! Did you all hear that? Even the Harmon family’s physician said it was death by poisoning! My father was poisoned to death by Immortunol!” The middle-aged man shouted.

As soon as the people heard his claims, their faces were filled with shock. They started pointing fingers at Natasha and whispering in hushed voices, their eyes full of suspicion.

“Dustin! What nonsense are you talking about?! Did you even do a proper examination? You are obviously trying to throw the Harmons” under the bus!” Jessica hissed under her breath.

She couldn't help but suspect that Dustin was a spy planted by the Hummer family. In such a critical moment,

he actually said that the old man died of poisoning.

Wasn't he just adding fuel to the fire?

“Cousin, it seems like your little boyfriend here has rocks in his head. With his statement, he is confirming that you did sell fake medicine, which caused someone's death!” Quentin almost laughed out loud.

Could such stupid people actually exist? He was just making matters worse!

“What an interesting development...” Edwin smirked to himself as he stood among the crowd.

He couldn't believe that Dustin would add insult to injury. This was more than what he expected!

“Based on your reactions, I believe you all trust what I said, right?” Dustin stared directly at the man.

“We believe it! Of course, we believe it! You are an honest and upright man by publicly exposing the dark side of the Harmon family!” The middle-aged man nodded vigorously.

While he was praising Dustin, the man couldn't hide the faint smile on his lips. Although his smile quickly disappeared, it was still caught by Dustin.

“Now that you believe me, I'm going to save your father,” Dustin declared with a cheeky smile.

“Save? My father is already dead; how can you save him?” The middle-aged man was stunned.

“I have my ways,” Dustin said.

All of a sudden, he slapped the old man’s face. There was a loud crack as the old man’s dentures flew out and

fell directly into someone’s glass.

Before everyone could react, Dustin continued slapping the old man until his cheeks were swollen and his

nose was bleeding.

“Hey! Are you crazy? Why are you hitting my father?” The man’s face turned as pale as a sheet.

“I’m trying to save your father. This is a secret technique that can bring people back from the dead. You shall see for yourself soon,” Dustin said as he slapped the old man a few more times, increasing the intensity.

The old man’s head swelled up like a balloon from Dustin’s assault. Tears were flowing down his cheeks.

“Stop it! You lunatic, stop it!” The middle-aged man was furious and rushed forward to hit Dustin, but Dustin

pushed him away easily.

“Is this guy a real doctor? I’ve never seen such a way of saving people before.”

2/3

“What bizarre technique is this? He’s clearly just beating up a dead body!”

“Is he insane? How could the doctor beat up the old man so violently when he is already dead?”

“The doctor’s character is corrupt! The Harmon family is completely rotten to the core! What is the world coming to?”

In response to Dustin’s absurd behavior, the crowd began condemning him, filled with righteous indignation.

The deceased should be respected!

Beating up a corpse like this was simply inhumane!

“This guy’s crazy! He’s beating up my father’s corpse! The Harmon family killed my father, and now they are treating his body with disrespect! Is there anyone who can help me?” The middle-aged man slumped on the ground, crying bitterly.

“Dustin, stop it!” Jessica’s face turned pale.

“He’s gone mad! This guy is out of his mind!” Quentin shook his head.

“What’s going on?” Ruth was stunned.

“This is getting more and more interesting.” Edwin gloated.

Just as everyone thought that Dustin had gone insane, there was suddenly a cry of surprise from the crowd.

“Hey, I think I just saw the dead man’s finger move!”

“Did you see it too? I thought I was seeing things.”

“Not only did his fingers move, but look! Tears are flowing out of his eyes too.”

Incredulous, the crowd noticed something strange about the dead body.

Everyone looked at each other in confusion. Could slapping someone’s face really bring them back from the dead?

“He’s pretty resilient.” Dustin sneered as he stopped the assault.

“It seems like I need to go all out to wake him up. Ruth, bring me my knife, the one I used to slaughter pigs. I would have to make a cut on his head to bring him back to life.”

As soon as these words were spoken, the ‘corpse’ on the ground couldn’t bear it any longer and sat up with a

scream.

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Chapter 174

When the old man suddenly sat up, all the guests were startled. Some of the women screamed frantically,

losing their composure.

“It’s a zombie!”

Shocked to the core, the crowd scattered in all directions. No one expected that the motionless corpse would

suddenly spring to life.

It was such a terrifying moment!

“Dad? Y—you’re not dead?” The middle-aged man pretended to be shocked.

“Yes, I’m not dead.” The old man gave a forced smile.

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His voice was slurred as his dentures were knocked out. Combined with his swollen cheeks, the old man

a comical sight.

“Oh my god! This young man could even revive the dead! How could this be?”

“No words could express my amazement right now!”

“What a strange way to treat people! Are medical techniques nowadays getting more straightforward?”

Staring at the old man, who was obviously alive and kicking, there was pandemonium in the hall. Some of the onlookers were shocked, and some were curious.

“Hey, I saved your father’s life! Is it too much to ask for you to show some gratitude?” Dustin smirked.

“You bastard! Even if my father survived this ordeal, it’s because of his good luck! It doesn’t change the fact that Immortunol is poisonous!” The middle-aged man was livid.

“That’s right! I almost died after eating your medicine. Now, I’m still feeling sore all over!” The old man gritted his teeth and looked resentful.

After enduring such a fierce beating, he couldn’t let Dustin go without extorting sufficient compensation.

“Oh? Where else do you feel uncomfortable? Let me have a look.” Dustin stepped forward.

In fright, the old man backed away repeatedly. “What are you doing? I’m warning you, stay away from me!”

“Don’t be nervous! Your illness is not fully cured yet, as you have just regained consciousness. Here, let me diagnose you for a complete recovery, just in case.” Dustin smiled.

“Dustin, the knife you wanted is here!” At that moment, Ruth ran over excitedly. In her hand was a large kitchen

knife that she somehow managed to find.

“Perfect timing. Although it’s bigger than what I’m used to, it’s just right to crack open a skull” Dustin took the

kitchen knife and swung it around.

“Crack open my skull?!” Hearing this, the old man trembled all over. “Son, let’s not waste any more time! I think

I need to go to the hospital for a full examination right away!”

“Oh, right! Of course, we have to go to the hospital first!” Seeing the unfavorable situation, the middle-aged man quickly helped the old man to his feet and tried to run away inconspicuously.

“Did I say you could go?” Dustin took a step forward and grabbed the old man by his hair, pulling him back.

“I always treat my patients to the best of my ability, even after their deaths.” How can I ignore it when you are so sick?” With that, he started brandishing the kitchen knife back and forth.

“Don’t, don’t! I’m not sick, I’ve already recovered!” The old man shivered in fright.

“Don’t be stubborn: your illness is life-threatening. Everyone witnessed it just now.” Dustin said earnestly.

“That’s right, old man. If you’re sick, you should seek treatment as soon as possible. You shouldn’t refuse his good intentions!” Someone piped up.

“That’s right, this young man is highly skilled in medicine. You should trust him. Nothing bad will happen.” The others agreed and began to persuade the old man.

“I’m fine; I’m really fine.” The old man shook his head frantically, tears streaming down his face.

“Lie down and don’t move. Let me see where to make the first incision,” Dustin ordered, pinning the helpless old man down.

“Let him go immediately! You’re committing murder!” The middle-aged man panicked and tried to stop Dustin. but was held back by several bodyguards.

“According to my diagnosis, you are in grave condition! Let’s start by cracking your skull open, and then we will move on to cutting your abdomen...” Dustin trailed off, lifting his knife to strike.

“Wait! I’m not sick, I’m really not! Someone paid me to pretend to be dead!” Realizing his life was at stake, the old man finally revealed the truth with a wail.

“He was paid off?”

“Pretended to be dead?”

As soon as everyone heard this, their faces went red with fury and outrage.

“What a bunch of scammers! How dare you have the audacity to cause trouble here?”

“I can’t believe I felt sorry for you just now. It turns out that you’re all liars!”

“Young man, just chop them up. Trash like them deserves to die!”

After learning the truth, the crowd erupted into chaos. Some of them even threatened to get physical.

“Tell me, who put you up to this?” Dustin held his knife to the old man’s neck.

“I don’t know, we were just paid to do this. We don’t know anything else.” The old man shook his head.

“Please spare us, we won’t do this again.” The middle-aged man spoke up, frightened for his life.

They were just scoundrels who preyed on the weak. Once their true identities were exposed, they lost all their courage.

“Take these troublemakers away!” At Natasha’s command, the two were quickly taken away.

She didn’t need an answer. She already knew who was behind all this.

“Useless idiots!” In the crowd, Edwin snorted coldly and left.

He knew he had lost today. All his schemes had come to nothing.

“It’s over, we’re done for.” Quentin’s face was pale with despair. The initial glimmer of hope was instantly dashed in the blink of an eye.

If Immortunol was successfully launched, how could he sell his Eternumax?

He had put in his entire fortune!

“Dustin, how did you know that the old man was pretending to be dead? I saw that he wasn’t breathing.” Ruth couldn’t help but ask out of curiosity.

“That old man was using a technique called Breath-holding; that’s why he could pretend to be dead. I’m familiar with many of these tricks used by scammers everywhere, it’s not even worth mentioning.” Dustin replied with a faint smile.

“Oh, I see. It’s a good thing you figured it out, or else things would have gone terribly today!” Ruth patted her chest in relief.

“Mr. Rhys, you are indeed amazing. You exposed the deception of those two ruffians effortlessly! My

admiration for you is immeasurable!” At that moment, Malcolm came over to flatter Dustin.

Just sitting there quietly wasn’t really his thing.

“Dr. Shane, he just stumbled upon the solution by chance. How can you lower yourself to his level?” Jessica gave Dustin a cold glance before smiling at Dr. Shane. “If it weren’t for your help in developing Immortunol, the Harmon family would be in huge trouble! You are the biggest hero of the day!”

“What are you talking about? Who said I developed the Immortunol?” Malcolm frowned.

“What?” Jessica was momentarily stunned. She exclaimed, “Who else has the ability to do that besides you?”

“You really have no eye for talent! The mastermind behind Immortunol is none other than Mr. Rhys beside you!

*Malcolm rolled his eyes.

“What?” At this revelation, Jessica was instantly dumbfounded.

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Chapter 175

After a stormy event, the Harmon family’s press conference ended successfully.

On the other hand, the influential Hummer family's press conference ended in dismal failure.

The emergence of Immortunol dealt a huge blow to the sales of Eternumax. Compared to another medicine with better efficacy and a cheaper price, Eternumax was regarded as garbage.

The Hummer family's Eternumax couldn't be sold at all. In the end, they were stuck with piles of rotting inventory. The meticulous game planned by Edwin was a complete failure.

Although this disaster was unable to weaken the Hummer family's foundation, it still caused them heavy losses.

After the press conference, Dustin was about to say goodbye when he was stopped by Ruth at the door,

"Dustin, I need a favor from you."

"What is it?" Dustin asked suspiciously.

"I'm going to a reunion with some of my classmates later, can you come with me and be my bodyguard?" Ruth

was very straightforward.

"The Harmon family has so many bodyguards, why do you need me? I'm not interested," Dustin refused.

"How can those men compare to you? Well, to be honest with you, there's a really annoying guy among my

classmates who's been pursuing me. I told him I have a boyfriend, but he doesn't believe me. That's why I

need you to come along." Ruth pouted.

"In conclusion, you're just using me as an excuse! That makes me even less interested." Dustin shrugged.

"Hey! I consider you a friend, and you won't even help me with this small matter? Where's your loyalty?" Ruth had a displeased expression on her face.

“What do you mean? Don’t talk nonsense! Dustin’s expression changed as he looked around nervously.

“Don’t pretend you didn’t hear me!” Ruth crossed her arms smugly.

Dustin opened his mouth to explain, but Ruth interrupted him. “I don’t care! If you don’t help me out, I’ll tell my

mom!”

“What?” Dustin nodded in alarm. “Alright, alright. I’ll just keep you company. Are you happy now?”

He didn’t expect this little girl to resort to such a move. He really had to admire her persistence.

“That’s more like it!” Ruth smirked and pulled Dustin out the door.

It was the evening at the Phoenix Karaoke, in a private room.

Sheila sat on the sofa listlessly, propping her chin on her hands.

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Before her, a group of young men and women were singing and rapping, having a great time.

*Sheila, you said you were bored out of your mind in the villa. I took a huge risk to bring you out, but why are you still being mopey?” Claudia, who was sitting next to her, couldn’t help feeling puzzled.

Ever since her illness was cured, Sheila, who was usually lively and cheerful, seemed to be acting weird.

These past two days, she had no appetite and seemed to wander around mindlessly.

“Maybe my body hasn’t fully recovered yet,” Sheila lazily replied.

“Is that so?” Claudia looked skeptical.

“Sheila, can I ask you something?” At that moment, a young man suddenly cut in with a bright smile. “Did you inform Ruth about this gathering? I haven’t been able to contact her lately.”

“Of course I did. We’re all good friends, how could I leave her out?” Sheila nodded.

“That’s great. It’s been a while since I’ve last seen Ruth, I wonder how she is doing?” The young man smiled in relief.

“Nigel I advise you to give up on Ruth. She’s not interested in you.” Sheila was very straightforward.

“Where there’s a will, there’s a way. Maybe one day, Ruth will be moved by my true feelings.” Nigel wasn’t perturbed at all.

“True feelings? Nigel you seem to have a new girlfriend every month. It’s possible that you change girlfriends as frequently as someone changes clothes.” Claudia sneered.

“Claudia! Don’t talk nonsense, I’m a loyal person!” Nigel looked embarrassed.

“Okay, okay! You’re loyal, you’re not a playboy.” Claudia didn’t bother to argue.

Her duty was to protect Sheila. She had no interest in the love affairs of these young men and women.

Just as they were talking, the door to the private room suddenly opened.

Ruth, who was dressed luxuriously, entered the room, followed closely by Dustin.

“Ruth, you’re finally here! Please, have a seat!” Nigel was overjoyed when he saw Ruth arrive. He quickly poured Ruth a glass of juice, fawning over her.

“Dustin?” Sheila exclaimed and stood up suddenly..

Her overreaction took Claudia by surprise. Why was she so energetic all of a sudden?

Following her gaze, Claudia noticed Dustin standing there. She couldn’t help frowning her brows. Could it be

that Sheila liked him?

“Dustin, why are you here?” Sheila greeted him with joy, to the point of ignoring Ruth’s presence.

“Ms. Murray?” Dustin was slightly surprised. What a coincidence! He didn’t expect to meet her here.

“Sheila, do you two know each other?” Ruth stared at the both of them in astonishment.

“I had fallen ill two days ago. It was Dustin who saved me!” Sheila smiled sweetly.

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“Is that so? As fate would have it, both of you have met again!” Ruth had a meaningful smile on her face as well.

“Yes, it must be destiny!” Sheila nodded energetically. She completely forgot about being bored.

“Ruth, who is this guy? I haven’t seen him around before.” Nigel narrowed his eyes and stared at Dustin with an unfriendly expression.

Two beautiful women were both fussing around Dustin and being so affectionate with him.

This made Nigel green with envy.

“Oh, I forgot to introduce him. This is my boyfriend, Dustin.” Ruth raised her chin proudly.

“Boyfriend?” Upon hearing this, Nigel’s face darkened,

As for Sheila, the happiness she had shown earlier was instantly replaced by disappointment and sadness.

Who knew that Dustin had already been taken by her good friend?

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“Ruth, when did you get a boyfriend? Why wasn’t I informed?” Nigel’s face turned ugly as he stared at Dustin

with hostility.

“Do I need to report to you when I have a boyfriend? You really think too highly of yourself.” Ruth rolled her eyes. She had already rejected Nigel multiple times, but he just wouldn’t give up and continued to pester her.

“I’m just worried that you might be deceived. There are a lot of con artists these days who use their good looks to cheat people out of their wealth.” Nigel said in a mocking tone.

“That’s not true! Dustin is not a con man!” Sheila quickly defended him.

When everyone fixed their gazes on her, Sheila realized that she had spoken out of turn and immediately shut

her mouth.

“Ms. Murray, what’s with the sachet on your neck?” Dustin suddenly noticed something unusual.

“Is there a problem?” Sheila picked up the sachet and examined it.

“Throw it away. It’s a little suspicious.” Dustin shook his head.

“Hey, what do you mean? This aromatic sachet can calm the mind and improve sleep. How suspicious can it be?” Claudia was displeased.

“I’m just telling the truth, Dustin replied calmly.

“If you’re not sure, then shut up and stop being a smart aleck!” Claudia didn’t mince her words.

“Claudia!” Sheila pouted in annoyance.

“Alright, alright. It’s just a sachet. What’s there to argue about? Come on, let’s sit down and enjoy ourselves.”

Ruth pulled Sheila to sit down beside her and started chattering away.

Dustin was left feeling a little left out.

Claudia glared at him and turned away in a huff. For some reason, she always felt uneasy around Dustin.

“Claudia, who is this guy anyway?” Nigel narrowed his eyes at Dustin.

“He’s nothing special, just a doctor from the countryside. If you really want to know about him, he’s skilled in the use of obscure hidden weapons,” Claudia said coldly.

“I thought he was some big shot. Turns out, he’s just a doctor. Hey, you there! Don’t blame me for not warning you, you won’t fit in our circle. If you have some brains, you’ll leave on your own initiative!” Nigel sneered with disdain.

“That’s right, a burn like you doesn’t deserve to be Ruth’s boyfriend, let alone compete with Mr. Lincoln!”

Another girl dressed in yellow taunted Dustin.

“Oh, so what?” Dustin remained expressionless.

“So, you better have some self-awareness. Don’t embarrass yourself. Do you see the Patek Philippe watch on Mr. Lincoln’s wrist? You’ll never earn that much money in your lifetime!”

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“Oh, so what?”

“It seems like you still can’t comprehend Mr. Lincoln’s background. Let me educate you then. Mr. Lincoln’s family dabbles in real estate located within Millsburg, owning assets worth several billion dollars. Their family’s network is spread throughout the marketplace and the underworld.” The girl in yellow said arrogantly.

“Oh, so what?”

“Not only does Mr. Lincoln have a strong family background, but he’s also extremely outstanding. He

graduated from Oxford University and earns millions of dollars every year. Besides that, he has practiced martial arts since a young age. Due to his natural talents, he was invited to be a member of the Martial Arts

Association. He’s truly accomplished in both literature and martial arts!”

“Oh, so what?”

“With Mr. Lincoln’s identity and abilities, he is in the spotlight wherever he goes. A loser like you can never

compare to him!”

“Oh, so what?”

“Hey, can’t you say anything else?”

“Oh, so what?” The girl in yellow rolled her eyes. Her face turned red with anger and disgust. It was so damn

infuriating to talk to this guy!

“Punk, you’ve got a sharp tongue, but what good does it do? You will always be inferior to me in every way. In

the face of my complete dominance, sweet talk and flattery will get you nowhere!” Nigel sneered.

“Oh, so what?” Dustin retorted.

“You...” Nigel’s mouth twitched, feeling annoyed.

Damn it, why was this punk repeating the same sentence over and over again?

Couldn’t they have a decent conversation?

Just as they were talking, they were interrupted by a commotion outside the door.

“Stop right there! This place has been booked for another event. Everyone who is not involved, please leave-!”

“Surround them! Don’t let anyone escape!”

Amidst curdling screams and cries, the door to the private room burst open.

A group of masked assassins dressed in black rushed in with an imposing aura. The bodyguards guarding the

door were all taken out.

“Who are you people? Who let you in? Get out!” The girl in yellow stood up angrily.

“Fuck you!” The assassins’ leader slapped her and sent her flying.

“What arrogance! How dare you have the audacity to stir up trouble here?” Nigel jumped up in a rage.

“Our target is Sheila Murray. Anyone who is not involved, get out of here!” The assassins’ leader shouted.

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“What?” Claudia frowned, on high alert. Judging from their attire, these assassins were most likely the same

ones who ambushed them a few days ago.

“Bastards, who do you think you are, demanding to hand Sheila over? If you don’t want to die, get the hell out

of here!” Nigel’s gaze was ferocious.

“What, are you trying to save the damsel in distress?” The assassins’ leader eyed Nigel carefully.

“So what if I do?” Nigel puffed out his chest.

“You foolish idiot! Kill him!” The leader ordered his men without hesitation.

“Yes, sir!” The other assassins drew their swords and attacked Nigel.

“How dare you show off such petty tricks in front of me?” Nigel laughed coldly.

He rushed towards the assassins and gave them a roundhouse kick in the gut s. His attack was swift and

vicious. In a matter of seconds, he had defeated all of the assassins.

After finishing them off, he struck a confident pose.

“Oh my god! Mr. Lincoln is amazing!”

Everyone’s spirits were lifted upon seeing his victory. Some of the girls couldn’t help but scream with

adoration on their faces.

“These punks are no match for me! Nigel turned around and flashed a handsome smile to his fans.

However, at the next second, a fist the size of a sandbag hit him square in the face.

Nigel was caught by surprise. The attack caused him to become disoriented and his nose to bleed profusely.

Nigel’s high spirits were short-lived.

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There was pin-drop silence in the private room.

At a loss for words, everyone was aghast at what had happened. No one expected the twist of events.

Just a minute ago. Nigel was their hero, flaunting his strength and skills, but now he was lying helplessly on the ground like a dead dog.

How could this bald guy be so powerful?

"H—how dare you hurt me? Do you know who I am? I'm Nigel Lin—"

"Shut the hell up!" With a crack, the bald man stepped on Nigel's leg and broke it.

Nigel wailed in pain, with cold sweat appearing on his forehead.

"If you've got the nerve, tell me your names!" Nigel gritted his teeth, his eyes flashing with rage.

"Listen up! My name is Brent Garcia, and this is my brother, Wade Garcia!" The bald man in green announced loudly.

"Brent Garcia, Wade Garcia? Could it be...are you guys the Four Scoundrels?" Nigel's pupils shrank in fear.

"The Four Scoundrels!" Everyone was shocked at the revelation.

The Four Scoundrels was a notorious group of merciless and vicious outlaws that terrorized the Southern

province.

These ruffians were infamous for their ruthlessness, and they would stop at nothing to achieve their goals!

Wherever they went, destruction and calamity followed. Countless elites in the Southern province were terrified of the Four Scoundrels, living in constant fear and anxiety.

After learning the identities of the two men, all the girls panicked.

"This is bad!" Claudia furrowed her brows.

The Four Scoundrels were all martial artists with incredible internal energy. Brent and Wade were said to be

even stronger than Thor.

It was already difficult enough to deal with one person.

Now, there were two of them at the same time, undoubtedly making things worse. If she were alone, she might

still have a chance to escape.

The problem was that she had to protect Sheila as well.

With her previous injuries, Claudia had no chance of winning if she had to go up against two villains

simultaneously.

"Brent! I'm warning you, everyone here is of elite status. You'd better not mess around!" Nigel shouted bravely.

"Who cares if we cause trouble? You're nothing but a piece of shit!" Brent kicked Nigel forcefully, sending him

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flying into the crowd.

Amidst the screaming and chaos, Claudia suddenly sprang into action!

She drew her dagger and lunged like a cheetah toward Brent's throat, hoping to take out one of the two

opponents.

In a fair fight, she knew that she was no match for either of them.

By taking out one person, her chances of winning would significantly increase!

Although it was a good plan, Brent was no fool.

As the dagger came at him, he quickly dodged aside and slammed his shoulder into Claudia's chest.

She grunted and staggered back, but before she could regain her footing, Brent punched her again with tremendous force.

Desperately, Claudia lifted her arm to block the blow. There was a loud thud as Claudia was thrown back once

more.

Her arm hanging limply, she spat out a mouthful of blood. Her internal injuries had opened up again.

"Ms. Doyle, if you were at full strength, you might be able to put up a fight with me for a few rounds. In this state, however, I suggest you surrender," Brent sneered at her.

Claudia's face darkened, and she rushed at him again with her dagger.

After they exchanged blows for a few rounds, Claudia was punched heavily in the stomach.

She fell to the ground, unable to stand on her feet.

"It's over, it's all over!"

"Even Mr. Lincoln and Ms. Doyle were defeated. Who else can stop them?"

"What should we do? I don't want to die!"

Seeing Claudia defeated, the girls were on the verge of tears. Their last glimmer of hope was now gone.

"Wade, take Ms. Murray away. I want to have some fun with the beautiful ladies here first," Brent said with a wicked grin.

"Listen up. all of you. If you don't want to die, take off your clothes. Otherwise, you'll have to bear the consequences of inciting my anger!" As soon as he spoke, all the girls turned pale with fear.

Were they going to be violated by this pervert?

"Ms. Murray, come with me." Wade, the bald guy in black, stepped forward and approached Sheila.

"Stop right there!" Suddenly, Ruth grabbed a fruit knife and stood in front of Sheila.

"I'm warning you, don't come any closer, or I'll stab you!"

"Get lost!" Without saying another word, Wade swung his hand toward Ruth.

The energy gathered around Wade's hand was strong enough to whip up a wind around them.

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At the crucial moment, a hand suddenly reached out and grabbed Wade's wrist. Wade's palm was frozen,

inches from Ruth's face.

"You can bully the others, but you can't touch these two," Dustin said calmly.

"How dare you meddle in other people's business? You're asking for it!" Wade's expression turned ugly, and he

raised his other fist to strike at Dustin's head.

Dustin snorted lightly and made the first move. He punched Wade in the chest, his moves as quick as

lightning.

With a dull thud, an invisible beam of energy pierced through Wade's back, shattering a wine bottle several

feet away.

Wade shuddered and slumped to the ground, unconscious.

"Wade!" Brent's face contorted with anger.

"How dare you hurt my brother? I'll send you to hell!" He charged forward like a wild bull and threw a punch directly at Dustin's face.

Dustin caught his fist with one hand and squeezed it gently.

With a loud crack, the bones in Brent's fist shattered. Blood and flesh splattered everywhere.

Before he could register the pain. Dustin grabbed his collar and slammed him hard against the wall like a sandbag, creating a gaping hole.

Brent hung helplessly on the wall, bleeding profusely and unable to move.

"I wanted to have a decent conversation with you guys, but you had to resort to violence." Dustin patted the dirt off his clothes indifferently, as if defeating both of the bald guys was a trivial matter.

Everyone present was dumbfounded and stunned at Dustin's nonchalance, including Sheila, Claudia, and

Nigel.

Dustin managed to defeat both of them with just two moves.

It was unthinkable that two of the invincible Four Scoundrels would be trounced and beaten up by a thin, frail guy like Dustin.

Were they dreaming?

Was he the cowardly and useless guy they were making fun of before?

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“H—how was this possible?!” Nigel gasped, his mouth wide and his face full of disbelief.

He finally witnessed how formidable the Four Scoundrels were in person. Either one of them could quickly

snuff him out.

It was perhaps fate that an expert like himself had been crippled by a doctor they looked down upon.

Such a thing was practically unheard of!

“How is this guy so powerful?” Claudia’s eyes widened in shock and bewilderment.

Initially, she had assumed that Dustin was an unsavory character who only knew how to resort to using dirty tricks up his sleeve, so she hadn’t expected him to be so skilled in martial arts.

He was miles better than her!

He wielded such strength at such a young age, too. She was frozen on the spot once the revelation hit her that she was no longer a goddess among men.

“Dustin’s way too cool!” Sheila cheered as her eyes sparkled.

After exchanging glances with one another, the rest of the girls also started looking at him in a different light.

Not used to everyone's starstruck gazes on him, Dustin walked up to Brent before asking. "Tell me, who sent you here?"

"Today's my day of reckoning anyway, so kill me all you want!" Brent screamed through gritted teeth.

"It's not like killing you guys will do me any good anyways. As long as you're willing to talk, I'll let you all live to see another day." Dustin said.

"I'll die either way if I reveal anything!" Brent replied solemnly.

"You're referring to the spider venom in your stomach, right?" Dustin asked with raised eyebrows. He then pulled out a golden needle and stabbed it directly into Brent's abdomen,

Immediately, a bulge was seen on Brent's abdomen. The bulge began moving violently as if something inside him was fighting for their lives.

A few exhales later, the writhing stopped, and the bulge could no longer be seen moving.

When Dustin pulled out the golden needle, it was now stained with a sliver of blackish liquid.

"The venom is gone. You should be able to speak now," Dustin said flatly.

"H— how did you do that?" Brent gasped, and his expression immediately turned into one that was fearful and

horrified.

That was because the Four Scoundrels had actually been controlled by someone who led them venom all this time. The mere thought of resistance could inflict pain that was worse than death on the host.

They had tried various ways to get rid of the venom, but not only did none of them have the slightest effect,

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they even aggravated the pain.

However, the person in front of him had gotten rid of the spider venom in his body with a mere needle.

These kinds of miraculous means were simply unheard of!

“I’m skilled in the art of poisons and venom, so if you wish to regain your freedom, you need to be honest and

tell me everything.” Dustin stated indifferently.

After hesitating for a long while. Brent finally compromised, saying, “Fine, I’ll tell you the truth, but you must

promise to spare the both of us,”

Which sensible human would choose death over life?

“Done.” Dustin nodded his head.

“To be honest with you, the person who ordered us to kidnap you was- Before Brent could finish his

sentence, the doors to the room were forcefully kicked open.

Xavier rushed hastily inside the room with a group of elite guards. He scanned the room and quickly found

Brent.

“It’s the Four Scoundrels again! Prepare to die!” Without waiting for the crowd to react. Xavier bashed Brent’s

skull in with his fists.

He was swift and brutal. Now, his hands were drenched in blood.

“Huh?” Dustin narrowed his eyes.

Did Xavier just kill him to silence him?

“Sheila! Claudia! Are you guys alright?” Right after killing Brent. Xavier immediately turned around and asked Sheila and Claudia while wiping the blood off his hands.

“We’re fine. It was a good thing Dustin came to our aid just now.” Sheila forced a smile.

“Dustin?” Xavier asked as he suddenly turned his head to look at the man.

“What are you doing here? Xavier asked with a condescending gaze.

“What a coincidence.” Dustin replied indifferently.

“What do you mean, ‘what a coincidence? You were there the last time Sheila got ambushed, and you’re here yet again, so how can this be a coincidence?” Xavier scoffed, glaring down at Dustin.

“Your point exactly?” Dustin shot back.

“I suspect that you colluded with the Four Scoundrels to come up with a plan to get close to Sheila!” Xavier accused.

“I can assure you it’s not like that- Sheila spoke up before being interrupted by Xavier again.

“Don’t be fooled, Sheila! We don’t know where this guy is from or what his intentions are. Thus, he must be interrogated thoroughly for your safety. Apprehend this man for me at once!”

At his command, the group of elite guards proceeded to cock their guns.

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“Stop! I was the one who brought Dustin here, so I can guarantee that he isn’t a bad guy!” Ruth stepped

forward, attempting to mediate the situation.

“Whether he’s a bad guy or not, we’ll know once we catch him!” Xavier retorted.

“Hey, do you still have any sense left in that brain of yours? Can’t you see that you’re being cruel by apprehending an innocent person?” Ruth was getting annoyed with Xavier’s stubbornness.

“Who are you to talk sense to me? Get lost!” Xavier screamed before lifting his hand to give Ruth a hard slap across her face, causing her to stagger and fall to the ground.

Everyone could see five visible, bright red fingerprints on her face.

“Huh?” Dustin gasped as his expression sank. His eyes flashed with anger.

“Are you crazy, Xavier? Why did you hit my friend?!” Sheila scolded Xavier while helping Ruth up.

“I was thinking about your safety, Sheila. I refuse to spare anyone who acts even remotely suspicious! Even if I have to be a villain today, I’ll make sure to get rid of every threat to you! Arrest that punk! Kill him on the spot if he dares to put up a fight!”

At Xavier’s order, all the elite guards attacked Dustin at once.

Dustin merely let out a cold snort and started gesturing with his hands. “Phew! Phew! Phew!”

Golden needles shot out from his hands and accurately navigated their way to the various acupuncture points on the bodies of the guards.

In no time at all all of the guards seemed to be bound by a spell of some sort, as they stood frozen in place,

unable to move.

“Do you want to die?!” Xavier shrieked as a scowl appeared on his face. He then immediately fished out his gun and fired at Dustin’s chest.

However, with a mere flick of a finger, Dustin swiftly sent two needles flying into the air. One needle landed on

Xavier's shoulder, and another landed on his neck.

His body instantly stiffened as his arms and legs became paralyzed, and this made it difficult for him to move

a bit.

"W—what kind of sorcery is this?" Xavier cried, his face full of shock.

He was one of the top martial artists out there, so how could he be rendered immobile by two tiny golden needles just like that?

"Not only are you not that skilled or powerful, you still have the audacity to show up here and start hurling insults and beating the shit out of people? Dustin asked with an icy stare as he slowly approached him.

"Rhys! You'd better let go of me if you know what's good for you, if not, I'll make sure that you never leave here alive!" Xavier sneered fiercely.

"You dare threaten me? This is for speaking out of turn!" Dustin scoffed as he lifted a hand to slap Xavier's face.

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He then gave him another slap. "This is for cursing me!"

After that, he gave him a harsh third slap. "This is for your audacity to even lay a finger on a woman!"

The slapping continued non-stop for a while. Dustin showed no mercy as he kept delivering blow after blow onto Xavier's face. He delivered a slap after every sentence he uttered.

The atmosphere in the room became tenser and tenser by the second.

"And this is for your stupid f*cking face!" Dustin roared as he delivered the most powerful slap he could

muster, smashing Xavier to the ground.

Everyone in the whole room became dead silent for a moment!

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Everyone in the room was flabbergasted as they stared at Xavier, who'd been mercilessly battered and bruised.

No one had expected Dustin to be so bold as to slap Xavier. Everyone knew that the Horst family was among

the five most powerful families in the Southern province.

They were the top of the top! They were essentially untouchable!

As an immediate heir, he was the rising star of the Horst family.

So, no matter where he went, he'd have the stars laid out at his feet.

No one had ever dared to humiliate him in public like this, much less slap him like a maniac so many times.

Was this guy batshit crazy?

"Y—

you dare hit me?" Xavier asked rhetorically. The corners of his eyes started twitching as he tried to put on a fierce expression.

"I'm not just going to beat you, I'm going to make sure you can never use your hands ever again!" Dustin snorted and proceeded to stomp on his wrist, breaking it.

"Argh!" Xavier wailed in pain as he broke out in a cold sweat, his expression twisted.

It was a pity that he couldn't even move a muscle at the moment.

“Stop! Have you lost your mind, Rhys? Do you have any idea who Xavier is? How dare you hurt him?” Claudia

shouted angrily at Dustin.

“I don’t care who he is. Anyone who dares mess with me will get a beating from me,” Dustin replied flatly.

“Didn’t he just slap you, Ruth? Come here and give him ten slaps for me!”

“Okay!” Ruth exclaimed and started adjusting her shirtsleeves before going up to Xavier and slapping the shit

out of him.

“How dare you hit me! How f*cking dare you hit me! I’ll beat your ass up!” Ruth cursed with gritted teeth while

venting her anger as she continued slapping him.

“Stop!” Claudia yelled in rage and immediately stepped in to put a stop to everything.

“Get lost!” Dustin sneered and slapped her after, sending her flying into the air.

“Y— you dare hit me too?” Claudia whimpered while covering her face as if she were in disbelief.

“Don’t you think you deserve it? Dustin let out a snort.

“I saved your life on more than one occasion, and this is how you repay me? You didn’t say a word when Xavier framed me, and you also acted as if nothing had happened when Ruth got slapped. So, why is it that you’re turning against us after seeing Xavier get beaten up? Are all of the families who practice martial arts always this vengeful? Dustin snapped at Claudia.

“I—

“Claudia stuttered as her face turned bright red. She was stunned and speechless after being bombarded

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with a series of valid accusations.

This even caused Sheila to be at a loss for words, as she simply did not know what she should do now. On one hand, there was the savior of her life, and on the other, a long-time friend.

After getting caught up in the middle, she was at a loss for words.

“I’m done with him, Brother-in-law!” Ruth announced after she finally came to a stop. Her hands had become numb from all the brutal slapping.

As for Xavier, his face had long since swollen enough to resemble a pig’s head. He felt dizzy all over, as he

didn’t get any chance to catch his breath the whole time.

“I don’t care what you say. The fact that you laid a finger on Xavier means that you’re now an enemy of the Horst family. I’m afraid no one will be able to save your asses if you don’t state your case right now!” Claudia

shrieked.

Despite everything, the Doyle family had been friends with the Horst family for generations, so she couldn’t possibly stand up for mere outsiders now.

“You want us to state our case, right? Fine, I’ll grant you your wish,” Dustin said and suddenly turned to face

Sheila before continuing. “May I know if the sachet in front of your chest is a gift from Xavier, Miss Murray?”

“I—

I’m not sure. All I know is that Claudia gave it to me.” Sheila said with her head lowered.

“What if I told you it was from Xavier?” Dustin continued to probe.

Claudia felt that she had nothing to hide, so she immediately shot back, “Xavier had to beg an expert to

procure this sachet, and he had me deliver it to Sheila afterward. It was said to aid in one's sleep and nourish

the soul, so why are you finding fault in this?"

"It was said to aid in one's sleep and nourish the soul? What a load of crap!" Dustin snickered before

snatching the sachet off her chest and throwing it into a glass of wine.

"Gurgle gurgle." The sound of bubbles could be heard as the sachet suddenly started expanding in size, as if

hinting that there was something inside.

Immediately after, a thin, red-colored snake slithered out of the sachet and began thrashing about wildly in the wine.

"W-what is that?!"

"It's a snake! My goodness, it's a snake!"

"How horrifying! How can there be a snake inside the sachet? What if it bites someone?"

A sea of horrified looks could be seen almost immediately from the crowd. More and more started to murmur among themselves at the sight before them as their hearts raced with fear.

"How could this be?" Claudia gasped and didn't know how to react to this.

"Do you know what this is, Miss Murray?" Dustin probed while pointing at the small red snake.

Sheila remained frozen on the spot as she shook her head, still reeling from her shock.

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“This is called a Serpent Love Charm and it can be used to confuse people’s minds. Once the snake enters one’s body, the charm will slowly take effect until the host completely falls head over heels for someone. The host’s heart could even stop beating after that!” Dustin explained plainly.

“That was a “Serpent Love Charm“?”

Everyone in the room was stunned after they heard this.

Even Claudia started feeling a little uneasy after hearing that. She did not expect that there would be a Serpent Love Charm inside the sachet.

“I’ve only heard stories about it before, but I didn’t know that such a thing even existed in our world!”

“Utterly ridiculous, right? To think that he put a Serpent Love Charm on her so that he could manipulate her feelings toward him. How shameless!”

“So, Miss Doyle, do you still think that this sachet can aid in one’s sleep and nourish their soul?” Dustin asked sarcastically.

“Well-
..” Claudia frowned, and her gaze subconsciously shifted to Xavier. She couldn’t believe what was happening in front of her right now.

“Stop listening to his nonsense!” Xavier spoke in defense immediately after coming back to his senses.

“What the f*ck is a Serpent Love Charm? I’ve never heard of this in my life! This sachet was gifted to me by someone else! I’m the victim too here!”

“That’s right! Even if there was a Serpent Love Charm in the sachet, that doesn’t prove that Xavier was the one who put it there. For all we know, some bigshot could’ve set him up!” Claudia roared.

“Yeah! Xavier’s always been an upright and honest person, so he would never stoop this low!” Nigel and the others also backed her up.

“Him? ‘Honest’ and ‘upright’? You’ve got to be kidding me!” Dustin snickered.

“The Serpent Love Charm only works if there is a pair of snakes, one female, and one male snake. Now that the female snake has appeared, we’re only missing the male snake. Since you all still don’t believe me,

allow me to show you!” With that, he waved one hand and sent two needles flying toward the arca between Xavier’s chest and abdomen.

His body spasmed as a pained expression took over his face. Soon after, he spat out a dark, black liquid. And thrashing around inside the black liquid was a thicker, reddish snake.

The crowd was dumbfounded the moment they witnessed this!

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Chapter 181

“S—so that was a charm after all?”

Everyone at the scene was frozen in place as they stared at the red snake that Xavier vomited.

One by one, their faces showed looks of disbelief. No one could’ve ever imagined that the esteemed heir of the Horst family, who had a bright and promising future ahead of him, had stooped this low just to court someone.

“Xavier, I never thought you’d be like this!” Claudia yelled angrily in shock.

Who knew that she’d be the one who would be deceived by trusting him too much in the end? She almost

became an accomplice in his schemes too!

“—” Xavier was at a loss for words as his face turned pale.

The truth was already laid bare for all to see, so even if he still insisted on denying it, his attempts would be

absolutely futile.

“Hmph. It’s a good thing Dustin has a good eye to see through your evil schemes. Otherwise, Sheila would’ve

fallen right into your trap!” Ruth spat, her expression full of contempt.

She hated despicable and shameless men like him the most, the type who was incapable of landing a girl for

himself, and yet insisted on using unorthodox methods to do so. Absolutely disgusting!

Sheila said nothing to all of this and merely looked at Xavier with disgust and a heightened sense of

awareness.

“Yeah, so what if I gave her the charm? The only reason I did that was because I liked Sheila so much! I assure you that I’m the only person who’s the best match for Sheila in the entirety of South City, so much so that Uncle Caden already treats me like his son-in-law! I only did this to expedite the marriage between both of our families, so what’s so wrong with that?” Xavier roared, clearly irritated.

“Ugh, you’re such a hypocrite! It still doesn’t change the fact that you had to stoop so low to get what you

want. You’re disgusting!” Ruth spat on the ground.

“What do you know? What I have is true love for Sheila, a love that can’t be compared with anyone else!”

Xavier retorted angrily.

“True love? If it really was true love as you proclaimed, why’d you have to kidnap Miss Murray in the first

place?” Dustin snorted.

“What the f*ck are you talking about, kid?” Xavier scowled.

“Miss Murray had been attacked twice, and your timing was right on the dot, which meant that someone

secretly tipped you off. And as for the Serpent Love Charm and the Spider Venom you put inside the Four

Scoundrel’s bodies, they both came from the same person. So, I’ve concluded that you have close ties to the Four Scoundrels,” Dustin explained as a matter of factly.

“What a load of bullshit!” Xavier yelled in response.

“If you really did nothing wrong as you claimed, then would there still be any need to kill the man off just now?”

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Dustin threw the question back.

“I—

I was just worried about Sheila’s safety, which is why I struck him with my full power!” Xavier explained

stubbornly.

“Is that so? We still have a survivor here, so what say we call them up to ask them their side of the story?” Dustin said before picking up a badly injured Wade with one hand.

It was a good thing Wade was still semi—alive and not completely out of the picture yet.

“That’s enough! Everything ends here, right now!” Claudia shouted all of a sudden.

“Didn’t you want me to state my case just now? Why the change of mind now?” Dustin snickered.

“You’d better quit it now if you know what’s good for you, Dustin! Tearing each other apart like this won’t benefit anyone. Besides, this matter should be kept between the three of us and our families. We’ll come up with the best way to deal with this, so we certainly don’t need any outsiders butting into our business now!” Claudia roared at Dustin.

The Murray family, Doyle family, and Horst family had always been longtime friends. The three families were

basically married to one another as their interests were intertwined. If one of them went down, then the rest

would go down together too.

Thus, if the scandal got out today, then it wouldn’t just be the Horst family’s reputation that would be damaged, but the Murray family and the Doyle family too.

Therefore, even if it were at Sheila's awkward expense right now, they had to cease all questioning. immediately.

"Wait, this guy's rotten to the core, and yet you still insist on helping him? Have you ever considered Sheila's feelings?" Ruth yelled back in frustration.

"Shut up, you don't have the right to butt into our business!" Claudia spat in disgust.

"Why you-" Just as Ruth was about to explode in fury again, Dustin stopped her by putting his hand in front of her. "Just let it go already. She's right; it's their own steaming heap of shit to take care of. It has nothing to do

with us."

"But what about Sheila?" Ruth frowned. The two of them had a good thing going, so she did not want her best

friend to suffer like this.

"I'll be fine, Ruth. I've decided to leave this matter in the hands of my father," Sheila said as she forced out a

smile.

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Even though she said that, she secretly knew that her father would take Xavier's side out of his great fondness

for him.

When one was born into a wealthy family, joy wasn't as much of a significant consideration as the family's

interests.

“Alright. We all know how much Uncle Caden adores you, so he definitely wouldn’t let you suffer,” Ruth replied. and she no longer pressed her for answers.

“Let’s go back home and take a nice nap, Ruth,” Dustin yawned. After retrieving all of his golden needles, he spun around and was about to leave when a voice piped up again.

“Running away already?” Xavier taunted, his expression now full of furious rage and his gaze scorching.

He immediately pounced on Dustin while he wasn’t paying attention and stabbed him with a knife!

“Just die already!” Xavier roared as he pushed the tip of the blade into Dustin’s back.

“Behind you!” Ruth and Sheila shrieked in horror,

Everyone else at the scene was also stunned by Xavier’s sudden attack. No one expected that he’d launch a sneak attack against Dustin.

“Oh?” Dustin hummed as his footsteps came to a halt. He then slowly turned his back to meet Xavier’s crazed

gaze. “You want to kill me?”

“So what if you die? I can kill trash like you whenever I want!” Xavier laughed maniacally as he used more force to push the blade further inside.

But it was soon after that he realized that something was off. It was strange to him that he couldn’t seem to

push the knife in any further as he tried to put more force behind it.

“Since you explicitly said that you’re cut for my blood, then don’t blame me for being merciless,” Dustin grabbed Xavier by the neck and lifted him off the ground.

“Urgh!” Xavier gasped for air as his face turned red. He struggled to break free from Dustin’s grasp as he flailed his legs wildly in the air.

“Dustin! Release him right now!” Claudia commanded, her face aghast, after feeling an urge to kill him.

“He wants to kill me though? Are you saying I should just stand here and let him kill me?” Dustin turned his head sideways, his gaze was as cold as ice.

“I don’t care about that! You just can’t hurt Xavier, no matter what. Otherwise, you’ll be making yourself an enemy of all three of our families!” Claudia threatened,

“That’s right! Just let go of Xavier already! Or else, you won’t like it when I’m angry!” Nigel echoed.

“Mr. Horst is not someone you can mess with, Dustin. Just admit you’re wrong, and who knows, you might just receive his forgiveness,”

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“Can’t you look at the situation and adapt? Just let Mr. Horst stab you with a knife to let off steam, and all of this will be over. As long as you dare put up a fight, you and your family will be faced with calamity in the future!”

“Yeah! In this world, it is useless to rely on strength alone. The most important thing is still power, so just kneel down to Xavier and admit your mistakes already. It’s not anything shameful if it’ll help you make it out of here alive, you know.”

The crowd erupted in a flurry of scoldings toward Dustin.

Although they all knew that Xavier was in the wrong, they understood that he was still the one with absolute power. At this stage, it wasn’t important who was right or wrong.

“Heh, you hear that, Rhys? I’m not someone you can simply cross, you know. So what if you can fight? You’re just a puny martial artist, after all. One word from me, and your entire family goes poof! Kneel and bow down to me right now. Who knows—if you manage to appease me, I might even spare your puny life!” Xavier sneered and believed that he already had this in the bag.

“What makes you so sure that I don’t dare to kill you?” Dustin asked, amused.

“Do you, though? If you do so much as touch a single hair on my head, I’ll have your whole bloodline wiped out! Come on then, kill me! Aren’t you the one who kept saying they were so powerful? Then kill me if you have the balls! I want to see if you have the balls to-” Xavier shouted profusely, taking it to the extreme, until he was rudely interrupted by a violent smack by Dustin, which decimated his neck.

He died instantly!

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Chapter 183

“Why don’t you get a better brain in your next life.” Dustin spat as he looked at Xavier’s corpse. And with one swift motion, he threw his dead body to the side with one hand, as if it were trash.

Xavier’s body landed with a “thump” near Claudia and the other’s feet.

Xavier’s face was riddled with fear and disbelief. Even up to his death, he didn’t understand why Dustin dared to make a move on him.

Everyone gasped, petrified, as they stared at the corpse beneath their feet. Every single one of them was frozen in place and was at a loss for how to respond to the scenario in front of them..

To think that an heir from an affluent family, who was also the pride of an entire city, had his life taken from him just like that?

How was this remotely possible?

After a brief silence, everyone at the scene erupted into a frenzy of chatter.

“Are you out of your mind, Dustin?! D—d— did you actually just kill Xavier?” Claudia shouted with a face full of shock, looking at Dustin as if he were a maniac.

The action of Dustin killing Xavier was akin to a peasant killing a king.

It was simply treacherous and heartless!

“You’ve done it this time, bastard! You’ve really done it this time!”

“Since you were the one who killed Xavier, no matter where you go in this world from now on, you’ve got

nowhere to hide!”

“The Horst family would surely want to exact their revenge on you, your entire family, and your friends after

this. Everyone whom you’ve ever loved will be a target of the Horst family now, and they’ll follow all of you to your graves!” Nigel hissed frantically.

“He’s insane! This guy’s truly gone off his rockers!”

“The Horst family comes from a long line of martial artists, and their influence spans the entirety of South City.

They have countless disciples under their wing, so the fact that you committed such a heinous act means that you made yourself an enemy of said countless disciples too!”

“Do you even know what you did? How dare you kill Mr. Horst? Even God can’t protect you now!”

The crowd was in an uproar. No one had expected that Dustin would be so bold as to kill someone. Did he

want to die so badly?

“As long as you don’t cross me, I won’t do the same back to you, but if you do, then I’ll return the favor. This

Horst wanted to take my life, so how could I let him live?” Dustin’s expression remained stoic.

“You’re f*cking insane! You madman! You’ll definitely regret this!” Claudia roared; she was still in shock at the

turn of events. She shot him a look as if she were looking at a dead man.

“I never regret anything I do. If the Horst family wants revenge, just tell them that they’re free to come to me anytime.” Dustin snapped before turning around to leave.

“Hey, wait for me! You were so cool tonight, Brother-in-law, but Xavier’s not some small fry, you know. I doubt if things are going to end well after killing him. But you shouldn’t worry, with the Harmon family’s help, I’m sure we can take care of this matter for you!” Ruth exclaimed before running up to catch up to him.

“Don’t bother. I was the one who dealt the killing blow, so I shouldn’t be afraid if his family wants to get back at me. Even if we end up fighting again, who knows which side will emerge as the victor this time around?” Dustin was unconcerned.

“Are you for real? You don’t need to put up a front, you know!” Ruth said while eyeing him suspiciously.

The Horst family, while slightly inferior to the Harmon family in terms of power, was still a force to be reckoned with in the city.

While Dustin had great power himself, he was up against an affluent family that had been here for years. Thus, it would seem like a single person was unable to fight against such a powerful force.

“You’ll find out soon enough.” Dustin let out a soft chuckle and refused to reveal too much.

As soon as the two of them left, the room erupted into chaos once again.

“Quick! Notify the Horst family immediately!”

“To think that that madman dared to kill Mr. Horst. We’ll make sure he pays the price for it!”

Inside the council chamber at Fallridge Haven, Caden was drinking tea with a middle-aged man.

“I need to apologize to you about the Gozoraberry, Sir Gabriel. Unfortunately, the gem isn’t in my possession right now, so I can’t give it to you at the moment,”

“Oh, what happened?” Gabriel Horst asked with a puzzled look.

The Gozoraberry was said to aid one in their quest to become a high-level martial artist. After hearing about this piece of news, he jumped at the first chance to obtain it for himself.

“Two days ago, this punk named Dustin got lucky and managed to cure Sheila’s illness, so he was rewarded

with a Gozoraberry,” Caden explained.

“How can a mere brat have such a valuable item in his possession?” Gabriel spat as he narrowed his eyes, his

gaze annoyed.

“I thought the same thing. Although I was the one who gave it to him, it doesn’t mean you can’t get it back,”

Caden insinuated.

“You’re too kind. Since you can’t be the one who takes it back from him, allow me to take care of this,” Gabriel

grinned.

“That would be the best course of action for now. However, try not to involve the Murray family, I don’t want

anyone gossiping about this,” Caden replied.

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“Consider it done! This won’t be the first time I’m killing someone just to get something I want, so I’ll make

sure that everything is done discreetly so that no one ever finds out about this,
” Gabriel plotted as an evil glint flashed across his eyes.

Every man was considered innocent until a bounty was put on their head. How could a mere background character with no influence on his name possess such a valuable treasure?

He definitely deserved to die..

“Sir Gabriel! Something terrible has happened!” A guard from the Horst family suddenly interrupted the two of them with a panicked look.

Because he ran too fast, he tumbled onto the ground after losing his balance. His movements made Gabriel furrow his brows.

“You fool! What are you panicking for?” Gabriel snapped at the guard.

“I-“The guard wanted to say something but stopped himself.

“Spit it out! What the hell is going on?” Gabriel snapped, confused.

*Sir! Something terrible has happened! M-
Mr. Horst has been killed!” The guard wailed as he fell to his knees.

“What?! What the hell are you talking about? My son seemed fine not long ago, so how is he dead now?”

Gabriel shrieked and shot out of his chair, his face full of horror.

“But it’s true, Mr. Horst had his neck broken, and his corpse is outside as we speak!” The guard cried.

“That’s impossible! Absolutely impossible!” Gabriel spat and frantically shook his head in utter disbelief.

However, when they carried Xavier’s corpse into the room, Gabriel felt as if he’d been struck by lightning, and

his face turned pale as a sheet.

“Who?! Who the hell did this?!” Gabriel yelled frantically after reeling from his shock. His eyes turned bloodshot, and he started acting like a rabid beast.

Such senseless violence!

Such madness!

“I—
it was done by a guy called Dustin Rhys.” The guard managed to sputter out.

“Dustin Rhys, you f*cking dog! How dare you kill my son? I’ll break your body into pieces! I’ll tear you to shreds!” Gabriel roared while gnashing his teeth, his eyes almost popped out of their sockets.

“Pass on the order! Use up all your resources to search the entire city if you must! We must find that bastard at all costs!”

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Chapter 184

After sending Ruth home, Dustin returned to the Peaceful Medical Center.

However, he couldn’t help but frown the moment he opened the doors to the building. The place looked as if it had been ransacked. It was a mess.

Boxes of medicine were scattered all over the place, and Dahlia, who had been rushing here and there the whole time, had on a face that was drenched in sweat.

“Diarhica, Where did he put the Diarhica? Dahlia mumbled to herself with a prescription in hand.

After looking around for a while, she finally saw a box of Diarhica that had been stored in a medicine cabinet high above the ground. Since it was out of her reach, she could only retrieve it by stepping on a stool.

“What are you doing?” Dustin asked coldly.

Dahlia was startled by his question and lost her balance on the stool, Seeing as she was about to fall to the ground, Dustin instinctively grabbed hold of her before that could happen.

It felt as if he was carrying something precious in his arms, as a nice smell wafted into his nostrils.

After propping her up on her feet, he immediately without a moment of hesitation and let go of her.

“You’re back already?” Dahlia asked as her expression lit up for a brief moment before she quickly snuffed it out.

“Where did you go in the middle of the night? How come you didn’t pick up my calls?”

“I just went out for a bit and didn’t bother checking my phone. What are you doing here?” Dustin answered back with indifference. He assumed that she wasn’t the type to take the initiative to search for him, especially with her arrogant attitude.

“I just so happened to pass by and saw Mr. Jones passed out at the entrance, so I helped him get inside.”

Dahlia explained.

“He passed out? What happened?” Dustin asked with a frown.

“I heard that his house had been ransacked by thieves, and after fighting them off, he got severely injured in the process. I think you should head inside to take a look at him,” Dahlia urged.

Dustin said nothing more as he immediately complied with her request.

Sure enough, he saw Gregory Jones lying on the bed with a pale complexion. Inside the steel basin under his

bed was a pool of contaminated blood.

When he went up to him to check his pulse, he immediately frowned. Gregory's Celestial Decay seemed to be getting worse.

It was also getting worse at a faster rate than he had expected.

"You're back already, kid?" Gregory asked as he slowly opened his eyes. He had a nonchalant expression on

his face.

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"I guess this condition is back again, but since that Dahlia girl gave me some medicine just now, I should be fine now." Gregory explained.

"What the hell happened here?" Dustin asked as his brows furrowed deeply.

To curb his Celestial Decay, he had specially placed several seals on Gregory's body. But now he could see that the seals had been loosened. This indicated that Gregory had been forced to use his true energy.

"Not long ago, a few scums arrived at the medical center and started blabbering about arresting you and talking about taking this Gozoraberry or something from you. Naturally, I refused to tell them anything and even beat their asses before they fled. However, I didn't know that by doing that, I'd be using my true energy. which would cause all of my old wounds to reopen. I really f*cking don't know what to say!" Gregory huffed.

To think that ten years ago, he could've easily taken care of all of those scum with a flick of a finger. It seemed that his age had finally caught up to him!

"Oh right, before they fled, they left you a note. Take a look at it yourself." Gregory added before pulling out a blood-stained sheet of paper.

"What?" Dustin gasped after reading the paper over. Two lines of words were written on it.

“Meet me at the Horst Dojo at 10 pm! Remember to bring the Gozoraberry as well. If you don’t show up, we’ll

get rid of your entire family!” were the words that were written on the paper.

After he finished reading it, Dustin crumpled the paper into dust with one hand

It was fairly obvious that this was the work of the Horst family.

He didn’t want to make a big deal out of it, but since they were the ones looking for trouble in the first place.

they couldn’t blame him if he decided to play along.

“Anyway, it was a good thing that Dahlia girl came in clutch at the right time. Otherwise, I would’ve been in

serious danger by now!” Gregory let out a small sigh.

Although the scoundrels didn’t manage to scratch him, his internal injuries were quite bad. So, if it weren’t for

Dahlia’s timely treatment, his life would’ve been in jeopardy.

“Thanks.” Dustin muttered as he turned around to look at Dahlia with a complex look on his face.

“You’re welcome. Mr. Jones has always been good to me, so I felt that it was only right that I returned the favor,” Dahlia replied while wiping off her sweat.

“Regardless, I should still thank you for everything. Anyway, I have places to be again, so I’ll have to trouble you to take care of Gregory here,” Dustin said.

“Where are you headed to this time?” Dahlia frowned.

“To get my revenge!” Dustin declared.

At night, in the commander’s room at South City’s military headquarters, a handsome young general was analyzing his battle formations on a sand table.

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Standing behind him were several female lieutenants, all of whom merely stood guard as they allowed him to

do his thing.

All of their gazes were filled with admiration and worship towards the man.

One must know that the person in front of them was actually the youngest commander of Dragonmarsh!

Paired with the Goddess of War, Scarlet Spanner, they were known as the rising stars of the Spanner family!

Not even thirty years old, he held power over hundreds of thousands of troops, he'd won hundreds of battles, achieved countless merits, and was definitely worthy of the title God of War indeed!

No one was more capable in the entirety of Dragonmarsh than him!

He was known as the "National Warrior"!

At that moment, his phone started ringing. He'd received a call from an unfamiliar number.

Adam Spanner raised his eyebrows slightly at this, as he thought that it was a bit strange.

"Hello, is this Adam Spanner?" A familiar voice asked him the moment he answered the call.

"Who are you? How dare you call this commander by his name? The nerve-

"This is Dustin Rhys speaking" Adam instantly froze on the spot and didn't know how to respond. He immediately swallowed his words back down.

After staying silent for a while, he finally mustered the courage to reply in a stiff manner, "Well, well, well, if it isn't Mr. Troublemaker. I thought you died in a ditch somewhere, I even brought flowers to visit your grave

every year."

"Stop talking shit. I need you to do something for me." Dustin snapped.

“Hey, watch your tone! I’m the commander of an army now, not some puny mafia character you can brutally beat up!” Adam whispered.

“Oh, so what do you want me to do?” Dustin taunted in reply.

“I want you to give me more respect. Like when you ask me to do something for you, you need to word it in a way that sounds like you’re pleading. You could, like, butter them up a little first,” Adam said while dusting the

badges on his shoulder pad.

It seemed to Dustin that he was still as arrogant as ever.

“Forget I said anything:

I’ll go find someone else,” Dustin spat, as he wasn’t in the mood to play games with

him.

“D—

don’t hang up on me yet!” Adam responded, all startled, before continuing with a face that was all smiles, “Look at you, can’t you take a joke? Honestly, you get mad at everything I say. You know how it is between us: if you have anything on your mind, you know that you can just tell me!

“What was I thinking? You’re the commander and military god of the Dragonmarsh army now, after all. So, how could I possibly trouble you with this? Perhaps it’d be better to just find someone else.” Dustin trailed off.

“No need to bother with that, Dustin! It would be an honor for me to do something for you. Just take it as your granting a favor for me, alright? Please give me a chance: I promise to do a good job for you!” Adam begged in a panicked tone.

After waiting for so f*cking long, he finally obtained a chance to show his strength. How could he let go of this opportunity so easily?

“Ha! Since you’re the one doing the begging now, I’ll give you a chance, as I can sense your sincerity through the phone,” Dustin said.

“Thanks a lot, Dustin!” Adam thanked him with a huge grin on his face.

This display of his soft side caused a few female officers near him to stare at him in disbelief. All of their eyes were wide with shock, and they all looked as if they'd seen a ghost.

Was this really their usual death stare and stoic commander?

Who exactly was the person on the other side of the phone?

How did they manage to make an esteemed military officer act so meekly like this?

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Chapter 185

At Fallridge Haven.

“Father! Please help Dustin; otherwise, he'll die!” Sheila begged on her knees.

“Hmph! You have the audacity to request assistance for him?! He is responsible for Xavier's death! That is the gravest of offenses! The Horst army has already assembled all of Swinton's finest warriors! No one can save him now!” Caden spoke with a frigid tone.

“Father! Dustin has rescued me on numerous occasions. Please help him, for my sake!” Sheila pleaded, tears streaming down her face.

Ever since she returned to Fallridge Haven, she hadn't stopped begging his father for his help. That was because only her father could go against the Horst army.

“It is exactly because he's saved you that I refrained from taking his life!” Caden retorted coldly.

“Father! I will do as long as you save Dustin!” Sheila begged on all fours.

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Soon, her knees started to bruise.

“You fool! You have no idea what you're doing!”

Caden slammed the table as he stood up. "Do you want me to cross the Horst family for a nobody? Have you no care about what might happen to the rest of us?!"

"I don't care about the others! I just know that Dustin saved me, and I must repay him!" Sheila said with tearful eyes.

"You" ..you're being foolish and naive! Claudia! Bring her downstairs and keep an eye on her. She is not allowed to leave Fallridge Haven!" Caden was fuming.

"Yes, sir!" Claudia replied as she dragged Sheila away.

"Claudia! Please, help me, would you?" Sheila's eyes were swollen red from her tears.

"Dummy, it's not worth it for a stranger." Claudia sighed.

She could see that Sheila had fallen for Dustin. However, this love was destined to fail. She was from a rich

family, and he was just an ordinary guy with no background. They were worlds apart.

"Claudia! Let me call Grandpa. As long as he agrees, Dustin will be saved!" Sheila begged.

"Sheila, General Murray has no longer been concerned with these matters. Your father is the one in charge of everything now." Claudia shook her head.

"No matter what, I must give it a try. I won't give up!" Sheila said, full of stubbornness.

"Alright then I hope you don't regret it." Claudia could only pass her phone to Sheila.

From her standpoint, Sheila was wasting her energy.

General Murray was one of the highest-ranking generals in Swinton.

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Ten years ago, he had already retired and passed down all his responsibilities to Caden. Unless his family is threatened, he would never show his face. It was impossible for him to put in such great effort for such a small matter.

10.00 pm, at Swinton Horst Dojo.

Gabriel, dressed in heavy armor, stood stoically within the ring, his fierce expressions sending chills down the spines of any who dared to meet his gaze.

Behind him loomed the elite members of the Horst family, their presence commanding respect and fear alike. As far as the eye could see, there were hundreds of them stretching across the horizon, a formidable force to be reckoned with.

In the crowd. Nigel was whispering to a group of people.

“Mr. Lincoln, do you think that Rhys fellow would show up tonight?” The girl in a yellow shirt asked.

“Hmph! Even if he doesn’t dare to show up, he’s still dead meat! The only difference is whether he dies alone or with his entire family!” Nigel laughed coldly.

The Horst family reigned supreme at the apex of the martial arts world, their wealth and power placing them among the elite in Millsburg. How can a nobody from the countryside be able to fend against them?

“He’s a fool who deserved death for crossing the Horst family!”

“Sure, he may bask in the glory for a few seconds, but eventually, he’ll have to face the consequences of his actions!”

A few people in the group shook their heads, waiting for the showdown to begin.

“Hey! I think someone’s coming!”

At that moment, someone from the crowd shouted.

Everyone looked over and noticed a silhouette slowly approaching them.

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“That fellow really dared to come? He really doesn’t treasure his life!”

“Your bravery is commendable. But showing up here is a foolish move!”

The crowd erupted into an uproar, with a variety of expressions on their faces.

“Dustin Rhys is it?!” A guard from the Horst family took a step forward, his voice booming with authority.

“That’s me.” Dustin replied, unfazed.

“So, you’re the one who killed my son, Xavier?” Gabriel’s fierce gaze remained fixed on Dustin, his expression stern and unyielding.

“Yes.” Dustin nodded once again.

“Kneel down!” Gabriel roared.

“Kneel? You’re not worthy of such respect.” Dustin retorted.

Dustin added, “Horst, I’ll give you a chance. Hand over the people who trespassed at Peaceful Medical Center and apologize to Gregory. Then, I’ll spare your life.”

The crowd went wild at his statement.

“Holy shit! Is he out of his mind? He’s still acting so brazen even when his life is at stake?”

“Having killed Xavier, he dares to demand an apology from Sir Gabriel! He’s wild!”

“Those who are ignorant are the ones who are fearless. This guy has no idea who he just crossed.”

The crowd murmured as they pointed at Dustin.

“Punk! Do you know what you’re saying? You are the one who is trapped now! If you don’t want to suffer a painful death, hand over the Gozoraberry and beg for forgiveness on your knees. Otherwise, you will be erased from this world!” Gabriel’s face darkened, and his voice became cold and ominous.

“I may not have the Gozoraberry, but I still have my life. If you think you’re capable of taking it, then come and get it. Dustin motioned with his finger.

“Great! How absolutely fantastic! Since you don’t value your life, then don’t blame me for what happens next! Guards! Cut off this insolent punk’s limbs! I want his head on a stick as revenge!”

Soon after his orders, a few guards rushed towards him, trying to get a head start.

“Boom!”

With a loud stomp of his foot, the ground beneath Dustin shattered, sending debris flying across the room in all directions.

As the debris flew across the room, some of it moved with such force that it struck the guards like bullets, causing them to stumble and fall to the ground.

Within a matter of seconds, a few of the guards had fallen to the ground, groaning in pain as they clutched their wounds.

“Go! All of you!” Gabriel thundered, his voice filled with anger and frustration.

“Kill him!”

At Gabriel’s command, a large number of guards charged toward Dustin, their weapons raised and their faces filled with fury.

The guards surrounded Dustin like a tidal wave.

“Hmph! This punk is dead meat! The members of Horst dojo are all elites. He won’t be able to fend them off no matter how skilled he is!” Nigel laughed.

“I can’t wait to see him defeated.” The girl in yellow laughed along with him.

“He’s not even running after being surrounded by that many guards. Does he plan to fight all of them alone? Hahaha! Does he think he’s Superman?”

The group of people laughed as they mocked Dustin, waiting for a good show.

Yet, in a few moments, their smiles were frozen in place. As the fight began, the match took a completely different turn from what they had expected.

Dustin was unstoppable and invincible!

One, two, three-

Ten, twenty, thirty...

In just two minutes, more than half of the guards from the Horst family had fallen. Till that moment, no one could match Dustin's level of combat.

The whole scene was a massacre!

Dustin alone was slaughtering the bunch of them.

"H-he's on another level!"

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Ten minutes later.

The entire Horst Dojo was filled with pained groans.

Dustin stood amidst the crowd, emanating a presence akin to that of a god or demon. His presence was awe-inspiring, commanding, and intimidating.

A few people in the audience were stunned. They stared with widened eyes as if they saw a ghost.

Everyone was taken aback by Dustin's strength. Single-handedly, he had managed to sweep through the entire Horst dojo!

It should be noted that these warriors were the elite of the dojo, capable of facing ten opponents alone.

Yet, in the span of a few minutes, all of them were taken down. This was too absurd!

“Fuck! He’s that strong? He’s on an entirely different level!”

“My goodness, where did this demon come from?!”

Nigel and the others were stunned speechless, especially a few girls who covered their mouths in shock.

Dustin alone faced off against a hundred soldiers, slaughtering people from all directions.

It was truly unbelievable!

*The Horst dojo is nothing.” Dustin stood proudly as his gaze landed on Gabriel.

“I have to admit, kid, you’re pretty good. I underestimated you earlier.” Gabriel took off his coat, revealing his muscular body and long sword at his waist.

“But it ends here. Today, I’ll personally take your life!” As he spoke, he slowly drew his long sword, and a cold light flashed around him.

“Sir Gabriel is unleashing his full strength. This kid is doomed!” Nigel became excited at the sight.

“Have you heard of the Hundred Immortals?”

“Of course! The Hundred Immortals is a combat power ranking list in the martial world, In Dragonmarsh, there are millions of martial arts practitioners, but only one hundred can make it onto the Hundred Immortals. These one hundred individuals are all the cream of the crop, the most outstanding top-tier experts!”

Nigel arrogantly lifted his head and said, “Good to know. Let me tell you, he is one of the top ten of the Hundred Immortals.”

“What? Top ten of the Hundred Immortals?” The others were all shocked at the news.

They knew that Gabriel was powerful, but they never expected him to be ranked so high on the Hundred

Immortals list.

It was extremely difficult to even make it onto the list, and even more so to become one of its top members. Any one of the top ten could easily sweep through all the martial arts dojos in Swinton.

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"It seems that I underestimated Sir Gabriel's terrifying power. He truly is a martial art master born into a martial arts family!"

"This poor guy, he actually provoked Sir Gabriel, He's looking for death!" The onlookers were all full of surprise and pity, looking at Dustin as if he were already dead.

"I heard that Sir Gabriel's sword is faster than a bullet, and no one can block it. Is it true?" The girl in yellow suddenly asked.

"Of course it's true! Sir Gabriel's sword is famous for its speed, especially his ultimate move. 'Eclipse Strike'. Whenever he uses it, no one has ever escaped alive!" Nigel spoke boastfully.

"Wow, that's amazing! I wonder if we'll have the chance to witness Sir Gabriel's ultimate move today?" The girl in a yellow dress looked on with anticipation and admiration.

"Quick, look! Sir Gabriel is about to make his move!"

As the crowd discussed, on the stage. Gabriel's aura became more imposing, exuding an intense and sharp

pressure.

"Kid, it's an honor to die by my sword!" Gabriel declared.

"Now, let me show you what it means to break all laws with a single sword strike!" With a single step, Gabriel

leaped high off the stage.

Upon landing, he crouched slightly, gathering energy before springing forward like an arrow and hurtling

towards Dustin.

“Eclipse Strike!” Gabriel roared, unleashing his ultimate move. Instantly, the air was filled with the glint of the

sword and the howling of the wind.

“Here it comes, Sir Gabriel’s most powerful sword strike!”

“No wonder it’s his ultimate move! It’s so cool!”

“No one can survive the ‘Eclipse Strike’!”

The crowd shouted in admiration and shock.

Gabriel and his sword merged into a rainbow of light, piercing straight toward Dustin’s chest.

Right when it seemed like a killing blow was about to land, a light “ding” sound was heard.

Suddenly, two fingers appeared out of nowhere, gripping the sword. With a simple twist, the sword snapped in

half.

“Clang!”

The wind ceased, and the light dispersed.

“Huh?!” Gabriel was stunned. He stood in place, a little lost on what to do.

“My famous move was actually blocked just like that? And with just two fingers?” He thought.

“How is this possible?!” cried Nigel, his face turning pale.

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“Smack!”

When the last slap fell, Gabriel was completely disfigured, with a crooked nose, a twisted mouth, and half of

his teeth falling out, looking extremely miserable.

He collapsed on the ground, completely powerless. He never expected Dustin to be so strong, to the point

where he couldn't even fight back throughout the whole fight.

He could only passively take the beating without any resistance. With this kind of strength, Dustin might even well be in the top three of the Hundred Immortals.

“D—did I see it right? Sir Gabriel was actually defeated? And so miserably?”

“Who is this guy? What kind of monster is he?” After a long silence in the martial arts gym, there was finally

some sound.

However, no one responded because the facts were already laid out in front of them.

Gabriel had indeed lost and was completely crushed throughout the entire fight.

The so-called top ten of the Hundred Immortals and his so-called “Eclipse Strike”, his “ultimate” move, had

become a joke at this moment.

Dustin's strength was far beyond everyone's imagination. With just a slap, he could render Gabriel completely

powerless.

“Who are you?” Gabriel sat on the ground, his face twisted with fear.

How could there be such a powerful person in a small place like Swinton, and more importantly, one so

young? This was simply abnormal!

“Who I am doesn’t matter. What matters is, will you still be able to survive after this?” Dustin looked down at

him coldly.

Upon hearing this, Gabriel first froze, then burst out laughing maniacally, his face distorted. “Kid! I admit you are strong—even exceptionally talented! But the problem is, you are just one person, and behind me stands the

entire Horst family!

“The disciples of the Horst family are well into the thousands, spread throughout the seventeen provinces of Swinton! Will you be able to defeat ten, a hundred, or even thousands of them? If you dare to kill me today, you will become the public enemy of the entire Horst family. By then, you will face countless warriors’ relentless pursuit, day and night! You should weigh the consequences yourself!”

After hearing these words, Nigel and the others, who were initially shocked and confused, immediately came back to their senses.

“That’s right, so what if Dustin is so powerful? He was still only a human being who has weaknesses and flaws. The Horst family was a wealthy and powerful family in the capital with tons of skilled warriors, some even stronger than Gabriel himself. Once these strong warriors learn of the news and gather up, it would be easy to crush him.” The crowd thought.

“A person who acts recklessly will always remain so, and can never attain the heights of true strength!” Nigel. shook his head and retained his calm smile.

“Exactly! No matter how powerful he is, he is still an ant in front of the great Horst family. He’ll be crushed easily! The girl in the yellow dress followed up in agreement.

“In this world, it is not strength that matters but power and connections. This kid will ultimately face death!” After realizing this, the group of people couldn’t help but feel a sense of excitement about Dustin’s impending doom.

“Are you so confident that the Horst family can protect you?” Dustin looked at Gabriel with a meaningful smile on his lips.

“What, do you still want to challenge the entire Horst family with your own strength?” Gabriel sneered, with a condescending look on his face.

“Challenge? You are overestimating yourself a little. Give the Horst family a call and ask if they can protect you. Do they even dare to protect you?” Dustin sneered.

“Huh?” Gabriel narrowed his eyes and, after confirming that the other party was not joking, immediately took out his phone.

However, the dozens of missed calls on it made him frown slightly. He felt a sense of unease in his heart. He took a deep breath and dialed the number back.

As soon as the call was connected, his father’s roar came from the other side.

“Gabriel! Where the hell have you been? Your phone has been unreachable! You despicable animal! What the hell have you done? Our entire family has been ruined by you! If I had known this would happen, I should have strangled you to death earlier! So that you wouldn’t bring disaster to our whole family!” His father’s angry rant immediately stunned Gabriel,

After a while, Gabriel tentatively asked, “Dad, what happened exactly?”

“You still have the nerve to ask what happened? It’s all your fault! It’s all because of you, you despicable animal! Our entire family has been banned from killing by the military! Do you know who issued the kill ban order? It was Adam Spanner! It’s the God of War, Adam Spanner! One of the twin stars of the Spanner family and the youngest chief commande

r in Dragonmarsh! If the God of War personally takes action, what the hell have you done to offend him?!”

As he listened to his father’s shouting in his ear, Gabriel felt as if he had been struck by lightning and stood there stunned!

God of War?

Adam Spanner?

Kill Ban?

H–how could this be possible?

“Die! Just go and die! No one can protect you! And no one dares to protect you! Only when you die can the Horst family survive!” His father’s voice came through the phone again.

Gabriel stood there, at a loss. His face was full of disbelief.

How could the world–renowned God of War, Sergeant Spanner, suppress the Horst family? Who could request Sergeant Spanner to intervene?

“So? Do you still think that the Horst family will stand up for you?” Dustin’s indifferent voice sounded.

“W–was it you?! Was this...all your doing? W–who are you? Why would even Sergeant Spanner stand up for you?!” Gabriel trembled all over, raised his head, and looked at Dustin in horror.

He couldn’t believe it. How could such a deity–like person be hiding in a small place like Swinton?

“You don’t deserve to know who I am. Now, I’ll give you a chance to take your own life, so that you can still save your family. As he spoke, Dustin kicked the broken sword on the ground toward Gabriel.

“Take...my own life?” Looking at his broken sword, Gabriel was stunned; his face was ashen, and his eyes were filled with despair.

Then, in front of a group of people with shocked, astonished, and unbelieving eyes, Gabriel picked up the sword and directly severed his own neck.

In an instant, his head rolled off and blood spattered on the ground.

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“Uh...”

Looking at the head rolling on the ground prompted a brief silence from those in the martial arts gym, followed

by the commotion and screams.

No one expected that Gabriel would choose to commit suicide so decisively and ferociously.

With one sword, he cut off his own head.

Has he lost his mind!?

“What did you do to Sir Gabriel?! Nigel was sweating with fear.

“You want to find out? Go ask him yourself.” Ignoring the shocked expressions of everyone, Dustin turned

around and left the gym.

As soon as he left, a fully armed team immediately rushed in and sealed off the scene. Everyone involved was

arrested.

He didn't care to worry about what happened next.

With Sergeant Spanner's power, there would naturally be no loopholes in handling this small matter..

On the other side, at Fallridge Haven.

“What? Dustin didn’t die?! How could this happen? Gabriel is in the top ten on the Hundred Immortals, and he brought so many elite members of the Horst family to help him out. It should have been easy to deal with that kid.” When the news came out, Caden couldn’t help but furrow his brows slightly.

“We still don’t know the details. There was no news from the dojo. We only heard that Dustin returned unharmed,” the guard whispered.

“That’s odd. Where is Gabriel? Call him and ask,” Caden said thoughtfully.

“Sir Gabriel disappeared. The phone won’t get through, and the dojo has been sealed off by the military,” the

guard replied.

“Sealed off by the military? What happened?”

“We’re not sure yet.”

“Send someone to investigate and find out what happened,” Caden ordered.

“Yes, sir!” The guard agreed and quickly left.

However, at that moment, a strong windy blade sound could suddenly be heard from outside. A military helicopter descended from the sky and landed steadily on the square.

As the cabin door opened, an old man with white hair and a burly figure, followed by several subordinates, walked out confidently.

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The old man had a square face, a goatee, and a dignified look, emitting a strong and powerful aura. That was

the aura of a seasoned warrior, formed after many years on the battlefield!

Ordinary people would shiver at the sight of him and wouldn’t dare to get close.

The old man was none other than Christopher Murray, the founding father of Dragonmarsh!

“Father? What brings you here?” When Christopher walked into the council chamber, Caden, who was drinking

tea, was startled. The tea spilled all over the floor, and the teacup shattered on the ground.

But he didn’t have time to care about that and got up to greet him respectfully, like a mouse meeting a cat.

Although Christopher had not been involved in the family’s affairs for ten years, his accumulated influence

over the years still made people tremble with fear.

Even Caden, as the heir, didn’t dare to behave out of line.

“Kneel down,” Christopher uttered two words softly.

“What?” Caden was stunned for a moment, then obediently knelt down on the ground.

In the Murray family, Christopher was like a god, and no one dared to defy him.

“Do you know the reason why I made you kneel?” Christopher sat down on the chair, his presence was

imposing.

“I don’t know.” Caden lowered his head.

“Hmph! You’ve damaged the reputation of our family. You did things you shouldn’t have done and offended

people you shouldn’t have offended. The Murray family’s reputation was almost ruined by you!” Christopher

spoke with a cold expression.

“Huh? Father, I don’t quite understand.” Caden was stunned.

“You don’t even know you’ve made a big mistake. The Murray will be destroyed by you sooner or later if

you don’t step down from the position of head of the family. If you’re not capable of handling it, then step

down now!” Christopher was livid.

“Step down?” Caden was stunned.

He thought his father was just going to scold him a few times, but he didn’t expect him to directly strip him of

his power!

Over the years, he had worked hard for the Murray family, focusing on his work and getting things done.

Although he didn’t have much merit, he at least kept the entire family in order. Now, he was suddenly asked to

step down without knowing the reason behind it. He was very dissatisfied.

“Father, I don’t understand. What did I do wrong?” Caden was unwilling.

“You are ignorant and shortsighted. You don’t recognize a true dragon when you see one. Retire and reflect on it before you cause any bigger trouble. After you’ve figured it out, then we’ll talk.” Christopher left no room for

argument.

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Caden opened his mouth to explain but was interrupted by Christopher. “Save some dignity for yourself, and don’t disappoint me further!”

Upon hearing this, Caden fell silent, feeling confused as he knelt on the ground.

“Leave and call Sheila.” Christopher waved his hand.

“Yes...” Caden didn’t dare to disobey, so he bowed deeply before turning and leaving. His face was filled with gloominess.

“Grandpa! You really came?” After a while. Sheila ran into the living room with a surprised look on her face.

She threw herself into Christopher’s arms and tearfully pleaded, “Grandpa! You came just in time. Please, save Dustin! He’s about to die!”

“Okay, alright. Silly girl Dustin is fine now.” Christopher showed a rare smile.

Back then, Caden was able to take the position of head of the family because he gave Christopher this precious granddaughter.

“Really? Dustin is really okay?” Sheila wiped away her tears quickly.

“Of course. When has Grandpa ever lied to you?” Christopher patted her head.

“Thank you, Grandpa!” Excited, Sheila planted a kiss on her grandfather’s face.

This made the old man burst into laughter, and he couldn’t stop grinning.

“Little girl are you so nervous about Dustin because you have a crush on him?” Christopher suddenly asked.

“Huh?”

Sheila was stunned at first, then her face turned red in an instant. “Grandpa! What are you talking about? I

don’t have a crush on him!”

“Hehe...if you like someone, then you like them. What’s there to be afraid of admitting? Young people should be bold.” Christopher laughed.

“Grandpa, Dustin saved me before. I’m just grateful to him,” Sheila lowered her head, stuttered, and her neck turned red.

“Just grateful? Then why were you crying for him? Little girl, if you really like him, take the initiative to pursue him, and don’t miss any opportunity. That kid is not an ordinary person. If you can win him over, it will be great news for me too.” Christopher rubbed his beard and laughed.

After all, Dustin was the kirin!

“If he can become my grandson-in-law, those old guys will be jealous and crazy, won’t they? Hahaha— He thought.

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When Dustin returned to Peaceful Medical Center, everything that had been smashed and damaged had been cleaned up.

The whole clinic was like new again.

Dahlia was sleeping on the table, leaning on it with a slightly haggard look on her beautiful face and eyebrows slightly furrowed.

Looking at her. Dustin felt a complicated mix of emotions and couldn’t help but feel grateful. After all, she had saved Gregory’s life.

He took off his coat and draped it over Dahlia.

“Mmm?”

Dahlia trembled all over and instantly woke up. “You’re back? Are you hurt?”

“I’m fine, thank you for today,” Dustin said politely.

“Don’t mention it; it’s only right for me to take care of Mr. Jones when he’s injured,” Dahlia said, pursing her

lips.

“Have you eaten? Are you hungry?”

“A little.”

“You want your usual, spaghetti bolognese?”

“Mmm, thank you.”

“Wait a moment.” Without much ado, Dustin walked into the kitchen and began to skillfully cook the dish.

In the three years of their marriage, whenever Dahlia came back late and hungry, he would prepare a midnight

snack for her. Especially spaghetti bolognese; she never got tired of it.

But at some point, the distance between them grew farther and farther, and their relationship became more

and more estranged. Eventually, they ended up divorcing.

“Here’s your spaghetti.” About 15 minutes later, Dustin brought up a steaming plate of spaghetti bolognese.

“Mmm, it smells so good.” Dahlia sniffed, immediately digging in.

In no time, she had finished the bowl of pasta, even drinking up all the sauce.

“The taste is amazing. It seems like your cooking skills have improved.” Dahlia gave a rare smile.

“Maybe it’s just that you haven’t eaten it in a long time,” Dustin said suddenly.

“Is that so? Maybe.” Dahlia’s gaze became a little dim.

Unknowingly, three years had passed.

Over time, many things that had once been routine had become second nature to Dahlia. She had grown

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accustomed to having someone bring her warm clothes when the weather turned cold, to having someone

cook for her whenever she felt hungry, and to having someone by her side when she was ill.

But when those routines changed, she found herself at a loss.

“Dustin, will we...be able to return to what we were before?” After a moment of silence, Dahlia suddenly asked.

Dustin, who was about to wash the dishes, froze for a moment and was speechless for a while.

Could they go back to the past?

Maybe a while back, they could have. At one point, he even wished that she would say so.

But now...

“Ring ring ring!” At that moment, a phone started ringing.

Dustin put down his fork and answered, greeted by a gentle and crisp voice.

“Hey honey, where are you? Do you want to come out for a late-night snack together? This is a great

opportunity for you to get me drunk.”

“Uh...I can't go tonight. Gregory's not feeling well, I have to stay home and take care of him,” Dustin replied

awkwardly.

“Gregory is sick? Then I'll come over right away!” Natasha said anxiously.

“No need, it's just a minor illness, nothing serious,” Dustin quickly responded.

“Gregory is getting old. We shouldn't be careless about it. How about this, I'll send someone over tomorrow to

help take care of him.”

“That’s too much trouble. I can take care of him myself.”

“You’re a big man, clumsy, and prone to making mistakes; you’ll inevitably overlook something. I’ll send an experienced caretaker over to take care of Gregory’s daily needs, and that’s settled!” Natasha declared, leaving

no room for argument.

“Alright then.” After thinking about it, Dustin finally agreed.

Having someone around to accompany Gregory would make it safer to avoid any further accidents.

“Oh, by the way, there’s one more thing. Immortunol has already made a name for itself, but if we want to sell it everywhere, we’ll need to find a few agents. Tomorrow, I’ll be holding an open recruitment at Mirage. You, as

the major shareholder, can’t be absent,” Natasha said.

“Okay, I’ll definitely be there tomorrow.” After hanging up the phone, Dustin met a pair of resentful eyes.

“That was Natasha who just called, right? Talking on the phone so late at night, it seems like your relationship with her is not ordinary.” Dahlia said in a sour tone.

“We’re just-”

“Enough! You don’t need to explain anything to me. I’m not interested in listening. Take care of Gregory well, I’ll go back to rest,” Dahlia said, getting up and leaving before Dustin could even respond.

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Dustin shook his head; he was rendered speechless by Dahlia’s behavior.

What was that all about?

The following morning, the council hall at Mirage was packed with people who had gathered for the distributorship of Immortunol. Ever since the press confe

rence held by the Harmon family, news of the popular medicine had spread across Swinton, and many wealthy people were looking to get a piece of the action.

As Matt and Julie walked in, Matt turned to Julie and asked, "Can that Harvey guy really help me get a distributorship?"

"Of course! Harvey is a key member of Harmon Pharmaceuticals, and he has influential people supporting him. If he's willing to help, it's a guarantee!" Julie replied confidently.

"Fantastic! I'll make sure to show my appreciation generously after the deal is done," Matt replied, feeling energized.

The Laney family was struggling, and they desperately needed a way to revive their fortunes. Immortunol was that chance. Therefore, this was an opportunity that could not be missed!

"Matt, you're too kind. A small favor like this is nothing." Julie smiled.

As Julie was speaking, she suddenly frowned. "What is that piece of trash, Dustin, doing here?"

Matt followed her gaze and saw Dustin's face, feeling a sense of irritation as he remembered their encounter a few days ago.

Since they had bumped into Dustin today, they needed to humiliate him somehow.

"Let's have some fun with him." Matt said coldly to Julie, then walked towards Dustin.

"Well, well, well, if it isn't Rhys! Are you also trying to be a distributor for Harmon?"

"Rhys? He's nothing but a piece of trash! Why would the Harmon family work with someone like him without any qualifications?" Julie added sarcastically.

"I don't have the qualifications? Do you have the qualifications to work with the Harmon family then?" Dustin sneered.

“Why wouldn’t we? The manager here, Harvey, is like a brother to me. As long as I say the word, it will be easy to get the distributorship!” Julie replied arrogantly.

Dustin shook his head and replied, “Really? I don’t think that would be the case. I believe the Harmon family won’t give you the distributorship.”

“What? You say they won’t give it to us, and they won’t? Who do you think you are?!” Julie sneered.

Dustin smiled faintly and said, “Me? I’m the chief physician of the Rhys family, and I’m also the major shareholder of Immortunol,”

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“What did you just say? A major shareholder?” Julie paused for a moment before she laughed. “Hahaha! Have you lost your marbles, Rhys? You? A major shareholder? What a joke!”

“Oh, Rhys, you can go around boasting to others for all I care, but what’s the point of bragging to us? You’re just humiliating yourself!” Matt guffawed. He had done a thorough investigation on Dustin, and from what he found out. Dustin was, simply put, a good-for-nothing. He might have had some underhanded tactics up his sleeves, but he definitely had no real capabilities.

“Whether or not you believe me, that’s your choice to make. But I guarantee that you won’t be getting the company’s rights,” Dustin said calmly.

“Hah! You guarantee? How highly you think of yourself! Mr. Marcs is in charge here. Just one word from him.

and the decision is final!” Julie made a disdainful face.

“I do not know any Mr. Marcs, but I’m sure he does not have the authority to do so.” Dustin remained unfazed.

“Hah! And do you? Take a look in the mirror, sucker! Who are you to say who has the authority and who

doesn’t?” Julie ridiculed.

“Oh, get out of here, Dustin. Quit embarrassing yourself!” Matt jeered, looking at Dustin as one would a clown.

He didn’t even quite understand how he had lost to such a loser twice in a row

*Julie.” As they were speaking, an obese man approached them. The man was the manager of Harmon

Pharmaceuticals.

“Harvey, you’re finally here!” Julie’s eyes lit up, and she quickly went up to him and hooked her arm around his. fawning all over him.

“Julie, it’s been a while since I last saw you. I swear you’re much lovelier by the day.” Mr. Marcs gave Julie a light smack on her behind and a lecherous smile on his face.

“Stop it.” Julie whined coquettishly as she twisted away. “Harvey, I’ve got some serious business to discuss with you today. Here, allow me to introduce you to Matt Laney. Mr. Laney here comes from a distinguished family in Millsburg.”

“Oh? Mr. Laney? Pleased to meet you!” Mr. Marcs’ eyes lit up, and he immediately reached out to shake Matt’s hand.

The Laney family were a prestigious family with assets amounting to tens of billions. He definitely considered it an honor to be acquainted with someone from the family.

“And this is?” Mr. Marcs’ gaze turned to Dustin.

“He’s just a useless burn. Take no heed of him.” Julie spared Dustin no slack.

“Oh...” Mr. Marcs threw him a contemptuous side-eye.

“To tell you the truth, Mr. Marcs, I’m actually here for Immortunol. I’m really interested in getting the Harmons’ company’s rights.” Matt cut right to the chase.

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“Mr. Laney. I’m afraid I don’t call the shots regarding the company’s rights.”

Mr. Marcs shook his head, pretending that he was stumped. “Ms. Harmon has given full authority on this

matter to Mr. Rhys. He’s the one who calls the shots on who the company’s rights go to.”

“Mr. Rhys? Who’s that? Is he a very powerful person?” Julie was curious.

“Truth be told, not only is Mr. Rhys the chief physician of Harmon Pharmaceuticals, but he’s also someone who’s really close to Ms. Harmon. I heard that he’s the one who came up with the prescription formula for

Immortunol!” Mr. Marcs explained.

“He must be a really brilliant person to be able to produce Immortunol! I wonder if I’ll ever have the privilege of

meeting him!” An expectant expression came over Julie’s face. She always had the habit of forming

connections with people by bringing them into her bed.

“Mr. Marcs, where is Mr. Rhys? Could you please introduce him to me?” Matt tried his luck.

“Well—” Mr. Marcs hesitated.

“Ah, right, I have a gift for you. Please have this.” Matt quickly pulled out a million-dollar check and handed it

to Mr. Marcs.

“Hahaha! How generous of you, Mr. Laney!” Mr. Marcs beamed brightly at the sight of the check.

“And about the company’s rights?” Matt prompted.

“Of course, there won’t be a problem!”

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“To tell you the truth, Mr. Rhys is a tight buddy of mine. We’d give our lives up for each other. In fact, I had a night out drinkin

g with him just yesterday! As long as I put a word in for you, he'll definitely do me this favor!"

Mr. Marcs assured.

Dustin chuckled lightly at that. What an artful liar!

"Hey! What are you sniggering at?" Mr. Marcs glared at Dustin.

"Ignore him, Harvey. He's just a loser." Julie rolled her eyes.

"Mr. Marcs, if you can get me the company's rights, I'll be sure to repay you handsomely!" Matt promised.

"Haha! No problem! I'll get it done!" Mr. Marcs was beyond elated.

"Thank you, Mr. Marcs!" Matt grinned too. Judging from the high demand for Immortunol, he would soon be filthy rich once he got the company's rights. And then, he would have no difficulty restoring his family to its former glory!

"Mr. Matt, I happen to have another business opportunity apart from the company's rights. Would you be interested?" Mr. Marcs asked sneakily.

"Oh? And what business opportunity is that?" Matt raised a brow.

Mr. Marcs looked around him and said softly. "Our company's demands a very high quality on Immortunol, so products that do not reach the benchmark will be destroyed. Several of us managers agree that that's a waste, so we kept those substandard products and plan on selling them off. If you want them, I can sell them to you

at a really good price."

"Substandard products? What good will they do?" Julie wondered aloud.

"See, Julie, they may be substandard and less effective, but they can easily be passed off as quality products. Nobody can tell them apart from genuine Immortunols when they are put together!" Mr. Marcs smiled

profoundly.

"Really?" Julie's eyes lit up.

“When have I ever lied to you? Here, how’s this? If you take them, I’ll sell them at a fifth of the original price. You can sell them off and earn a great deal!” Mr. Marcs proposed..

“That sounds amazing! Thank you, Harvey!” Julie was overjoyed.

“What do you think of this deal, Mr. Matt?” Mr. Marcs’ gaze bore into him.

“It’s a great deal, no doubt! I’ll take however much of the stock you have, Mr. Marcs!” Matt beamed. It

was a steal to be able to purchase Immortunol at a fifth of the original price. Matt was not one to let such a good offer pass

him by. As for the quality of the products, he couldn’t care less about that. All he cared about was that he’d make money from them. If anything were to

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“You! How dare you hit me?” Mr. Marcs held his face, which still burned from the smack. A mix of anger and shock was evident on his face.

With the Harmons behind him, people fought to curry favor with him everywhere he went. When has anyone ever had the gall to hit him?

“So what if I smacked you? As an employee, you’re supposed to uphold the standards of the company.

but look what you’re doing! You steal from the company and mix substandard products with quality products. I think you deserve every bit of that smack!” As Dustin spoke, he went up and delivered a few more smacks. Mr. Marcs saw stars and bled from both his nose and mouth.

The commotion attracted a lot of onlookers.

“Goodness! Who’s this? How dare he hit Mr. Marcs?”

“Wreaking havoc on Harmons’ premise! I gotta say, he’s something else!”

“I think he’s just ignorant. He’s going to end up in a lot of trouble!”

The crowd gathered around to watch and exchanged comments among themselves.

“Rhys! Are you out of your mind? Stop it this instant!” Shocked, Julie halted him immediately.

“Dustin! Have you any idea how much trouble you’ve gotten yourself into? How dare you hit Mr. Marcs? You’re

not getting out of this door in one piece today!” Matt roared.

But Dustin was not the least bit fazed. He went ahead and gave Mr. Marcs another round of beatings.

He could let things slide if all he did was run his mouth and be unrepentant about them. But he was even about to get violent! How reckless! That did not sit well with Dustin at all.

“Security! Someone! Anyone!” Mr. Marcs shouted in agony.

Soon, a large number of guards swarmed over. They had Dustin surrounded in less than a minute.

“Rhys! How dare you beat Mr. Marcs up! You’ll be sorry!” Julie scowled when she saw that they had backup. She looked at Dustin, waiting to see what misfortune would befall him.

“Hmph! You ignorant fool! Nobody can save you now!” Matt also basked in the pleasure of seeing Dustin get

into trouble with Mr. Marcs.

Dustin had rubbed him the wrong way for quite a while now. He simply hadn’t taken action yet because he had

an image to uphold. Matt couldn’t be happier now that someone was about to teach Dustin a lesson.

“What are you guys doing just standing there? I want to see his arms and legs broken. Right now! I’ll bear the

consequences!” Mr. Marcs hollered at the guards as he pointed his finger at Dustin.

“What’s going on?” A loud voice rang just as the guards were about to get rough.

A man with a squarish face rushed over with an imposing presence. He had several men following behind him. Dustin spared him a glance and recognized him as Morgan Finn, the vice president of Harmon

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Pharmaceuticals.

The moment they caught sight of him, the crowd made way for him to pass through. Even Mr. Marcs, who had been barking orders at the guards, quieted down.

“Is this their superior? We can’t be so unlucky, can we?” Julie wondered. She gulped dryly, an inexplicable anxiousness coming over her. She could tell that this man approaching them was someone of status based on how much Mr. Marcs feared him.

“This bastard really lucked out!” Matt thought as he gritted his teeth out of annoyance. He had thought that Mr. Marcs would be able to avenge his grudge against Dustin, but this man’s unexpected appearance seemed to have ruined that.

“Mr. Finn, you’ve come at the right time. This man here is stealing from the company when he should be protecting it. He’s stolen and sold substandard products. This will badly tarnish the company’s reputation. You need to arrest him,” Dustin said as he pointed at Mr. Marcs.

Morgan squinted and hummed lightly. “Oh? Are you telling me what I should be doing? And who are you to be doing that? Do I even know you?”

“Mr. Finn, we’ve met before,” Dustin replied.

“So what? I’ve met lots of people. Am I supposed to know all of them?”

Morgan gave Dustin a derogatory once over. “Also, who do you think you are? Who are you to butt into the

internal affairs of the company?”

Dustin frowned when he heard what Morgan had to say. “Mr. Finn, as vice president of the company, are you not going to look into actions that will ruin the company’s reputation?”

“Whether or not I look into the matter is my call to make. What evidence have you got to claim that Mr. Marcs

is selling substandard products?”

“You want evidence? Here’s your evidence!” Dustin kicked the box over, spilling Immortunol all over the ground.

“Hey, young man, so what if these Immortunols are substandard? How are you going to prove that they belong to Mr. Marcs? Who’s to say you didn’t steal them?” Morgan retaliated.

Mr. Marcs was taken aback for a moment, but he quickly reacted. “That’s right! Mr. Finn, this fella here is a thief! I caught him stealing from us! I did not expect this brazen rascal to fight back so violently! He’s truly heinous and despicable!”

“I can vouch for that! He’s the one who stole the Immortunols!” Julie added.

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“Do you hear that? Everyone’s saying that you’re the thief.” Morgan smirked maliciously. Which insolent bastard is this who dared meddle in his affairs?

“Mr. Finn, it seems like you’re going to cover up for him, then?” Dustin’s eyes narrowed, a menacing look in his

eyes.

It suddenly made sense to Dustin why Mr. Marcs dared to act so rampantly. It was because he had an equally unrighteous superior! Dustin had thought that he had seen the worst from Mr. Marcs, but it turns out that Morgan was worse!

Not only did he distort the truth, he even framed others for things that they did not do. It was plain for all to see that his subordinate was in the wrong, but he blatantly put the blame on Custin. That was too much!

“So what if I cover up for him? Who do you think calls the shots here?” Mr. Finn pressed his lips together into a thin line. “I’m giving you a chance now. Get down on your knees and apologize to Mr. Marcs right now, and admit that you were wrong. If you don’t, I’ll make sure you spend the rest of your days behind bars!”

“Are you sure that’s what you want to do?” Dustin challenged.

“Do I look like I’m joking? You should check if your opponent has someone behind him before you go throwing your weight around like that! Who do you think you are to do as you wish on my turf? Now get on your knees and apologize!” Morgan roared.

“Do you hear that? Get on your knees!” Mr. Marcs jeered, looking at Dustin like he had victory over him.

“Rhys! Why did you even intervene in the first place? This is what you get for meddling in other people’s business!” Julie gloated.

“You really think too highly of yourself! Matt shot him a contemptuous and dismissive look.

In the face of absolute power, it was irrelevant whether you were right or wrong. So what if you were right?

When the person in power dictated that you’re wrong, you have no way of defending yourself, Such was the law of society.

“Alright, if you’ve made your choice, then don’t regret it.” Dustin didn’t waste much time talking to them. He

whipped out his phone and made a call.

“Oh? You’re calling for backup? Hahaha!” Morgan snickered. “Hey, brat! I don’t think you get the idea here! This

is my turf, and I call the shots here! Who do you think can save you now?"

"Mr. Finn, let's not get too cocky. I think the Harmons are in charge here at Harmon Pharmaceuticals, not you.

Mr. Finn," Dustin corrected him.

"So what? I'm a founding member of Harmon Pharmaceuticals! Even Natasha Harmon has to address me respectfully, what more of a scoundrel like you?" Morgan announced arrogantly.

As he finished his sentence, a crisp and clear feminine voice rang out. "Is that so? So I should be addressing you respectfully now?"

The crowd turned to the source of the voice to see an elegant woman dressed in red entering and approaching them. It was Natasha Harmon!

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"Ms. Harmon?" Morgan felt a premonition of oncoming trouble. He immediately forced a smile and went up to her. "Why have you come?"

"I'm here to join in the fun! Am I not welcome here, respected Mr. Finn?" Natasha put extra emphasis on how she addressed Mr. Finn.

"Ms. Harmon, that was just a joke. Don't take it to heart," Morgan explained awkwardly. How was he to know that she would appear at such terrible timing?

know

"A joke? It didn't sound like one to me. You sounded so sure of yourself back there," Natasha said, unperturbed.

"Well— Morgan could not find the words to excuse himself for what he said.

"Forget it; I'll let that go. Now tell me, what's going on here?" Natasha asked calmly.

"Ms. Harmon, here's what happened." Mr. Marcs was just about to explain when he was cut off by a glare from Natasha. "Are you in a position to speak now?"

“Know your place!” Morgan turned to Mr. Marcs and scolded him. Then he turned back to Natasha and smiled apologetically. “Ms. Harmon, it’s nothing much. It’s just that there’s someone here with unethical intentions who stole some Immortunols. I’m already handling it, and this will be settled in no time.”

“Oh? Who’s so audacious to steal Immortunols?” Natasha asked.

“It’s that rascal!” Morgan pointed at Dustin.

“Mr. Finn, are you sure it’s him?” Natasha looked like she was holding back a smile.

“Of course I’m sure!”

“And do you know who he is?” Natasha asked, amused.

“No matter who he is, he’s committed a grave offense by stealing the Immortunols! We need to ensure that justice is served!” Morgan declared in feigned righteousness.

“Alright then. I’ll have you know!” Natasha’s expression darkened over. “This man whom you’ve accused of theft is the chief physician of Harmon Pharmaceuticals and the developer of Immortunol, Dustin Rhys!” An uproar broke out when the crowd heard that.

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“What? Mr. Rhys?” Morgan had shock written all over his face.

He had indeed received news that the developer of Immortunol, Mr. Rhys, would be present today, but he hadn’t expected him to be so young!

“N—no way! H—he’s He’s Mr. Rhys?!” Mr. Marcs’s eyes widened in disbelief. Never in his wildest dreams had he imagined that the person he had been bragging about being a tight buddy with was right there in front of him. This was bad. This was really bad. They were in deep trouble now.

“Mr. Rhys? Dustin Rhys?” Julie looked around in bewilderment. “They must be mistaken! The brilliant Mr. Rhys

who developed Immortunol was Dustin? How is that possible?” She mused.

“What ability does this rascal possess to be able to come up with the prescription formula for Immortunol?”

Matt felt astonished, which was soon taken over by jealousy. Immortunol was a precious drug that was able

to bring in endless fortune! But how did such a treasure end up in the hands of such a worthless person? It

was truly a waste!

“Mr. Finn, I’ll ask you one more time,” Natasha said. “Do you think that Mr. Rhys is the person who stole these

Immortunols?”

“This Well—

This might be a misunderstanding.” The corners of Morgan’s eyes twitched and he forced a

smile.

“A misunderstanding? So what you’re saying is that Mr. Rhys isn’t the thief?” Natasha scoffed.

“Of course! Why would Mr. Rhys steal his own products?” Morgan nodded repeatedly.

“Alright, then tell me, who was the one who stole this box of substandard Immortunol?” Natasha asked

authoritatively.

“I understand now!” Morgan pretended to finally understand what was going on. “It must have been Mr. Marcs who stole the company’s products when he was supposed to be guarding them! He misused his authority and accused Mr. Rhys before we even looked into the issue! We cannot tolerate such a vile person in the company!”

I'll fire him right away!"

"Mr. Finn, I-

"Shut up!" Just as Mr. Marcs was about to speak, Morgan gave him a hard slap and reprimanded him loudly. You piece of trash! Admit your mistakes or I'll not go easy on you!"

"Yes, yes. I was wrong. Please forgive me, Mr. Finn. I'll never repeat my mistakes again." Mr. Marcs covered his face with his hands, shaking as he admitted his wrongdoing.

"Why are you apologizing to me? It's Ms. Harmon you should be apologizing to!" Morgan roared.

"Ms. Harmon, I'm so sorry! Please let me off this time. I know that I was wrong!" Mr. Marcs fell to his knees,

asking for forgiveness.

Natasha ignored him completely, her gaze fixed on Morgan. "What a smart move, Mr. Finn. You're pushing someone else under the bus to save your own sorry ass. But do you really think that you'll get away scot-free?"

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"Ms. Harmon, what do you mean? I'm afraid I do not follow." Morgan's brows were tightly knit.

"Don't assume that I do not know what you've done. I just never bothered to take action. But you've messed with the wrong person now! I'm giving you one last chance. Give Mr. Rhys a sincere apology for your behavior

today, or be prepared to bear the consequences!" Natasha ordered with an icy expression.

"Ms. Harmon, you must be kidding me!" Morgan's expression darkened. "I'm a founding member and the vice president of the company! How could you make me apologize to a mere boy toy like him? How will I put my subordinates in line if I do that?"

“You’re not apologizing, are you? Guards, beat him up!” Natasha wasted no time with him. With a snap of her fingers, two bodyguards came up to them and gave Morgan several hard smacks on his face. He was totally befuddled.

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“H—how could you order them to smack me?” Morgan cradled his face in his palms as disbelief consumed him.

“Not only did I get them to hit you, I’m throwing you out too! As of this moment, you are no longer vice president of the company! Natasha said bluntly.

“Natasha Harmon! This is too much! I’ve slaved my ass off in the company all these years, and you’re laying me off all because of this scoundrel? How won’t sit well with the rest of the employees? You dismiss my effort and labor! Are you not afraid that this

“What? Is that a threat? Do you think that you are in a position to threaten me?”

Natasha laughed mockingly. “Let me be honest here. I’m not only going to fire you, but I’m also sending you to prison today! I have records of all your dirty deeds, which I’m sure are enough to keep you in there for a lifetime!”

“Natasha Harmon! How dare you! I have the support of your cousin, Quentin Harmon!” Morgan shouted loudly. though he was trembling within.

“Quentin Harmon? Hah! Why don’t you get him to come here now? See if I’ll cut him any slack?” Natasha threatened him domineeringly.

Quentin, who had just set foot through the door, heard that and immediately retraced his steps. Damn it! He

dared not mess with her when she was already angry!

“Natasha Harmon, you can’t do this! I-

“Shut up!” Natasha lifted a hand and delivered a slap to his face so strong that his nose started to bleed. “I’ve

given you your chance, but you didn't take it. Guards! Tie them up and send them to the police station!"

Following her order, several security guards came and tied Morgan and Mr. Marcs up.

"Ms.

Harmon, I was wrong! Please, give me another chance! I'll never do this again!" Morgan finally lost his composure when he saw where things were going. He fell to his knees and started begging.

"Yes, Ms. Harmon, we were just momentarily taken over by greed. Considering how we've labored for the

company all these years, could you please forgive us this once?" Mr. Marcs was so terrified that he was in

tears.

Even Mr. Finn, the person on whom he relied to support him, was going under. How could he, a mere manager, put up a fight against Natasha?

"Mr. Rhys, I'm terribly sorry! I was rude and ignorant, please, have mercy on us and let us go!" Morgan saw how Natasha was ignoring them, so he quickly changed his target and turned to beg Dustin.

"What?" Julie and Matt watched the proceedings with their mouths agape. The vice president of Harmon Pharmaceuticals was on his knees, begging for forgiveness from a worthless piece of trash? How humiliating!

"It's too late to repent now! Take them away!" Natasha signaled to her guards. They were both quickly dragged away. Their cries and shouts for forgiveness fell on deaf ears.

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Natasha's swift and decisive course of action caused the crowd to look at her in awe. She was impressive and domineering, truly deserving of her title of the Steel Lady.

“Dustin, I’ll leave the rest to you. I’m taking this opportunity to rid the company of anyone else bearing ill intentions. I don’t want an insignificant employee of the company to ruin our reputation.” Natasha gave Dustin a heads-up and proceeded to leave with her men in tow. It was a critical moment for the company, so she would not allow anyone to jeopardize them from the inside.

After Natasha left, all eyes were on Dustin. In the end, Mr. Rhys was the one with the power to decide who the company’s rights would go to.

“Rhys! Why didn’t you help plead for Mr. Marcs?” Julie confronted him, looking dissatisfied.

“He stole what he was supposed to guard and sold substandard products in secret. He deserved everything that he got today. Why should I help him?” Dustin asked calmly.

“He’s a close friend of mine! You could easily have helped him! Why didn’t you? Do you even have an ounce of empathy for others in you?” Julie glared at him.

“He’s your friend, so what’s that got to do with me? In fact, what do you even have to do with me?” Dustin said.

“You’re my ex-cousin-in-law! Even if not for my sake, you should have helped him for Dahlia’s sake! Why are you so cruel?” Julie said brazenly.

“Haha! So you do know that I’m your ex-cousin-in-law? If my memory serves me right, not only did you not help me when I was accused of theft earlier on, you even stepped out to vouch for those who slandered me.

Why didn’t you think about how I was your ex-cousin-in-law then?” Dustin snorted.

Julie’s face flushed instantly. She found no words fit to clear herself of her actions.

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“Alright, alright. Let’s put all those behind us and talk business, shall we?” Matt stepped in to smooth things over. “Dustin, let’s be professional here. I’m really interested in the company’s rights. Here’s a million-dollar check. I’d like to buy an allocation for the rights.”

“A million dollars? Do you take me for a beggar? Dustin found it ridiculous.

“Hey! Are you saying that a million dollars is too little? Aren’t you getting greedy?” Julie protested indignantly. “Just because the Harmons’ gave you a prescription formula, you think that you can flaunt your authority? You only have authority because you are affiliated with the Harmons!”

“Dustin, let’s cut to the chase. Name your price: how much will it take for you to give me the company rights?” Matt tried his best to stay calm.

“No amount of money will be able to get you that. A person of your character is simply not qualified to obtain the company rights for Immortunol Dustin flat-out rejected him.

“What? You’re rejecting money?” Matt narrowed his eyes.

“Well, it depends on the source of the money. Yours come from unsolicited sources, and I don’t like that.” Dustin turned his nose up at Matt’s offer.

“Dustin! You’re going overboard!” Matt’s expression clouded over. “I’m giving way to you and letting go of past grudges, but you better not overstep your boundary and stand in the way of my money!”

“That’s right! It’s your honor that Matt is interested in having the company rights for Immortunol! Don’t be ungrateful and shameless!” Julie boasted arrogantly.

“Are you threatening me?” Dustin lifted a brow.

“That depends on how you see it. It could be a piece of advice as much as it could be a threat!” Matt said in a low voice.

“I don’t care if it’s advice or a threat. I stand by my words. No way in hell are you getting the company rights!” Dustin said it plain and clear.

“Rhys! Are you really hellbent on crossing me?” Matt gritted his teeth; his gaze was as cold and poisonous as

a serpent's.

"So what if I cross you? Do you think I'd be afraid of you?" Dustin scoffed.

"Alright then, just you wait!" Matt glowered at him before making his way out.

"Rhys! What good will it do to burn bridges? You're just lucky that you got the prescription formula. Don't get all cocky thinking you're all that. You're only making things difficult for yourself by going against Matt! You despicable person! All you do is rely on others! Just you wail, Rhys! You're going to get it!" Julie was just about to leave after she ran her mouth berating Dustin, when several police officers came in.

"Are you Julie Amberson?" The leader asked.

"So what if I am?" Julie shot them a dirty look.

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"We just received a report that you are in league with Morgan Finn and Harvey Marcs for selling drugs in

private. We have concrete evidence. You'll need to come with us."

"Hey! What nonsense is that? When have I sold drugs in private?" Julie was terrified.

"Still denying, are we? Harvey Marcs has just pointed you out as the mastermind!"

"N—
no way! That's not possible! How could Harvey point me out? You must be mistaken!" Julie shook her head vigorously.

"Come with us, and we'll find out if we're mistaken. Bring her away!" The leading officer could not be bothered to waste more time with her. He gave the order to have Julie cuffed and brought away.

"I'm innocent! This is an injustice! Matt! Save me, Matt!" Julie was utterly flustered. She cried out desperately for help, but there was no one there to help her

. Matt had hidden away the moment he sensed trouble. He wasn't about to get himself involved. He did not expect Mr. Marcs to push the blame on Julie.

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An hour later, James burst into the Nicholson manor hurriedly. "Mom! I've got bad news! Julie's in big trouble!"

"Trouble? What trouble?" Florence was enjoying her tea and responded slowly.

"Matt just called to tell me that Julie's been sent to jail!" That was a shocking piece of news.

"What?" Florence sat bolt upright when she heard that. "How did that happen? Why would Julie suddenly be locked up?"

"Matt said that Julie went to the Harmons to buy something called Immortunol, and she got into some sort of conflict with Dustin. Somehow, Julie ended up detained for stealing drugs, James explained.

"Stealing drugs? No! That's impossible! Julie might be spoiled, but she would never commit theft!" As Florence

spoke, she suddenly seemed to catch an important piece of information, "Hang on, did you just say that Julie had a conflict with Dustin, which was why she got caught? Could it be possible that the worthless piece of

trash pulled a dirty trick on her?"

"That's right! That's what Matt said too!" James nodded. "That rascal has been resentful towards us all along.

This time, he must have framed Julie up to seek revenge for his personal grievances!"

"That monster! Has he no conscience?" Florence was so furious that she slammed her hand on the table. She

spat her words through clenched jaws. "The Nicholson family has been nothing but kind to him, but not only is he not grateful, he repays our kindness with enmity. He's nothing but a treacherous beast who betrays people

who showed him kindness!"

"What do we do now, Mom?" James asked.

"We have to use our connections to bail Julie out!" Florence was flustered. Julie was her only niece, and she

doted on *her*

1. so.

"Mom, it seems like the only person who can help us now is Matt," James said solemnly.

Matt rushed in hurriedly right then. From the looks of it, he had already been running around trying to help

Julie.

Florence immediately went up to him and started pleading when she saw him. "Matt, you've come at the right time! Julie's been apprehended and you're the only one who can save her now!"

Matt sighed heavily. "Mrs. Nicholson, I've been asking around; Julie has been pointed out as the mastermind

behind the theft. The Harmons won't let her off easily. From the way things look right now, Julie might be

sentenced to prison for around eight to ten years."

"What?" Florence was so startled that she nearly lost her footing. "Julie is just a dainty little girl who's never

been through any hardships! How could she possibly survive eight to ten years behind bars? Please, Matt!

Think of something! You must save her!"

“Mrs. Nicholson, based on the severity of the issue, I need to get my father to help out with this,” Matt said

with a shake of his head.

“Anything will do! We’ll forever be indebted to you if your father can get Julie out of there!” Florence looked at

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him expectantly.

“I’ll give him a call to see what he says about this.” Matt pulled out his phone and gave his father a call.

After a brief conversation, he ended the call and said with a troubled expression. “Mrs. Nicholson, my father has agreed to save Julie on one condition.”

“And what condition is that?” Florence asked.

“According to my father, Dustin has the prescription formula for Immortunol. If you can get the prescription formula from him, then not only will my father be able to save Julie, but he will also give you thirty thousand dollars as a reward!” Matt’s offer was shocking.

“Thirty thousand dollars? Do you mean it?” Florence’s eyes lit up.

“Of course! My father never backs out on a promise.” Matt nodded.

“That’s no problem at all! It’s just a prescription formula, isn’t it? I’ll go get it right away! That worthless man would never dare to reject me if I asked for it!” Florence was roused. Not only would she be able to get Julie out of prison, but she would also get a large sum of money out of it. What an enticing deal!

“Alright, then I’ll be waiting for your good news. Mrs. Nicholson.” Matt smiled.

“James! Get a few men and come with me!” Florence ordered and stormed out the door.

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Chapter 199

At noon, after settling the issue with the dealer, Dustin returned to Peaceful Medical Center.

However, as soon as he walked in, he realized that there was an additional person there—an 18-year-old girl

with a sweet face.

Her hair was tied in a ponytail, and she was dressed casually. She was cleaning the medical center, and sweat poured down her face from how hard she was working.

Meanwhile, Gregory was passed out on a recliner, snoring in his sleep. He was covered in a blanket, which

was rare.

“Mr. Rhys, you’re back?” When the girl saw Dustin, she immediately stood up straight and greeted him, looking

nervous.

“Who are you?” Dustin found the situation rather strange.

“I’m Caitlyn Lawler. Ms. Harmon sent me here to take care of Mr. Jones,” the girl replied, nodding her head in

greeting.

“A—are you of age?” Dustin was a little taken aback. He thought Natasha was going to send a middle-aged

housekeeper, not a young teenager.

“I am! I’m already 18 years old!” Caitlyn nodded her head fervently.

“Miss, I still think you’re too young. At your age, you should be in school.” Dustin shook his head.

It was just a casual statement, but after Caitlyn heard it, she actually fell straight to her knees.

“Mr. Rhys, I’m begging you to not fire me! I’m very capable. I can do laundry, cook, and clean. No matter how tiring or tedious the task may be. I’m willing to do it. Don’t be fooled by my thin figure: I’m actually very strong. Not to mention, I eat very little, so I definitely won’t be a burden to you!”

“Huh?” Dustin was stunned by the sudden outburst. She was fine earlier, so why was she on her knees right

now?

“Mr. Rhys, I’m begging you! If I do anything poorly, you can scold me and hit me as you wish. I can take anything. So please, don’t fire me!”

As she spoke, she smacked her head on the floor over and over again. After a few harsh knocks, her forehead.

began to bleed as her skin scraped the hard floor.

“Foolish girl, what are you doing?” Dustin was shocked at the scene before him.

He immediately helped her up and comforted her. “I wasn’t trying to fire you, I was just worried that the work

would be too hard on you.”

“It’s not hard at all... Caitlyn shook her head profusely.

With teary eyes, she said, “It would be the blessing of a lifetime to be able to serve you and Mr. Jones. I’m not

afraid of hard work. If you don’t mind, Mr. Rhys, then I am willing to become your laborer!”

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Chapter 199

“Caitlyn, is there something that you’re too embarrassed to share?” Dustin tried asking.

“Nothing of that sort. It’s completely voluntary on my part.” Caitlyn explained hastily.

“I was orphaned when I was young. It was Ms. Harmon who saved me and helped me survive this long. I dare not ask for too much; all I want is to be able to repay Ms. Harmon. I’m very stupid; I don’t know anything but hard labor. I hope you won’t detest me for it, Mr. Rhys.”

Seeing the person in front of him look so terrified and pitiful, Dustin let out a sigh. He couldn’t help but feel pity

for her. She was at the peak of her youth and knew how to tug on people’s heartstrings.

“Caitlyn, since you want to stay, then stay,” Dustin responded in a gentle voice

“Thank you, Mr. Rhys! Thank you!” Caitlyn got on her knees and began bowing again, knocking her head on the

floor once more.

Dustin instantly pulled her to her feet. Feigning sternness, he warned, “Caitlyn, you may stay, but we must set some rules. From today onward, you’re not allowed to kneel before anyone!”

“Okay, I’ll remember that!” Caitlyn promised cheerfully.

“From today onward, you belong to the Peaceful Medical Center. If anyone dares bully you, you just have to tell

me.” Dustin said, smiling softly.

“Okay!”

“Alright. Go get some rest; you don’t need to work now.”

“Okay” Caitlyn nodded again. Despite agreeing, she still didn’t dare remain idle and continued to wipe the tables and clean up the medical center instead.

Dustin felt helpless, but he didn’t stop her.

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Chapter 200

Dustin knew that Caitlyn deeply lacked a sense of security.

If he asked her not to do anything, she would feel even more lost.

At that moment, his phone rang.

When he picked up the phone, he heard an unfamiliar voice. "Hello, is this Mr. Rhys? I'm the new chief inspector from the investigation bureau, Aspen Cruiser."

"Oh, it's you, Chief Cruiser. Is something the matter?" Dustin was surprised.

"Here's the deal. We just arrested a suspect named Julie Amberson. According to our investigation, she was your sister-in-law, and she's involved in the theft of Immortunol. I wanted to ask if you wanted to take her case?" Aspen asked tentatively.

"It's fine. This has nothing to do with her," Dustin replied.

Although he didn't like Julie, he wouldn't stoop so low as to use his power for his personal revenge and send

her to jail.

"Alright, I know what to do now. Enjoy your day, Mr. Rhys."

Dustin said nothing as he hung up. Then, he took out an ancient text and began to leaf through it.

It was an old habit of his. Whenever he had some free time, he'd pick up a book to read.

Suddenly, there was a furious shout from outside. "Dustin, get the f*ck out here now!"

Soon after, Florence stormed inside, accompanied by James and a few other thugs.

“Did you need something from me?” Dustin raised his head to level her with a look.

“You inhumane animal! What did Julie ever do to you? How dare you try to get her in trouble?” Florence

screamed

as soon as she stepped through the door. “You’re truly devoid of a conscience, you pathetic,

shameless, ungrateful, degenerate animal!”

“Mom, since when did you know so many adjectives?” James was taken aback.

She didn’t even graduate from middle school, but she sure knew how to give a good scolding.

“Is that the point? Florence turned her head and glared hard at James. Then, she wiped her head and looked back at Dustin. “Rhys, I bet you have nothing smart to say anymore! I knew you were guilty from the start!”

“I don’t know where you heard this unfounded rumor from, but Julie’s arrest has nothing to do with me. She was the one who made friends with the wrong crowd,” Dustin said, unfazed by her accusations.

“Bullshit! Do you think that it’ll blow over if you keep denying it? I’m warning you, if something happens to Julie in there, you’ll never hear the end of it from me!” Florence warned through gritted teeth.

“Did you come here just to tell me this?” Dustin was expressionless.

“Of course not! The reason we graced you with our presence is to ask you for the formula for Immortunol!”

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James declared.

“That’s right! For getting Julie into trouble, you must compensate us. I order you to hand us the formula!” Florence demanded arrogantly.

"The formula for Immortunol?" Custin lifted a brow. "Sorry, I can't give it to you. It now belongs to the Harmon family."

"I don't care! You have to give us a copy today!" Florence commanded unreasonably.

"Exactly! If the Harmon family can have it, then so can we. If you hand us the formula, we won't hold the past against you!" James yelled.

"I told you, I can't give you the formula. If you're here for this, then please leave." Dustin tried to chase them out of the medical center.

"Bullshit! You have to give it to us today, no matter what! Or else, don't blame us if we do it the hard way!" James threatened, an evil glint in his eyes.

Seeing the situation turn sour, Caitlyn immediately stood in front of Dustin, shielding him. "You're being so unreasonable! Mr. Rhys has already said he won't give it to you. If you keep insisting, I'll call the authorities!"

Although she was shaking from fright, she didn't retreat.

"Where did this b*tch come from? Get the f*ck out of the way!"

Angered, James gave Caitlyn a harsh slap, and the latter fell to the floor.

Her pink cheek began to swell.

"Hmm?" Dustin's expression darkened.

An indescribable anger began to boil inside of him.

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Chapter 201

“James, I’m giving you three seconds to apologize to Caitlyn!”

Dustin slowly got to his feet, his expression dark.

“Apologize? Who the f*ck do you think you are? As if I’m going to apologize just because you asked me to. Not to mention, isn’t she just a stupid b*tch? So what if I hit her? What are you doing to do about it? If you’re going to keep yapping at me, I might even hit you too!” James yelled; his expression was ferocious.

“You dimwitted fool!” Dustin snorted humorlessly, launching a kick at James’ abdomen.

The latter let out a pained cry as he flew a few feet backward. His entire body was curled up into a ball as he rolled backward.

At first, Florence was utterly dumbfounded. Then, her eyes flared with rage, screaming as she pounced at him.” How dare you hit my son?! You **ruthless** animal, I’m going to teach you a lesson!”

She started to scratch and hit him, throwing out moves like it **was a** catfight.

“Get off!”

Dustin’s body shook, and an invisible force pushed Florence to stagger backward.

In the end, she lost her balance, falling onto her bottom with an “ouch”. Her head banged against the door.

“You horrible piece of shit! How dare you hit me too? This is wrong. This is all wrong! How did our family

raise

such an ungrateful bastard like you?!” Florence sobbed, seated on the floor.

After watching his mother fall, James immediately shouted furiously, “What are you all doing just standing

there? Get him!”

The thugs suddenly woke up from their daze. They instantly brandished their steel pipes and charged toward

Dustin, roaring.

However, in the next second, they were all sent flying out of the medical center, screaming.

“Fuck, you’re all useless!” James shouted, disappointed to the point of fury.

He thought that by bringing thugs over, he could get the upper hand in the battle. He **never** thought that the

thugs he hired would be so useless.

Suddenly, Dustin **spoke** up, “Caitlyn, he slapped you just now, so you can give him two slaps in return.”

“Don’t you dare!” James’ expression was demonic.

Caitlyn seemed frozen in fear. She shrank in on herself, not daring to **step** forward.

All her life, she had only been beaten—she **had** never hit **someone** else before.

“If she doesn’t **dare**, I’ll do it for her then!”

Without another **word**, **Dustin** slapped James hard in the face two times. The latter was dazed from the blows,

and his cheeks grew red and puffy.

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Chooter **201**

“You savage, you’re even lower than an animal! Did you **just** smack your former brother-in-law over a stupid

beggar? Are you even human?! Our family has done so much for you, but not only do you not know how to repay us, you choose to bite the hand that fed you!

“You’re truly heartless! No wonder my daughter wanted to divorce you. Because of your ungrateful character, you deserve to die alone! You petty, immoral, and hopeless piece of trash, you’ll never compare to Matt!” Florence screamed, pointing her finger at Dustin’s nose.

She **was** showing her true colors as a wicked shrew.

“The Nicholson family has done so much for me? I’m being ungrateful?” Dustin couldn’t hold back his laughter

at her ridiculous words.

“Why does that sound so funny coming from your mouth? When you say you did so much for me who do you think helped you get to where you are today? Ever since Dahlia started her company three years ago, it’s only been smooth sailing and successful; who do you think helped her out behind the scenes?

“Trevor’s revenge, the Harmon family’s partners, James being detained at the bar, Dahlia running into danger, and also getting rid of the Hummers’ boycott who do you think took care of these things? It was me! When you say you’ve done a lot for me, it’s me who’s done a lot for the Nicholson family! But how did you all repay me? By verbally abusing me and framing me. Let me ask you this, who’s the ungrateful one?!” Dustin spoke in a booming voice.

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Chapter 202

Dustin finally let out the grievances that he had bottled up for a long time.

“You...

... That’s bullshit!” Florence did not believe it in the slightest.

Her tone grew **even** shriller as she screamed, “As if you had the capability to help us! My daughter’s achievements today are all thanks to her **own** excellence! It has nothing to do with you! Also, don’t think you’re all that. You had to rely on a woman to climb your way up to where you are today! If Ms. Harmon hadn’t protected you, the Hummers would have slaughtered you long ago! So don’t feel too happy now. Ms. Harmon will kick a useless gigolo like you to the curb sooner or later. And when the time comes, you’ll become the public enemy!”

Hearing these words, Dustin simply shook his head and laughed.

Sure enough, there was no point in saying all those things. These people wouldn’t believe it at all.

In the Nicholson family’s eyes, he had always been nothing but an incompetent average Joe.

Of course, he didn’t care.

“Alright. I don’t want to waste my breath with you anymore. Please leave the medical center right now. You are not welcome here!” Dustin said, leaving no room for their bullshit.

“Just you f*cking wait! This is not over! James bellowed. Then, he helped Florence into the car and left.

He couldn’t beat him in a fight, so he could only think of another way.

“Caitlyn, are you okay?” Dustin asked with concern.

“I’m fine. I’m sorry for causing trouble for you, Mr. Rhys.” Caitlyn looked **ashamed**.

“You silly girl, if you encounter this again in the future, run far away and hide. Don’t try to act tough,” Dustin

admonished.

“Okay.” Caitlyn **nodded** her head with a sweet smile on her face.

In the evening, Dahlia returned to the Nicholson Villa after work. As soon as she stepped through the door, she

saw James' bruised face as well **as** Matt's stern one.

As soon as James saw her, he told her what happened. "Dahlia, you're finally home. Did you **know** that Mom

got **beaten** up?"

"Mom **was** beaten? What happened!?" Dahlia **was** shocked.

"It's a long story. **You** need to go to Mom's room and see her **as soon as** possible!" **James** urged.

Dahlia frowned and quickly went to Florence's room.

She found Florence lying on the bed, looking pallid.

Her head was wrapped in thick bandages, and her hands and feet were in casts.

Chapter 202

On the bedside table, there are several bloody towels. It was a scene from a nightmare.

"Mom, what happened to you? How did you get hurt so badly?" Dahlia was agast.

"Dahlia, you're finally back. If you had come **any** later, I may not see you ever again..." She trailed off before erupting in a fake coughing fit.

"Mom, just what happened to you? Who did this to you?!" Dahlia's expression turned frosty.

"Ugh It was all because of that animal, Dustin! Your brother and I went to the Peaceful Medical Center today to ask him to help us write a formula, but not only did that animal refuse to help, he even spewed many offensive things. I got mad and told him off, but that savage was so ashamed that he flew into a rage and beat me and your brother up. I got lucky. Otherwise, I may not have been able to return!" Florence sighed, recounting the incident with a few embellishments.

“Dustin? He would never do that.” Dahlia’s eyes widened. She found it a little hard to believe.

The Dustin she knew was definitely not a vicious person.

“Dahlia, I know it’s hard for you to believe, but the truth is already in front of you. Look at Mom, and then look at my face. We were beaten to a pulp! That Rhys bastard is simply not human!” James whined indignantly.

“No, that can’t be. Was it some kind of misunderstanding?” Dahlia held onto the last glimmer of hope.

“Dahlia, things **have** already come to this. Don’t tell me you still want to defend that trash! Fine, since you don’t believe me, I’ll show you proof! This is a recording from my dashcam. You’ll know whether it’s true or not once you watch it,” James said, fishing out his phone from his pocket. He opened a video and pressed play. Dahlia focused on the screen. In an instant, she felt **as** though she’d been struck by lightning.

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Chapter 203

The video on James’ phone showed Dustin getting violent.

First, he kicked James, then he pushed Florence aside, causing her to fall onto the floor and bang her head against the door.

Finally, it ended with Dustin slapping James twice.

The start and end of the video had been edited out, and there was no audio, only images.

After watching it. Dahlia was frozen.

She couldn’t believe it before, but the video was right here; she had to believe it.

“Dahlia, you saw what happened, right? This is proof that he beat us! Mom is already getting old; she can’t handle that piece of trash’s beatings! We already went to the hospital to get checked out. The doctor said that her concussion is

s so severe that she might develop Alzheimer's disease! Not to mention, she even broke a few bones. She'll have trouble looking after herself in the future. Dahlia, do you still want to believe such a savage?! "James spat through gritted teeth, looking downtrodden and furious.

"Why? Why would he do that?" Dahlia clenched her fists, and her face was pale.

Their relationship had just begun to improve. She was even considering marrying him.

But why did Dustin hit her mother?

Could he have lost all feelings?

"Dahlia, not only did that brute hit me, but he also framed Julie and sent her to jail!" Florence said gravely.

"What? Julie is in jail?" Dahlia's eyes grew wide.

"That's right! Today, Julie went to the Harmons' to buy Immortunol and got into a disagreement with Dustin. Then, that bastard wanted to take revenge, so he got someone to arrest Julie and charge her with theft." James said venomously.

"I was there the whole time. I can vouch for it," Matt chimed in from the side.

Naturally, he wouldn't give up an opportunity to kick a man while he **was** down.

"Dahlia, did you hear that? That **bastard**, Dustin, is an ungrateful son-of-a-b*tch. We were all fooled by him back then. He **has** already shown **his true** colors now, and he does not want to forgive and forget. How can you trust a man like him?!" Florence added, stoking the flames. As she spoke, she began to cough again.

She looked like she **was** at death's door, and Dahlia's heart clenched at the sight.

The last ray of hope in her heart was completely extinguished. **Instead**, it **was** replaced by fury!

Without another word, she took out her **phone** and dialed **Dustin's number**.

"Hello? I demand an explanation!"

"An explanation? For what?" Dustin responded calmly.

Chapter 203

"I'm **asking** you whether you were the one who beat my mother and James up?!" Dahlia asked, **suppressing**

her anger.

"I did hit James, but he deserved it. As for your mother, she caused her own f all by accident."

"By accident?" Dahlia's voice rose sharply.

"You say it like it's nothing! Not only did your **so-** called accident cause my mother to break her hands and legs, she even suffered a severe concussion!"

"Is it that serious?" Dustin was suspicious of that claim.

She's lying in bed, unable to move due to her injuries. Do **you** think that's not serious? According to your logic, does my mother have to die on the spot for her injuries to be serious? Are you even human?' Dahlia's blood was boiling.

"You'd better calm down and take your mother to have her injuries examined," Dustin said.

When Florence left earlier, she had been fine. There was no way she was this badly injured all of a sudden.

"Have her examined for what? I've already seen it with my own eyes, so why do I need to get her checked out? Are you still trying to justify yourself at this point?" Dahlia said, fuming.

He had beaten up her family. Now, not only was he refusing to apologize, but he was also acting **so**

righteously.

When did he become so unreasonable?

“Since you believe your mother’s story, then why are you asking me?” Dustin’s tone grew cold.

“What? Are you throwing in the towel just because you’ve been caught? You’re the one who beat them up; are you saying you were in the right?” Dahlia said.

“Fine. Let’s say I did beat them up, but did you ever ask why?” Dustin said.

“Of course, I asked! My mother asked you for the **formula**; not only did you refuse, you even said some harsh things. She told you off, and then you beat her up. Isn’t that what happened?!”

“Heh If that’s what you think happened, then that’s what happened.” Dustin smirked.

The current him was too lazy to explain. No matter what he said, they wouldn’t believe him.

“Dustin, ch, Dustin. I really didn’t expect you to be this kind of person! Did you have to go that far over a formula? What would have **happened** if you’d **given** her the recipe? Would you lose a limb? You know what, I can just pay for it! Is one million dollars enough? Or two? Name your price, and I’ll buy it no matter the amount!

Dahlia grew angrier and angrier as she spoke. Her hands started to tremble with rage.

“Do you think this is about **money**? To tell you the truth, I’ve already given the formula away.” Dustin stated indifferently.

“Who did you give it to? Was it Natasha? So are you saying that you would rather give her the formula for free

than sell it to me?”

“Can you be more reasonable?”

“Am I being unreasonable, or are you just a cold and heartless person who grew tired of your old toy in favor of a new one? Am I not even worth one formula in **your** eyes?!” Dahlia was about to lose her mind.

She wasn't this upset earlier, but at the thought of Natasha, she felt a knife pierce her heart.

She couldn't help but feel as if someone **had** taken something important from her.

“Dahlia, I don't want to argue with you. If you called me to talk about this, then I don't think we have anything to talk about,” Dustin said, taking a deep breath.

“Fine! Let's not talk about the formula—let's talk about Julie! Were you responsible for her arrest?” Dahlia changed the subject.

“If I said no, would you believe me?” Dustin said indifferently.

“Do you think I would believe you? Matt saw you plant fake evidence with his own eyes and got Julie sent to jail! I know you don't like her, but must you be so petty? How could you do such a cruel thing over a small conflict? That's my cousin! How could you do such a horrible thing?!” Dahlia was practically roaring by the

end of **the** sentence.

“So you'll believe whatever Matt says? Am I such a narrow-minded asshole in your eyes that you'd rather believe Matt over me?” Dustin asked, his eyebrows knitting together.

“You've done **so** many terrible things. How can I believe you?” Dahlia retorted back.

When Dustin heard those words, he fell silent, his mouth curving into a self-deprecating smile. He didn't want to explain further, nor did he have the energy to do so.

Once the **seeds** of doubt were planted, they could never be **removed**.

There had **always** been a chasm between him and Dahlia. It was due to a lack of trust.

No matter what he did or **said**, he would never receive an acknowledgment. But whenever there was a minor misunderstanding, it would explode into a full-**blown** argument.

That was the crux of their problems.

He had really done his best.

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Chapter 204

“You don’t have anything else to say? I **knew** you were lying! Why? How did you turn out this way? Why do you have to push my boundaries over and over again? Must you keep causing trouble until we turn against each other? Dahlia’s face was full of disappointment, and she felt disheartened.

“It’s not that I’ve changed, but you’ve never believed in me, whether it was before or now. Since you won’t believe me anyway, then there’s nothing to talk about. I’ll figure out a way to repay you for what you did for Gregory.” As soon as Dustin finished speaking, he hung up.

Could things go back to the way they were before?

No, it was impossible.

This was his **answer** to her question last night.

“Dustin, what do you mean? Are you trying to cut ties with me? You ... Dahlia still had more to say, but the line had already gone dead.

Dustin’s indifference and coldness felt like a knife in her heart.

She couldn’t understand why the two of them couldn’t get along peacefully. **Why** must they hurt each other?

Why?

Why couldn't he try to understand her?

"Dahlia, I told you a long time ago that Dustin is inhuman. I'm sure you've seen his true self by now," James said, adding fuel to the fire.

"Dahlia, we won't go and beg him. That **animal** will get his reckoning sooner or later!" Florence added another

blow.

"Mom, don't talk anymore; just focus on getting better. I'll think of something to help Julie." Dahlia's mental

state was a mess.

"Dahlia, you don't have to worry too much. My father is already talking to his connections about Julie's arrest. I'm sure we'll hear something soon," Matt said comfortingly from the side.

A woman was most vulnerable when she was injured.

If he took advantage of this opportunity, she would be his soon.

"Thanks." Dahlia forced a smile.

While they were talking, a police car suddenly **stopped** at the entrance of the villa.

The car door opened, and Julie jumped off the car joyfully.

As soon as she stepped through the door, she hollered, "Aunt Florence, I'm back!"

"Julie?!"

When the others saw her, they all had looks of surprise.

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Chapter 204

Florence even dropped **her** sickly act **and** leaped off the bed.

Grabbing Julie's hand, she looked her up and down with a worried face. "Julie, are you okay? Did you get hurt in there? Do you know how worried I was about you?"

"Aunt Florence, I'm fine. I was just locked up for half a day. I didn't get hurt." Julie smiled.

Although she **was** a little shaken up, she was glad to be back safe and sound.

"You were released after just half a day? That was quick" James said, a little flabbergasted.

"The situation was rather strange. When they interrogated me, they were so fierce and scary. **However**, after they got a phone call, **they** immediately released me," Julie said, sounding confused.

A light quickly went off in Florence's head. "Ah, I know! It must have been Matt's father who helped you. If it wasn't for Mr. Laney Sr.'s connections, you'd probably still be stuck in there."

"Really? Thank you so much, Matt!" Julie hurriedly thanked him.

"No, it was just a small favor. It was nothing." Matt faked a humble smile.

Although he said that, he thought the situation was weird, too. According to the plan, his father would only

help Julie after he got the formula for Immortunol.

So why had she been released so soon?

"See. Dahlia? This is the difference between Matt and Dustin! That Rhys bastard has no capabilities aside from using dirty tactics to get people in trouble! Then look at Matt—every time there's a critical moment, he always lends us a hand and saves the day! Now you should know which man cares about you the most," Florence said, purposely dragging one man **down** to lift the other **up**, showering Matt with praise.

*Exactly, Dahlia! That loser is not good enough for you. Matt is still the best match for you. Since

you're already divorced, the way I see it, you should just get together with Mat t, James added.

"I don't want to talk about this right now."

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Chapter 205

Dahlia frowned slightly, slowly coming back to her senses. Looking at Florence hop **around** e nergetically, she was astounded. "Mom, I thought you said you broke your hands and feet? How can you still stand?"

"Huh?" Florence's face froze, and she forced a smile. "When I saw Julie, I got a little too emotional and temporarily forgot about the pain. I should lie back down and get some rest right away."

With that, she limped to the bed.

But those horrible acting skills fooled no one.

"Mom, are you actually

actually fine and were just pretending to be hurt in front of me?!" Dahlia's face sank.

"How can I be fine? Didn't you see how Dustin hit me? Ouch held her head and began to put on a show again.

My head **is** starting to hurt again!" Florence

"You said you have a concussion and broken limbs. Well, where's the case file from the hospital? Show it to me!" Dahlia demanded.

"Well..." Florence and James both looked at each other, speechless.

Seeing their reaction, of course. Dahlia caught on.

"So you two have been lying to me all along? All for what?" She bit the bottom of her lip.

“Fine. I’m not hurt! So what? Seeing that her ruse was up, Florence stopped pretending.

She said indignantly, “Although I didn’t get hurt, **it’s** still true that that animal beat us up. You saw **what** happened in the **video**. Could that be faked?”

“That’s right! Dahlia, look at the injuries on my face. He did this to me!” James played along.

“Give me your phone!” Dahlia demanded, her gaze cold.

“W—what do you **want** my phone for?” James felt a niggling sense of guilt.

“Just give it to me!”

Without another word, Dahlia snatched the phone from his hands. She looked for the full video and played it with the volume turned up.

After grasping the entire situation, her body began to tremble from head to toe. She finally understood why her brother had been beaten up.

Dustin wasn’t the ungrateful one. It **was** her mother and brother who crossed the **line** and went to **his** doorstep to kick up a fuss!

“Why? Why did you guys lie to me?!” **Dahlia** was extremely upset.

“Dahlia, we didn’t lie **to you**. That animal **was** wrong to hit us. Even if we started it, he had no right to hit us back! So what if we hit him? We’re older than him; can’t we teach him a **lesson**?!” Florence argued righteously **as** if her actions were justified,

“You— you guys are really unbelievable!” **Dahlia** was furious. She didn’t expect that her mother would be so unreasonable and evil.

It was clearly her own fault, but she still pinned the blame on Dustin, deliberately twisting the truth and misleading her. 1

“Fine! Even if we were impulsive this time, it doesn’t mean that ass wasn’t responsible for this as well. If he hadn’t framed Julie, would we have gone over to pick a light? In the end, he had it coming for him!” Florence shouted with conviction, her hands on her waist.

As soon as she said that, a middle-aged man in uniform alighted from the police car that stopped in front of their door.

“You must be Julie Amberson’s family, am I right? I am Chief Aspen Cruiser. Regarding Julie’s case of medicine theft, although Mr.

Rhys has decided not to pursue

the matter, you still need to make sure she learned her lesson and won’t make the same mistake again. If Mr. Rhys hadn’t said anything today, Julie would probably have remained in there for a few more years. Do you understand?” Aspen said, giving them a stern verbal warning.

“Mr. Rhys?”

Florence and the others looked at each other. “Wasn’t it Mr. Laney Sr. who helped Julie?”

“Who’s that? I’ve never heard of him,” Aspen replied, stone-faced.

As soon as he said that, everyone’s eyes flicked over to Matt.

After everything that happened, it wasn’t even Phineas Laney who helped.

Then, had they thanked the wrong person?

Being on the receiving end of everyone’s gazes, Matt felt his face flush, as if he’d been slapped on both cheeks.

This **was** f*cking humiliating!

“Chief Cruiser, may I ask who this ‘Mr. Rhys’ is that you’re talking about?” Florence still couldn’t believe it.

Aspen raised an eyebrow. “Who else could it be? Of course, it’s Dustin Rhys. Who else would help you out?”

As soon as he said that, the entire room fell **dead** silent...

Chapter 286

“D—

Dustin Rhys? How could it be him?!” After learning the truth, Florence and the others looked at each other for a while, disbelief written on their faces.

Never in a million years had they considered that it wasn't Matt who saved Julie, but the person they **had** dubbed ungrateful.

This was simply a slap in the face!

"So Dustin never framed Julie in the first place, and it was you guys purposely slinging mud at him?" Dahlia stood rooted to the ground, expressionless.

Her face was as white as a sheet.

"W—who slung mud at him? I bet he's feeling guilty because he knows what he did wrong, so he's trying to make things up to us!" Florence insisted stubbornly.

She was used to bossing people around; of course, she would never admit that she had gotten the wrong **idea**

about Dustin.

That would be too humiliating.

"Mom, things have already come to this, and you still want to justify yourself?" Dahlia bit her lip. Even her

heart **was** clenching.

"How am I justifying myself? If that Rhys bastard hadn't framed Julie, why would he have saved her? In the end, he **was** just feeling guilty for doing something wrong!" Florence insisted indignantly.

"That's right! If he didn't do it, why did he save her?" James echoed.

"I've really had enough of you guys!" Dahlia's emotions finally exploded.

"Why? Why do you always have to pick on Dustin? What exactly did he do to you? Must you purposely pick fights with him? In our three years of marriage, he has always been honest and agreeable, but you have always had a prejudice against him. Even though he had never done anything **wrong**, you kept pushing blame on him again and again. Could you really be so blinded to how good he is?"

She **was** basically roaring by the end of her tirade.

Everyone **was** scared stiff.

After that spiel, Dahlia couldn't **stand** it anymore. She threw the door open and left.

She got in her car and **sped** down the road.

Her tears, however, couldn't **stop** falling.

She regretted it.

She really regretted it.

She regretted being so impulsive; she regretted believing her mother's words; and she regretted misunderstanding Dustin.

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Chapter 205

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Chapter 206

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Chapter 200

She felt distraught and confused.

She didn’t know whether they could go back to the way things were before.

At the Peaceful Medical Center, Dustin took a deep breath. He quickly calmed down after hanging up the phone.

After all it wasn't the first time something like this **happened**.

Hence, he wasn't much bothered by it right now.

"Beep beep!" At that moment, a Maybach with a Millsburg license plate stopped at the entrance.

Soon after, a middle-aged man in a flashy, red suit strutted over with his head held high.

Next to him was a stocky bodyguard.

"Are you Dustin Rhys?" The moment the man in the **red** suit entered, he began to eye Dustin up and down, acting all high and mighty.

"And who are you?" Dustin raised his head, sparing the man a glance.

"My name is Laney, Phineas Laney. I am from the Laney family of Millsburg."

Phineas picked up his handkerchief and wiped down the chair before taking a seat of his own accord.

Dustin quickly made the connection. "The Laney family? What's your relationship to Matt Laney?"

"Matt Laney is my son and the heir of the Laney family." Phineas pushed his **glasses** up his nose and continued indifferently. "Of course, I didn't come here to your doorstep to tell you these things, but to offer you riches."

"Oh? What do you mean?" Dustin raised his eyebrows.

"I heard that you have the Immortunol formula in your hands. It's something I am very interested in." As Phineas spoke, he took out a check and slid it onto the table. "This is a check for 30 million dollars. If you give me the formula, then the money is yours. For people like you, this amount is enough for you to live without worry for the rest of your life!"

"Sorry, I'm not interested." Dustin rejected it immediately.

“Why? Is it too little?” **Phineas** narrowed **his** eyes slightly. “I didn’t peg you for someone **with** a big appetite. Alright, why don’t I **add on** another 20 million dollars, which makes it 50 million dollars in total? **Give** me the formula.”

“Like I said, I’m not interested,” Dustin repeated indifferently.

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“Young man, I advise you to consider this carefully. I do not like to be rejected. If something catches my eye. I’ll do anything to get it.” Phineas began to ramp things up.

“If you agree, then not only will you get the money, you’ll also become a friend of the Laney family. If you ever run into trouble, our family will help you. Conversely, if you turn me down, you’ll become an enemy of the Laney family. You have to decide for yourself whether you want to be our friend or foe.”

Dustin couldn’t help but laugh when he heard that. “I don’t like to be threatened. If you’re going to speak like that, then we can only be enemies.”

“Hm?” Phineas’ face darkened.

“Punk, are you sure you want to do this?”

“Of course.” Dustin nodded.

“Hmph! Don’t think you can go around fearlessly because you have the Harmons backing you. To tell you the truth, I have a hundred ways to deal with small fry like you. If you’re going to remain stubborn, I don’t mind playing this game with you,” Phineas threatened with a nasty expression.

“I’ll play with you to the end.” Dustin was not the least bit afraid.

“Good. I hope you won’t regret it!” Phineas snorted, got up, and left.

A country bumpkin actually had the guts to go against him?

He must have a death wish!

The night went by uneventfully, but the next morning

“Ah!”

Dustin was rudely awoken by a scream.

When he opened his door, he found Caitlyn collapsed on the floor, her face white with fear.

“Mr. Rhys, Dusty is dead!”

Caitlyn pointed at the door with tears in her eyes.

Dustin looked over to find a dead gray cat **hanging** from the top **of** the entrance of the medical center.

The cat had been disemboweled, its blood dripping onto the floor. It was a **grisly** sight.

This was the cat that Caitlyn brought back yesterday.

“Hmm?”

Dustin frowned.

When he stepped outside to take a look, he discovered that dog blood had been splashed all over both sides

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of the main entrance, including the medical center’s sign.

Hanging a cat and splashing dog blood—this was no longer just humiliation.

This was a blatant threat and provocation!

“Beep beep! At that moment, the Maybach from yesterday slowly pulled over at the side of the road.

The window rolled down to reveal Phineas’ and Matt’s faces.

Both father and son had the same arrogant smirk on their faces.

“Did you do **this**?!” Dustin’s face turned stormy.

“Congratulations! You’ve got the right answer!” Matt grinned. “Dustin, oh, Dustin, we have already given you a chance. You didn’t appreciate it then, so don’t blame us for pulling some tricks!”

“You insist on fighting me?” Dustin’s eyes were icy.

“Fight? Heh Are you worthy of fighting us? You need to know that we’re still playing right now.” Matt

sneered.

“Of course, all this is just a taste. The main event will come later! Aren’t you always on your high horse? I have plenty of time to play with you! Of course, I’m not just going to play with you but also with your woman. I know you still have feelings for Dahlia, but don’t **worry**. Once I get her in my **bed**. I’ll film a video for you to enjoy. I want you to watch me defile your woman! Tsk just the thought of it is wonderful!” At the end of the sentence, he even licked his lips.

“You’re asking for death!” Dustin was seeing red.

“Asking for death? Heh Are you capable of killing me? Do you think the Harmons would turn against the Laney’s for you? Without Natasha’s protection, you’re f*cking nothing! I’ll give you three **days** to think. Either you hand over the Immortunol formula, or you start shopping for your **own** coffin!” After Matt finished speaking, he wound up the car window and left.

With a dark expression, Dustin took out his phone and dialed a certain number. “Hey, I need a favor

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After hanging up, Dustin began to clean the medical center with Caitlyn.

Although she didn't let out a word of complaint, Dustin could tell that the death of her pet cat had taken a huge toll on her.

Her eyes were constantly red, and she was trying her hardest to cry without making a sound.

This young woman had had such a tough life that she lived so pitifully and carefully that she didn't even dare **to** cry.

She was such a good kid that it tugged at Dustin's heartstrings.

The two of them worked together for a long time before the medical center **was** finally clean.

After a few moments, a silver Bentley pulled up at the entrance.

The door opened, and Natasha got out of the car, dressed in a red **dress**.

"Ms. Harmon?" When Caitlyn spotted Natasha, she immediately greeted her.

"Come on, Caitlyn, I've told you many times that you don't need to be so formal with me. You can just treat me

as your sister." Natasha smiled, patting Caitlyn's head.

"Okay." Caitlyn nodded obediently, but it would take some time for her to act casually with Natasha.

"Ms. Harmon, what can I do for you?"

Dustin walked over to Natasha from inside the medical center.

"Can't I come to see you without a reason?" Natasha raised **her** eyebrows.

"Of course not. You can come whenever you like, and I'll always welcome you."

"Hehe... That's more like it." Natasha smiled gently. "Come on, let's have lunch together today. I'll introduce

you to a big shot."

"A big shot? Who is it?" Dustin was curious.

“You’ll **know** if you come.” Then, Natasha called out, “Caitlyn, come, let’s go eat together.”

“I won’t go this time. I want to stay and take care of Mr. Jones.” Caitlyn shook her head.

“In that case, that’s fine. I’ll have Dustin bring some food back for you.”

o the car.

Natasha didn’t force Caitlyn to tag along. Instead, she just **tugged** Dustin into the car. 20 minutes later, the car pulled to a stop in front of the entrance to A’roma.

A’roma was a high-class Stonian **restaurant** that **was** also **one** of the Harmon family’s businesses,

Natasha would usually choose this place **whenever** she invited important guests for a meal.

The two of them walked up to the second floor and sat down at a table by the window.

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Through the window, they had an amazing view of the garden outside.

“Ms. Harmon, I think you can tell me who we’re meeting now, right?” Dustin asked again.

“Roderick Brooks of Millsburg. Have you heard of him?” Natasha said, smiling lightly.

“Roderick Brooks? He sounds familiar.” Dustin gave it some thought.

“Roderick is the chairman of the Riversouth Bank and a renowned tycoon in Millsburg. Apparently, he controls one-third of the cash flow in Millsburg. That’s how he got his nickname. Big Bucks Brooks,” Natasha explained.

“Oh, so it’s him...” Dustin nodded. He was getting a rough idea of this person.

“It’s not known to others, but Big Bucks Brooks is actually suffering from an illness. He’s seen many doctors. but none of them could cure him. I heard that you’re an excellent healer, so I invited you here to meet him. I think he’ll be here soon,” Natasha explained.

As the two were talking, a female voice suddenly sounded from behind them. “Why, isn’t it Ms. Harmon?”

Turning her head, Natasha saw an elegant woman dressed up to the nines in an extravagant custom-made evening gown walking toward her, carrying a Hermes handbag.

“Oh, it’s you, Mrs. Brooks. Where’s Mr. Brooks?” Natasha glanced left and right.

“What, do you miss my Roderick that much? Ever since the last time you saw him, your heart is still set on him, huh?” Chloe Marshall said sarcastically.

She had never liked Natasha.

On the one hand, it was because they were business competitors.

On the other hand, it **was** because Natasha was an outstanding individual.

Not only was she born into a wealthy family, but she **was** also gorgeous, and her business was booming.

This made her very jealous.

Especially after she learned that Natasha had frequent contact with her **husband**, she felt even more

threatened.

Hence, she had to establish dominance!

“Mrs. Brooks, you must have misunderstood me. Mr. Brooks and I only talk about business,” Natasha said

indifferently.

“Oh, talking about business, are **you**? **You** want to talk about business in his bed, don't you?” Chloe's smile

turned cold.

“Ms. Harmon, it's not a good habit to constantly be lusting after the next best thing. You're **already** keeping a **gigolo**, so why are you still thinking about my Roderick? Everyone **says** you're as pure as the driven **snow**, but I don't think so. If I remember right, Ms. Harmon, you're almost 28 years old, right? This gigolo looks to be in his

early twenties. In that case, aren't you a cougar?”

She deliberately raised her voice to draw the attention of the people around her, letting them hear her words.

She was trying to damage Natasha's reputation.

Natasha merely frowned lightly in response.

If she didn't have a good relationship with Roderick, she would have gone up there and given her two tight slaps.

“Where did this witch come from? Are you sick in the head?” At that moment, Dustin couldn't stop himself from speaking up. “If you are, then walk out the door, turn left, and go to the hospital to get your head checked. Don't bother those of us eating here.”

“You gigolo, do you know who I am? How dare you talk to me like that?!” Chloe whipped her head to glare at him furiously.

“Does it matter who you are?” Dustin scanned her up and down. “You're dressed like a person, yet you bark like a dog. Whenever you open your mouth, shit comes out. Your mouth stinks. You should go and brush your teeth, not make us gag here!”

“You

How dare you insult me?!” Chloe widened her eyes, shocked and enraged.

She was the wife of Big Bucks Brooks!

Everyone kissed the ground she walked on.

However, this gigolo had the guts to insult her to her face. He really had huge balls!

“So what if I insult you? If you keep humiliating Natasha, I’ll slap you. You’d better believe it!” At that moment, Dustin had a domineering expression.

Meanwhile, Natasha looked at the scene with a tender gaze, cupping her cheek with one hand. There was a blissful smile on her face.

“Gigolo, I demand you get on your knees and apologize at once! Or else, there will be consequences!” Chloe was steaming out of her ears.

“Get on my knees and apologize? Are you worthy?” Dustin snickered.

“Also, don’t say I didn’t warn you, but you really should head to the hospital for a check-up. You’re really sick!”

“You’re the sick one! Your entire family is sick!” Chloe gritted her teeth..

“Don’t believe me? Then let me ask you this—have you been experiencing headaches, fever, weakness in the limbs, occasional nausea, and difficulty breathing these days?” Dustin asked indifferently.

“Yes, but so what? I just have a cold!” At first, Chloe **was** stunned, but she quickly stuck her nose in the air again.

“A cold? Heh... You’re quite the optimistic person.” Dustin shook his **head**. “I can see that you **have** shortness of breath, the lymph nodes in your neck **are** swollen, **you look** lethargic, and you have a **rash** on your body. If my guess isn’t wrong, then I think you have Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome.”

“The what syndrome?” Chloe was dumbfounded.

“Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome, or AIDS for short.”

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As soon as he said that, Chloe turned to stone.

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“A–AIDS?”

Chloe **was** frozen in place, at a loss.

She was truly shocked.

Not only because Dustin hit the nail on the head for all the symptoms she was experiencing, but **mainly** because she had gotten a new boy toy a while back

.

When they were intimate, they hadn't used protection..

Now, hearing his words, she couldn't help but panic a little.

“Dustin, are you sure?” Natasha also looked surprised.

AIDS was not a trivial matter.

Could it be that this was Roderick's secret illness?

“Although I can't be a hundred percent sure, I'm sure I'm not too far off,” Dustin replied.

“You. You're bullshitting me!” Chloe shrieked. “I just had a medical checkup at the hospital this morning.

How can I have AIDS? Stop trying to scare me!

“It's up to you whether you want to believe me.” Dustin shrugged his shoulders.

“Bastard, you're scaremongering and humiliating me in public. I've **got** to teach you a lesson! Wally, beat him up!” Chloe flew into a rage and ordered the young bodyguard standing behind her to hit Dustin.

However, the bodyguard named Wally **was** rooted to the floor, his face pale. Cold sweat dripped down his face.

“Wally, what are you still standing there for? Do something!” Chloe shouted.

“What’s going on?!”

At that moment, a tan, obese middle-aged man suddenly walked in.

Two burly bodyguards trailed behind him.

“Huh Isn’t that Big Bucks **Brooks** of Millsburg? What is he doing **here**?”

“That seems to be his wife, Chloe Marshall. A good **show** is about to go down!”

“Big Bucks Brooks is known for spoiling his wife. It seems like that punk is going to get it today!”

The restaurant broke into a heated discussion when the middle-aged man appeared.

“Honey, you’re finally here!” The moment Chloe **saw** him, she immediately ran into his **arms** and started to sob. “That guy kept bullying me earlier. You have to help me!”

“Who’s the ballsy asshole brave enough to bully my wille?!” Roderick’s eyes turned fiery with anger.

Even though he knew his wife could be rather unruly, he still chose to dote on her unconditionally.

Chapter 209

“It’s that gigolo next to Natasha!” Chloe turned around to point at Dustin.

“Hm?” Roderick narrowed his eyes, displeased, “Ms. Harmon, is that man your friend?”

“This is Dustin, my boyfriend.” Natasha threw out straightforwardly.

These words shocked Roderick.

Wasn’t Natasha’s man Tyler?

How come there’s another one now?

And judging from her expression, it didn't seem like she was joking.

"Honey, not only did that gigolo call me a shrew, but he also humiliated me and said that I have a disease. If you don't stand up for me, I will be too ashamed to leave the house ever again!" Chloe put on a pitiful look.

As she spoke, tears spilled from her eyes.

It was like she **was** now a completely different person than **her** unruly self earlier.

She was a drama queen, plain and simple.

"Okay, calm down. I will definitely get justice for you." After comforting his wife, he turned back to Natasha.

Ms. Harmon, I need an explanation."

"What explanation? Your wife was the one spitting ugly words first. Dustin was just having a normal

conversation with her," Natasha responded indifferently.

Even though Roderick's family was filthy rich, she wasn't scared of it. If they could talk it out, then they would.

If they couldn't, then she'd let things get ugly. It was no big deal.

"You're talking nonsense! It's obvious that you're the ones ganging up to bully me!" Chloe shouted.

"You have to speak from your conscience. I was just kindly letting you know that you're sick," Dustin said in a

serious manner.

"See, honey! You heard it, right? He said I'm sick! He's clearly insulting me!" Chloe was furious.

"I'm only speaking the truth when I say you're sick. How is that insulting you?" Dustin asked back.

“Punk, you’re pretty arrogant, huh? Then I must ask—**what** disease **does** my wife **have**?” Roderick narrowed his eyes, his **expression** was livid.

“AIDS.” Dustin uttered casually.

“Bullshit!” Roderick’s face darkened. “I’ve always been clean, and I’ve never fooled around with anyone else. How could I possibly **have** contracted AIDS?”

“I know you haven’t, but your wife has,” **Dustin** said.

“What do you **mean**?” Roderick’s gaze was steely.

“It’s simple. Your wife **is having** an affair,” Dustin uttered those shocking words.

The entire room broke out into pandemonium.

T T

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All of them pointed at Dustin as if they were looking **at** an idiot.

He’d just told Big Bucks Brooks to his face that his wife was having an affair. Wasn’t this just asking for death?

Everyone knew that Big Bucks Brooks was known for covering up his wife’s mistakes.

“Punk, do you know what you are **saying**?” Roderick gritted his teeth, his eyes ferocious.

If it wasn’t for Natasha, he would have shot this man in front of him already.

“Of course I know what I’m saying.” Dustin said, his expression remaining unchanging. “Mr. Brooks, your wife just hired that bodyguard, Wally, a few months ago, right?”

“So what? Roderick frowned.

“Based on my observation, his symptoms are much more severe than your wife’s. Hence, my guess is that he was the one who gave your wife AIDS,” Dustin said.

Hearing these words, Chloe and the young bodyguard could not help but tremble in fear.

Panic flickered across their faces.

Roderick also caught this strange reaction.

“You

That’s bullshit! By the time she returned to her senses, Chloe’s shame had transformed into rage.” You dog, you’re smearing my innocence! I’m going to beat you into a bloody pulp today!”

With that, she got ready to pounce on him and attack him.

At that moment, Roderick’s cell phone suddenly vibrated.

A message arrived.

It was the result of the medical checkup this morning.

Roderick perused it, and his face instantly turned stormy.

Veins popped on his forehead.

“Honey, what’s wrong?” Chloe was feeling a little uneasy.

Suddenly, a sharp **slap** rang out.

Roderick, who was known for being overbearingly protective **of** his wife, slapped Chloe with so much force that she staggered backward.

The blow caused her to bleed from her nose and mouth, and her cheeks began to swell.

The entire room was shocked!

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Chapter 210

“Honey, why did you hit me?” Chloe cupped her face, looking hurt.

The others also looked at each other, unable to comprehend what had just unfolded.

No one expected that Big Bucks Brooks, the man who had always covered for his wife’s behavior, would

smack her with **his** own hand.

“See for yourself!” With a dark look, he threw the phone straight at Chloe.

Chloe picked up the phone and took a look. Suddenly, her face turned ashen, as if she’d been struck by

lightning.

It was the medical checkup report from the hospital, and the diagnosis was indeed AIDS!

“How could this happen? No, it can’t be!” Chloe shook her head frantically in utter disbelief.

“This medical report must have been falsified! Honey, I don’t have AIDS. I really don’t!”

“Are you still trying to defend yourself at this point?!” Roderick roared, his blood was boiling.

Any man would not be able to stomach finding out they were cheated on.

Even worse, his wife had contracted AIDS because of it.

This was simply humiliating!

“Honey, I’m sorry! I was just momentarily confused. I’m begging you, please forgive me!” With a thud, Chloe fell to her knees. Then, she pointed at the young

bodyguard next to her and bellowed, "It's all his fault! It's all because he seduced me! It's not me; I'm innocent!"

"Mrs. Brooks, you have to speak from your conscience. You were the one who came onto me, so how could you push the blame all on me?" Wally was a bit upset.

If he were to carry the blame for seducing a married woman, considering Big Bucks Brooks's power, his life

may be in danger.

Naturally, he didn't want to be the scapegoat.

"S— shut up! It was you! You seduced me! Not only that, but you also gave me AIDS, you animal!" Furious. Chloe stormed over to Wally and **gave** him a few huge slaps.

Afterward, she returned to her position on her knees in front of Roderick and begged, "Honey, I know I made a mistake. I won't do it again. I'm begging you, we're husband and wife, so please forgive me this time!"

Roderick was unmoved, his face icy.

He loved his wife, but only on the condition that she was faithful to him.

If she couldn't do the basics and remained loyal to him, then who was she to deserve his love?

"It's all your fault! It's all because of you two pieces of shit. I'm going to kill you!" Seeing Roderick's lack of response, Chloe became infuriated and lunged straight toward Natasha.

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She also purposely smeared her hand with the blood from her nose, intending to give Natasha a taste of AIDS.

"Get lost!" Dustin stepped forward and launched a kick straight at Chloe.

After getting sick, she still wanted to pass it on to others. She really deserved a beating.

“Honey, he—he hit me... Chloe held her stomach with a look of agony.

“Take Chloe home and keep an eye on her. Don’t let her leave the room for even a moment!” Roderick ordered with a cold expression.

“Roger!” Without another word, the two sturdy bodyguards immediately hauled Chloe up and left.

No matter how much the latter wailed and apologized, it was to no avail.

After the noise died down, Roderick couldn’t help but take a deep breath, Soon enough, he managed to

suppress his anger.

He was far more adept at controlling his emotions than the average person.

“Ms. Harmon, I’m sorry for my wife’s poor behavior. I’m sure you were frightened,” Roderick apologized.

“What happened today was nothing but an accident.” Natasha smiled politely.

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“This young man must be the skilled healer you mentioned, Mr. Rhys, right? From what happened today, you do live up to your reputation,” Roderick said.

“I only hope you won’t take it too hard, Mr. Brooks,” Dustin said.

Any man wouldn’t be able to handle hearing that he’d been cheated on.

“Speaking of, I should be thanking you, Mr. Rhys. If it wasn’t for your sharp eyes, I don’t know how long I would have been lied to.” Roderick forced a smile.

In this case, it was better to rip the bandage off.

Although it was a bit humiliating, it still beat getting cheated on repeatedly.

“Mr. Brooks, forgive me for asking, but could the secret illness you’ve been suffering from be the same as your wife’s?” Natasha asked tentatively.

Typically speaking, if his wife got it, then Roderick must have caught it too.

“Um. I probably don’t have it.” Roderick looked slightly embarrassed. “To be honest, because of how busy I have been with work, I haven’t slept with my wife for half a year.”

“That’s good. You dodged a bullet.” Natasha smiled.

“Mr. Rhys, can you tell what disease I have?” Roderick went straight to the point.

“Mr. Brooks, **have** you been experiencing back and knee pain, mood swings, and insomnia?” Dustin suddenly asked.

“How did you know?” Roderick raised his eyebrows in surprise.

“Of course, I observed it.” Dustin smiled slightly. “Not only do I know that your body is weak and sickly, but I also know about the hidden injury at your lower back. If my guess isn’t wrong, you injured your lower back a **few** years ago, right?”

The moment Roderick heard those words, his face instantly grew solemn.

The way he looked at Dustin also changed.

Indeed, he had gotten hurt a few **years** ago.

That time, he'd been on his way to a meeting to discuss a business deal when a hitman suddenly appeared, stabbing him in the **lower** back.

Fortunately, he didn't lose his life, but ever since then, his injury had been causing him **pain**.

The problem was that he'd never told anyone about this, so how did **Dustin** find out?

"Mr. Rhys, you're really amazing! But **how** could you tell?" Roderick **was** both shocked and suspicious.

"I'm a doctor. For most ailments, you can identify clues from the smallest details. For example, you were walking in a stiff manner earlier, putting less **pressure** on your left foot compared to the right. Evidently, you

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have a lower back injury." Dustin replied.

"Hahaha... You're truly a miracle doctor, Mr. Rhys! I acknowledge your talent!" Roderick said.

"What a compliment, Mr. Brooks. I'm just using my wits."

"Mr. Rhys, could you take a good look and see whether this illness of mine can be cured?" Roderick extended

his wrist.

Dustin felt for his pulse. Then, he responded, "It's curable, but it will take some time. That knife injured your kidney, which has affected your ability to have children. Your reproductive ability has also greatly deteriorated. This is also why you still haven't had children until now."

When he said that, Natasha and Roderick paused, clearly taken aback.

“Mr. Rhys, are you sure you didn’t make a mistake?” Roderick frowned.

“That’s right, Dustin. Mr. Brooks has a four–year–old son,” Natasha added.

The reason why Roderick had doted on Chloe so much was because she’d borne him a son.

Being able to have a son as a middle–aged man, he naturally had a lot of love and care for both mother and child.

“Huh?” This time, it was Dustin’s turn to be confused.

He reached for Roderick’s wrist again and said with certainty, “It’s impossible! Your knife injury happened at least six years ago. The knife went all the way in, so there is no way you are fertile, unless

“Unless what?” Roderick found himself asking.

“Unless your son isn’t biologically yours.”

Roderick was speechless.

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Roderick stood there frozen, his face was pale.

He’d experienced all kinds of hardships all his life, but at that moment, he didn’t know what to do.

He thought it was bad enough that he’d gotten cheated on.

He didn’t expect that there’d be a bigger “surprise” that followed.

His son wasn’t actually biologically his?

This revelation was even more severe than finding out he was being cheated on!

“Mr. Rhys, are... you sure?” Roderick’s eye twitched. He was clinging to the very last glimmer of hope.

“Mr. Brooks, it’s a hard pill to swallow, but based on your body’s current condition, you lost your ability to have

children a long time ago. If you don’t believe me, you can go get tested yourself,” Dustin said firmly.

To be honest, he was starting to pity Roderick.

Although he was swamped with riches, his wife had an affair, and his son wasn’t his.

This double whammy would **have** driven any ordinary person insane.

“Alright. Thank you, Mr. Rhys. There are too many people here. Shall we find another place to talk?” Roderick

asked, his face completely neutral.

“Of course.” Dustin caught Natasha’s eye and immediately agreed.

“Alright. Dan, take Ms. Harmon and Mr. Rhys to the Brooks Manor. I’ll be there after a while,” Roderick

instructed his driver.

Dan hummed in response. Then, he led Dustin and Natasha to the Rolls Royce outside.

After the two left. Roderick’s expression finally turned gloomy.

Whether his son was his or not, he would find out with a paternity test.

He could forgive his wife for her affair, but he couldn’t handle raising someone else’s child.

Dustin and Natasha walked around the garden at the Brooks Manor, gazing at the beautiful scenery

surrounding them.

A few housekeepers trailed behind them, carrying trays of pastries and tea, ready to be called upon anytime.

After taking a stroll through the garden, they found a **cool** area to rest their feet.

“Ms. Harmon, do you think Mr. Brooks can handle this shocking truth?” Dustin asked out of the blue.

If Chloe hadn’t done something so demeaning, he actually wouldn’t have stuck his nose where it didn’t belong.

“Mr. Brooks **has gone** through all sorts of trials and tribulations. He should be fine. Of course, that’s if you can

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cure his secret illness.” Natasha smiled faintly.

For a man, the ability to produce children was very important.

“As long as Mr. Brooks believes me,” Dustin responded.

As he spoke, a large shadow suddenly fell over them.

It was Roderick!

“Hello, you two. Sorry for making you wait so long.” Roderick wiped the sweat from his forehead, forcing a

smile.

“Mr. Brooks, has the matter been settled?” Dustin asked cautiously.

“Yes, it’s settled.” Roderick nodded.

Thanks to the power of money, the results of the paternity test were out in less than an hour.

As Dustin said, his son was indeed not his.

When he learned of the outcome, he was furious.

He even had the urge to kill.

However, after so many years, he had developed some attachments to them.

In the end, he let the mother and son live.

But from today on, they were not to appear before him ever again.

“Ah

fate truly dealt me a rotten hand! All my life, I did only good deeds, so who would have thought that not

only would I lose my ability to have children, but I would also end up parting ways with my wife and child.”

Roderick heaved a long sigh.

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Despite running such a huge family business, Roderick didn't even have an heir **now**. It was truly a tragedy.

“Mr. Brooks, don't take it too hard. Although the knife injury damaged your fertility, it can actually be treated. Once you're recovered, you can have another son, or even ten! It won't be a problem.” Dustin smiled as he attempted to cheer Roderick up.

“Really?” Roderick trembled, his face expectant.

In the past six months, the main reason he hadn't slept with his wife was because he couldn't get it up.

However, because of his dignity as a man, he'd always kept it a secret.

So, to hear that he'd be able to rise up again, naturally, he **was** elated.

"Mr. Brooks, if I dare to say it, it means I can do it." As Dustin spoke, he took out a tablet and said, "This is Gemiphen, which I created. It helps clear up circulatory pathways and heal internal injuries. Give it a try."

"Okay!" Without another word, Roderick took the Gemiphen and swallowed it.

As soon as the tablet entered his system, it turned into a rush of warmth that spread through his body..

Instantly, he felt his mood lift, and his body felt better in a way he couldn't explain.

The pain in his lower back had also improved significantly.

"Amazing This is amazing! Mr. Rhys, your miracle tablet is extraordinary!" After experiencing the fascinating changes in his body, Roderick was practically over the moon.

In an instant, he felt as if he'd gotten a brand-new body.

If he previously had doubts about Dustin's abilities, then now, he was utterly convinced!

Any famous doctor was trash in comparison to Dustin!

"Mr. Rhys, take the Gemiphen once every three days. After a month, your body will completely recover." Dustin **took** out a small glass bottle filled with Gemiphen and handed it to Roderick.

"Thank you so much, Mr. Rhys! I'll remember your great kindness for the rest of my life!" Feeling emotional,

Roderick knelt on the ground.

"Mr. Brooks, please get up It was nothing." Dustin quickly helped him to his feet.

Since this all happened because of him, now that he was able to cure Roderick's illness, there was at least a

good ending.

“Mr. **Rhys**, you’re too humble. If it weren’t for your help, my life would have been over!” Roderick said, his face glowing with gratitude.

A man who couldn’t get it up wasn’t a real man.

Now that Dustin had given **him** the chance to regain his dignity as a **man**, it was as though he’d been given a

new lease on life!

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“Mr. Brooks, now that Dustin has cured your illness, how do you plan to repay him?” Natasha said, half joking.

As his other half, she knew that it was time to ask for remuneration.

“Name whatever you need, Mr. Rhys. If I can do it, I won’t say no!” Roderick said, placing his hand on his chest

to show how genuine he was.

“I don’t need anything else. All I’m interested in are precious **herbs** such as heliotropes, chervil, and flowers of Crimson Gem. If you have them, Mr. Brooks, I would be nothing but pleased,” Dustin said, naming his price.

“I’ve never collected precious herbs before, but no worries. I’ll send someone to check it out. Once I get any

news. I’ll buy it for you right away, Mr. Rhys!” Roderick promised.

“Thank you, Mr. Brooks,” Dustin said.

“No, no. I should be the one thanking you, Mr. Rhys,” Roderick said in return.

He now had a profound sense of worship for Dustin’s impressive abilities.

“Sir... At that moment, an elderly butler suddenly walked over and reported, “Phineas Lacey and his son are here to see you. They say they have something to discuss with you.”

“Phineas Lacey? What is he doing here?” Roderick rubbed his chin.

“It’s such a small world. I never expected I’d run into them here.” Dustin narrowed his eyes when he heard their

names.

“What, do you know these people, Mr. Rhys?” Roderick pressed.

“I do, and we even got into a conflict. Without leaving anything out, Dustin quickly recounted the entire story.

After Roderick listened to the whole incident, he couldn’t help but snort. “Those two bastards are truly arrogant bullies. I hate people like this the most! Come with me to **see** them, Mr. Rhys. Today, I’ll give them something to see!”

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Chapter 214

At that moment, Phineas and Matt were in the Brooks Manor living room.

“Dad, do you think Big Bucks Brooks will lend us money?” Mall glanced around, looking worried.

“Big Bucks Brooks is filthy rich and generous to boot. He’s always had a good relationship with our family. It shouldn’t be a problem to borrow some money,” Phineas said, raising his cup and taking a sip. It was obvious that he was very confident.

Although the Lacey family hadn’t been restored to its previous glory, they were still above the average person.

Outside, they still had some status.

“If it weren’t for our family’s capital chain rupture causing our businesses to suffer majorly, we would never have to borrow money from others,” Matt said, sighing.

Not long ago, they’d suddenly received terrible news.

Many of their big-shot partners had retracted their investments. All the business deals they’d made previously

had gone bust.

Their entire family suffered serious damage overnight.

Now, they desperately needed a capital injection, or else the Lacey family would go bankrupt in less than a

month.

At this point, the only one who could help them was Big Bucks Brooks.

“Speaking of that, it’s really strange how all of the investments were retracted collectively, and disaster struck from all sides. I bet somebody’s targeting our family,” Phineas rubbed his chin in thought.

“Who’s gutsy enough to go mess with our family?” Matt slammed his palm **int** **o** the table.

Their original plan was to get the Immortunol formula in their hands and then use the investment funds to

conduct their own research.

This way, the Lacey family would be restored to their former glory!

However, after everything that had happened, their plan was ruined.

“**We** still haven’t been able to look into it yet. Once we raise the funds we need and get through these tough times, we’ll drag that bastard out!” An evil glint flashed through Phineas’ eyes.

“Dad, how much money does our family need to operate normally?” Matt asked uncertainly.

“At least three billion dollars!” **Phineas** put up three fingers.

“That much?” Matt’s expression **drooped**. “Would Big Bucks Brooks agree to loan us three billion in one go?”

“Big Bucks Brooks controls one-third of all the **cash** flow in Millsburg. What’re three billion dollars to him?” Phineas **took a** sip of tea and said casually, “Not to mention, I even came here personally. Would he dare to say no? He should be happy that our family is cozying up to him on our own accord instead.”

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“That’s true.” Hearing those words, Matt let out a sigh of relief.

The Laney family did have prestige out there; Big Bucks Brooks had to give them some respect.

As the two were speaking, the door suddenly opened, and a few people entered.

The one in the lead was none other than Roderick.

The moment they met. Phineas stood up and extended a hand, his face full of smiles. “Hey, Mr. Brooks! Long time no see. You’ve gotten much more handsome!”

However, when he saw Dustin behind Roderick, his smile froze on his face. “Punk, what are you doing here?!”

“You’re here, so why can’t I be here too?” Dustin retorted indifferently.

“Hmph! And who **are** you? Can you even be compared to us?” Phineas’ expression turned cold instantly.

“Dustin, are you here to also get a loan from Mr. Brooks?” Matt said with a suspicious look.

“Why I’m here doesn’t concern you.” Dustin’s expression remained unchanged.

“Mr. Brooks, we’ve always been friendly with each other. Don’t lend that punk any money! We have bad blood!” Phineas said, calling a spade a spade.

In his eyes. Roderick would never go against the Laney family for a small fry.

So, he definitely won today.

“Phineas, are you sure that you have bad blood with Mr. Rhys?” Roderick smirked coolly.

“Of course!” Phineas puffed out his chest. “Mr. Brooks, to be frank, the two grudges I have with him can never be solved, so please don’t try to lobby for him!”

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The Immortunol formula would definitely be his soon.

“You’re mistaken. I don’t mean it that way.” Roderick uttered calmly.

“Huh?” Phineas was puzzled. “What do you mean, then?”

“Both of you are here to borrow my money, aren’t you?” Roderick asked back instead of answering.

Phineas let out a sheepish laugh. “Our family ran into some trouble recently, and we need some money to turn

things around. That’s why **we’ve** come to you, Mr. Brooks.”

“How much do you need?”

“About three billion dollars?”

“Three billion!” Roderick raised an eyebrow. “Sorry, but no can do.”

“What?” Phineas shock quickly turned to dismay. “Mr. Brooks, three billion is nothing to you. Why can’t you

lend us the money?”

“Technically, I’ve already lent the money to Mr. Rhys, so you’ll have to beg him for the money.” Roderick replied

with a sarcastic smile.

“What? You lent it to him?” The father–son duo was stunned, unable **to** believe their ears.

There was no way Roderick would have lent that useless punk three billion dollars!

“You’re not pulling our leg, are you, Mr. Brooks?” Phineas asked again, **eyes** wide.

“Yeah! What are we supposed to do if you give the money to him?” Matt was dismayed.

“That’s none of my business!” Roderick responded frankly.

“Mr. Brooks, how could you lend your money to him instead of us? Considering our friendship, you’re carrying it too far. Do you think that brat is better than the Laney family?”

The Laney family was a noble family that was leagues above Dustin in terms of wealth and connections. Any normal person would know who to side with.

“Firstly, we’re not friends. Secondly, it’s my money. I decide who it **goes** to. I don’t have to **ask** anyone’s opinion. Lastly, **who** the f*ck do you think **you are**? How **dare** you compare yourselves **to** Mr. Rhys! You should really look in a f*cking mirror!” Roderick snapped scornfully.

“Mr. Brooks! Are **you** going to make the Laney family your enemy just because of that brat?” Phineas growled.

“Exactly! You should think this through carefully. Is the **Laney** family **more** important or **that** brat?” **Matt** quipped. They were sure that a businessman like Roderick would never turn his back on the Laney family.

“So what if we become enemies? A penniless family like yours **is** trying to threaten **me**? Ha! You must have a death wish!” Roderick curled his lip.

“I can cut off all your funds right now. I’ll make sure you never get a penny in this province!”

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His words hit the lather—
son duo like a bucket of ice. They’d been **so** agitated that they forgot that

Bucks Brooks they were talking to, whose influence and wealth exceeded the Laney family a gazillion times.

Even when they **had** been at full power, they still had to lower their heads in front of Roderick, let alone now.

Nonetheless, they could never have dreamed that someone **as** powerful as Roderick would butt heads with

their family for someone like Dustin.

Did Dustin **have** connections they weren’t aware of?

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“Mr. Brooks, why on earth are you willing to go against our family for him?” Phineas demanded with a threatening glare. He had approached Roderick confidently but **never** expected this outcome.

“To tell you the truth, Mr. Rhys is my **savior** and honored guest. If you have a problem with him, that means you have a problem with me! So, you either beg for his forgiveness, or your family **is over!**” Roderick declared: the aura he exuded was overwhelming.

“You want us to apologize to that asshole? In your dreams!” Matt yelled angrily.

“Then, get lost! I wonder how long your family can last.” Roderick kicked them out.

“Roderick Brooks, life has its ups and downs, so don’t look down on a broke man! You’ll regret it one day!” Matt forced through gritted teeth and stormed away.

“Mr. Brooks, you’ve incurred the wrath of the Laney family. I doubt my family can’t borrow merely three billion dollars elsewhere!” Phineas glared at Roderick before following his son.

“Arrogant fools!” Roderick sneered.

No one in the province would dare lend the Laney family money since Roderick already rejected them.

Matt and Phineas returned home displeased with the outcome.

“What’s wrong with Roderick Brooks today? He refused to help us because of that brat!” Matt seethed.

“It seems like that kid has some connections.” Phineas frowned.

“As if! He’s just a pretty boy who got lucky because of Natasha! I bet Roderick only went against us because of Natasha’s support too.” Matt was displeased

“The Harmon family sure is bothersome. I have a feeling that our financial issues have something to do with

them.” Phineas pondered.

“What do we do now, Dad? Should we fight to the death?”

“No. We aren’t at the end of our rope yet. Let me make some calls. Phineas pulled out his phone and began asking for help. The Laney family still had some friends **and** partners, so they’d definitely pull through as long as he managed to raise the funds.

“Hey. Mr. Smith, it’s me. I’m kind of short on cash, so do you think you could help me out? I’ll pay you back

with interest after the turnover.”

“Hi, Mr. Thompson. This is Phineas Lancy. I’m calling to ask for a favor.”

“Hey, Mr. Johnson. I need your help.”

Phineas made call after call to any of his friends who were well off. However, his face darkened with each call

he made.

As soon as they heard that he **was** trying to borrow money, these people who claimed to be his **friends**.

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immediately changed their attitudes and came up with all sorts of excuses to refuse, and some even hung up without responding.

Phineas finally knew what fair-weather friends were like. After all the calls, he still couldn’t get any money. Instead, he stirred up more trouble.

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“How did it go, Dad? Is anyone willing to help us?” Matt asked tentatively.

“Fuck those bastards! They come wagging their tails as soon as they have something they want and call themselves my friends, but the moment they find out that our

family is in trouble, they start running away! Those f*cking fakes!” Phineas’ face contorted with rage. He never thought that he, the head of the Laney family, would end **up** like this.

“Dad, everyone **always** says that misfortune shows you those who are not your real friends. Stop hanging out with them from now on. I’ll make them regret their choice after we pull through.” Matt swore solemnly.

“**Matt**, my contacts are useless now. You’re the only one I can rely on.” Phineas suddenly thought of someone. “Aren’t you close with Edwin Hummer’s daughter? Why don’t you ring her up and see if she can lend us some money?”

“Oh, right! I nearly forgot! The daughter of the wealthiest man in Swinton should be able to spare us three billion dollars easily. I’ll call her now.”

Matt pulled his phone out and dialed a number.

“My, my. If it isn’t Mr. Laney? How did you find **the** time to call me?” Someone grumbled over the phone.

“Don’t put it like that, Tina. I’ve been busy at work recently. I called you the second I got some free time,” Matt

said with a smile. He was a professional when it came to coaxing women.

“Humph!

At least you remembered to call me. So, why are you actually calling?” Tina smiled.

“Because I miss you so much, of course! Why else?” Matt teased.

Tina chuckled mirthlessly. “Right. I’m hanging up if you won’t tell me the truth.”

“Hold on, hold on. I do **have** a favor to ask you.” Matt cleared his throat. “My business ran into some financial issues recently, **so** we need some money to turn things around. Would you like to invest in us?”

“How much do you need?” Tina asked back.

“Not much. About three billion dollars.” Matt answered with a smile.

“Three billion isn’t a lot? You’re **Joking**, right?” Tina’s voice went up an octave.

“To others, it may be a lot. But you’re the daughter of the Hummer family, the prettiest and most talented woman in Swinton. Three billion can’t be much for someone like you.”

Tina was pleased with all the flattery. After all, who didn’t like to **hear** their lover praising them?

“I don’t mind getting you the money, but you have to tell me why.” **Tina stated**

.

“To tell **you** the truth, someone ruptured our capital chain, and I have a feeling that the Harmon family was the

one who did it,” Matt answered bluntly.

“You and the Harmon family **had always** kept a wide berth. Why would they do something like that to you?” Tina asked curiously.

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“Because of Dustin Rhys!”

Matt briefly explained everything to her.

“What? You threatened that psychopath?” Tina shrieked.

“That’s right! That shameless bastard tried to humiliate our family, so I had to teach him a lesson. I’ll destroy his family with your investment!” Matt fumed.

“Are you a f*cking idiot? Why would you try to piss that psycho off?”

“Why are you so afraid? He’s just a country bumpkin. I’ll get rid of him easily.” Matt declared confidently.

“In your dreams, you moron! Don’t drag me along your death quest!”

With that. Tina hung up the phone.

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“Hello? Hello!” Matt held **his** phone by his ear with a dumbfounded expression. All he did was mention Dustin’s name. Why did Tina sound so frightened?

Matt had no idea that Tina was still traumatized from the time Dustin slapped her. What’s worse was that instead of getting her revenge, she had been forced to grovel for Dustin’s forgiveness, which was nothing less than an utter embarrassment and a terror for her.

Although she was bitter about it, she couldn’t lay a hand on Dustin because her family didn’t dare seek revenge before her brother returned.

Dustin was someone who could defeat a martial arts master like Mr. Milfroy with ease. If someone like him

were to go crazy, he could destroy the entire Hummer family in a heartbeat! Because of this, they didn’t dare seek revenge, and Tina shook in fear every time someone mentioned Dustin.

“What did Ms. Hummer say, Matt?” Phineas saw his son in a daze and asked.

“Fuck! That b*tch is terrified of Rhys. There’s no way she’ll lend us money.” Matt scowled.

“The daughter of the Hummer family is scared of that brat? Is it because of the Harmon family?” Phineas

pondered aloud.

“Possibly.” Matt nodded, thinking hard. He couldn’t think of any other reason.

“This is bothersome...” Phineas frowned. “Our family is doomed if we don’t get any money soon. We might

have to beg for that brat’s forgiveness.”

“Beg for his forgiveness? Fuck, no!” Matt yelled. “Why should we lower our heads to someone like him? I’d

rather suffer than beg!”

“Don’t be rash, Matt!” Phineas warned gravely. “He has the Harmon family to support him, and now, he has Roderick Brooks’ support as well. We’ll sink further if you do anything to him!”

Alas, those words failed to reach Matt, who has lost repeatedly to Dustin recently. Today’s incident only fueled his anger, and his hatred toward Dustin peaked.

“Matt, leave this matter to me. You should **take** a break for the next two days. Just don’t get into any trouble.” Phineas instructed his son seriously, who didn’t reply as he began to plot his revenge.

Soon, night fell.

Inside Midnight **Rose**, Dahlia downed shot after shot in a corner.

Lyra sat beside her, her face full of worry. This was the first time she **saw** Dahlia like this.

Dahlia refused to return to the company or care about what was going on, completely abandoning her strong woman character and letting herself go.

Lyra heard that it **was** because of Dustin, but was it worth it?

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“Please stop drinking, Ms. Nicholson. Let’s go back. Your mother is worried about you.” Lyra implored.

“Leave me alone. I want to keep drinking. All my worries disappear when I’m drunk.” Dahlia chuckled

humorlessly before chucking another **shot** down her throat.

She didn’t know what to do. She was under constant pressure because of her family **and** had to fight her feelings for Dustin at the same time.

Dahlia knew she misunderstood him, but she didn’t know how to explain herself. Actually, it’d be more accurate to say that she was terrified of seeing Dustin’s heartless expression, so she decided to **use** alcohol

to numb herself.

She may be a capable leader in the business world, but when it **came** to her personal feelings, she realized she **was** an utter failure. Even though she knew that she had been the one who misunderstood Dustin, her pride wouldn’t let her apologize. Instead, she expected Dustin to step forward and request a reconciliation.

“So this is where you are, Dahlia.”

Matt entered the bar and spotted the two ladies immediately.

“Mr. Laney, you’re here. Please stop her. Her body can’t take it if she drinks so much!” Lyra quickly stood up **and** greeted Matt, whom she called. She felt that Matt was a much better option than Dustin.

*Please get her some water, Lyra. I’ll talk to her,” Matt assured with a smile.

“Thank you, Mr. Laney.” Lyra nodded and darted off.

“Why **are** you drinking so much, Dahlia?” Matt asked with a concerned expression.

“It’s none of your business. Go **away!**” Dahlia’s eyes were hazy, but her tone was colder than ever.

Matt’s smile froze for a second before he recovered himself.

Without anyone noticing, he slipped a pill into her wine and smiled. “You still want to drink, don’t you. Dahlia?”

Let me join you.”

He poured another glass for Dahlia. Dahlia, who was already tipsy, didn’t notice anything wrong and downed the glass without a word. Soon, her head became heavy and her vision blurred, making her sway.

“Mr. Laney, I think Ms. Nicholson is drunk.” Lyra returned just then.

“It’s a

Alright. I’ll send her home **now**. Her family’s worried sick.” Matt promised with a kind smile.

“Alright. Thanks, Ms. Laney.” Lyra didn’t think too much about it and helped carry Dahlia into Matt’s car. Since the car only had two seats, she could only watch as the car’s headlights disappeared.

“Humph! You’re finally in my arms. **You** like acting high and mighty, don’t you? Well, I’ll have some fun with **you** tonight.” Matt smiled sinisterly and headed straight to the hotel.

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Chapter 219

Meanwhile, at Peaceful Medical Centre, Dustin **was** reading a book in silence when a Maybach pulled up at the door. The car door opened, and Phineas came out holding some gills.

“Mr. Rhys.” Phineas entered the building with a smile, no longer carrying the arrogance he had when they first

met.

“Do you need me for something?” Dustin glanced at the other man indifferently.

“Mr. Rhys, I’m really sorry about today’s incident. Please forgive us for being so ignorant.” Phineas smiled apologetically.

He finally understood that there was more than meets the eye when it came to Dustin, who had the support of the Harmon family and the friendship of Big Bucks Brooks. If Phineas wanted to borrow three billion dollars, he had to first get Dustin’s forgiveness.

“How could a nobody like me make the Laney family apologize?” Dustin replied, unconcerned.

“What are you talking about, Mr. Rhys? You’re young but talented. We admit defeat proudly. Please give us a way out.” Phineas bowed his head. However, Dustin didn’t respond. Gritting his teeth, Phineas fell to his knees.

with a thud.

“Mr. Rhys, please accept our family’s sincere apologies. As long as you give us another chance, you’ll be our honored guest forever! I’m willing to offer a third of—

no, half of our property as an apology.” Phineas quickly bowed lower, surprising Dustin, Dustin admired the older man for having the courage to put his pride aside to

apologize.

“What should we do about the death of Caitlyn’s **cat**?” Dustin asked coldly.

“We’ll pay her back! We get her as many cats as she wants!” Phineas frantically **vowed**.

“Dusty’s dead. It doesn’t matter how many cats you get.” Caitlyn murmured sadly next to Dustin.

“Did you hear that? I don’t mind forgiving you, but you offended Caitlyn.” Dustin shrugged.

"I'm so sorry. Ms. Lawler. I **swear** I won't do it again! Please forgive me this once. I've learned my mistake!" Phineas quickly dragged **himself** to Caitlyn without getting up, and he began to apologize.

"I forgive you on the condition that you never do anything evil **again!**" Caitlyn declared gravely.

"Definitely! I've learned my mistake." Phineas **nodded frantically**, having no choice but to lower **his** head

toward them.

"Since Caitlyn forgives you, I'll let this matter go. You better remember your promise. Hall of your properties." Dustin reminded calmly.

"Of course. As long as the Laney family is able to pull through, they're yours!" Phineas dared not object.

Dustin hummed. He was about **to** say something else when his phone started **ringing**.

Dahlia **was calling** him.

Chapter 219

Muffled noises could be heard **as** soon **as** he picked up.

"Let me go. I want to go home." Dahlia demanded weakly.

"What do you mean 'go home'? Look at how pretty Estelle Hotel is. Let's keep drinking there." Matt cackled.

"You can go alone. Piss off."

"Fucking slut! You better appreciate the chance I'm giving you. You don't have a say in this. You're drinking tonight. Get in!"

As the phone fell to the floor, the cursing became softer until it completely faded away.

Dustin's face darkened immediately, and the air around him became unbelievably cold.

“What’s wrong, Mr. Rhys?” Phineas shivered.

A loud slap rang out as Dustin struck Phineas across the face, causing the latter to fall to the floor. “You motherf*cker! You better hope your son didn’t make a mistake, **or** I’ll destroy your entire family!” Dustin opened the door and dashed out.

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Chapter 220

“Huh?” Phineas covered his cheek with a hand, dumbfounded.

Meanwhile, inside a room in Estelle Hotel, Dahlia was lying strewn across the bed, nearly unconscious, her head heavy and her body weak.

Matt stood next to her, grinning wickedly as he admired her voluptuous figure.

“Dahlia, I **have** to admit. You sure are a beauty.” He tsked.

“Your looks and figure are perfect. I’ve f*cked countless women, but none were as charming as you. Naturally, I’m the perfect man for you. How dare **Dustin** Rhys try to claim you as his! But don’t worry, you’ll be mine after tonight.”

Sneering, Matt began to unbutton his shirt before remembering something. He pulled out his phone and

panned the camera toward Dahlia.

“I nearly forgot to record our wonderful night. I promised Dustin that I’d send him a video of us making love. Men don’t break promises.” Matt grinned excitedly.

“**You** despicable, shameless bastard! I’ll throw you to jail if you touch me!” Dahlia seethed feebly.

“If you don’t mind others seeing **the** video, go ahead. I don’t mind. So **what** if I have to go in for a few years? At least I get to f*ck **you**. Still, there’s no **need** for us to take things that far. You’ll just have to **marry** me after

tonight. That way, you'll be able to protect **your** reputation while **having** the honor of being f*cked by me. Isn't that a great deal?" Matt sniggered confidently

"**In** your dreams, f*cker! I'd rather die than marry a hypocritical asshole like you!" Dahlia tried to **get** up several

times but flopped back to the bed pathetically each time. Soon, her face flushed from the exertion, and the

drug was still doing its job.

"Huh?" Matt's expression hardened. "Are you still thinking of that loser right now? I don't get it. How is he

better than me? **Why** do you keep thinking of him?"

"He's better than you in every way. You don't even deserve to compete with him!" Dahlia fumed.

"He's a f*cking nobody. If someone hadn't supported him, do you think he would have **made** it to where he is.

today? That dickhead ruined my **plans** so **many** times. I swear I'm **going** to kill him one day!" Matt snarled.

"I'll kill you if you touch a hair on his **head!**" Dahlia swore, her expression ferocious.

"You're still protecting that asshole? I better teach you a lesson!" Matt **tugged** his belt off and **began** to lash out at Dahlia. "You **whore!** I'll kill **you!** You better say that I'm the best and that I'm the **man** you want!"

Soon, Dahlia's fair skin turned bloody as whip **marks** littered her body. Still, she kept silent, digging her teeth into her lip stubbornly.

"Fuck! **You're** stubborn, eh? I'll f*ck you up tonight!" Infuriated, Matt yanked his **clothes** off and lunged toward

her.

As he was tearing at Dahlia's clothes, the room door flew open with an ear-splitting boom, and a formidable figure stormed in murderously.

Instantly, the freezing wind whistled in, and lightbulbs exploded.

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Chapter 221

Bang!

As the room door was kicked open, the lightbulbs in the room exploded simultaneously, shattering into pieces of glass, and an ominous chill blanketed the room.

“Who the f*ck is it? Who’s ruining my fun?” Matt spun around, scowling. He was unable to identify the person due to the sudden darkness in the room.

“Matt Laney, you have a death wish!” An icy voice growled as the shadow approached.

The moonlight peeked through the window, and Matt saw the other person’s face. It was Dustin!

“It’s you!” Matt’s expression changed, and he hastily pulled out a handgun from the bedside drawer. He yelled.

“You imbecile! I haven’t paid you back for ruining my plans so many times, yet you approached me first!”

“Dustin? Hurry up and go. Don’t care about me — Dahlia cried out weakly. When she saw Dustin, she thought she’d finally be saved, but she never expected that Matt would have a gun, so she instantly panicked.

“Weren’t you talking so big, dipshit? Ha, you still have to admit defeat to our family. I guess you’re scared now,

eh?” Matt raised his gun and sniggered. “You better grovel if you don’t want to die, or I’ll send a bullet straight

through your head!”

“Grovel? As if you’re worthy of that.” Dustin glared at the other man.

“Worthy?” Matt grinned maniacally and fired two shots near Dustin’s feet. “I don’t want you to just grovel. I’ll f*ck your woman right in front of you!”

“Y—
you shameless bastard!” Dahlia’s chest rose and fell violently as she fumed. However, because of the

drug, her flushed face looked more alluring than ever.

“So what? I’ll have my fill with you before dealing with that brat!” Matt declared

“I planned to finish you off in one go, but I changed my mind.” Dustin approached calmly, his overwhelming presence making it hard for Matt to breathe, and Matt’s hand began to tremble uncontrollably.

“Stop right there! You better stop, or I’ll f*cking shoot you!” Matt yelled.

However, Dustin continued his way forward as if he hadn’t heard the other man.

“You’re dead meat!” Matt gritted his teeth and aimed the gun at Dustin’s head before pulling the trigger.

Ear—
splitting bangs rang out as the chamber was emptied of bullets. However, Dustin had disappeared.

Abruptly, he appeared less than two feet away in front of Matt.

“You—”

Startled, Matt tried to jerk backward, but Dustin grabbed his hair and slammed his head into the wall with a bang. Matt immediately passed out, his head bleeding.

“D—
Dustin Now that the danger had passed, Dahlia’s body finally relaxed, and she fell into slumber.

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Dustin glanced at the fallen man and pulled out his phone to call someone. 15 minutes later, Hunter and a

dozen bulky men walked into the room.

“Mr. Rhys, here are the men you wanted.” Hunter said politely. These men were not only large, but they were also studs who only had an interest in pretty boys.

“Good job.” Dustin nodded in approval before waking Matt with acupuncture.

“W—
what are you guys doing? I’m warning you. I’m the heir of the Laney family, so you won’t
get away if you do something to me!” Matt began making threats as soon as he woke up.

“Mr. Laney, I purposely asked these men to serve you. Enjoy.” Dustin gestured with his hand, and the men instantly pulled Matt away, beaming sinisterly.

“Let me go!” Matt paled, terrified.

“I’m sorry, Dustin! Please forgive me! I won’t do it again!” Matt shrieked before being hauled into a car. All that awaited him was pain and misery.

“Mr. Anderson, tell your men to take good care of him. I want him to suffer as much as possible!” Dustin ordered coldly.

“No problem!” Hunter promised before leaving. Matt’s ass was going to be gaping after tonight for what he did to Dustin’s woman.

After everyone left, Dustin walked over to the bed and began applying ointment to Dahlia’s wounds.

“Dustin. I—I’m sorry...” Dahlia finally mumbled the long-awaited apology dazedly. Dustin’s body stiffened, and a sense of loss glinted in his eyes. After a second, he shook his head and continued applying the ointment.

All of a sudden, the door opened again with a boom. Florence, James, and many others barged into the room, their faces darkening as they spotted Dahlia’s unconscious body.

“Rhys! How dare you touch my daughter, you despicable man! I’ll kill you!” Florence darted forward to slap Dustin, but the man grabbed her hand with ease.

“What? Are you going to strike me back? You disgusting asshole!” Furious, Florence kicked Dustin in the shin

instead. The man frowned but didn’t fight back.

“Call the police right now! We need to arrest this motherf*cker!”

“That’s right! A hypocritical asshole like him should be in jail!”

Several people shouted, and James pulled out his phone to call the police.

“It doesn’t matter whether you believe me or not, but this has nothing to do with me,” Dustin stated. indifferently.

“Bullshit! Why would she be here if you didn’t kidnap her?” Florence shouted, glaring at him.

“Exactly! Everyone here can tell that you were planning to do something nasty to her!”

“You dare to defend yourself even though we caught you in the act? I guess you refuse to give in until the end!”

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The crowd threw out accusations indignantly as they glared at Dustin like they wanted to skin him alive. They

were disgusted that Dustin stooped so low because he couldn’t have Dahlia.

“Whatever. I didn’t do anything wrong anyway.” Dustin shook his head and got up to leave. He knew that these people wouldn’t believe him if he tried to explain himself anyway.

“Hold right there. Who said you could leave? You’re not stepping out of this room without explaining everything!” James put himself between Dustin and the door, but with a shove from the latter, James went

tumbling to the ground.

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Chapter 222

“You f*cker!” James got up and was about to spew insults when he realized that Dustin was already gone. Damn it! That kid’s lucky he got away, or I’d have taught him a lesson!”

“He can’t run away forever! After doing something like this, I’ll make sure he stays in jail for the rest of his life!” Florence gritted her teeth.

“That’s right! You can’t let him go!” Julie and the others quickly agreed. Dustin had gone too far!

“Hmm

Just then, Dahlia began to wake up.

“You’re finally awake!” Florence lit up. “How do you feel?”

“What are all of you doing here, Mom?” Dahlia rubbed her aching temples, her memory was a mess.

“Lyra called and told us that you might be in danger, so we hurried here. Thank God we made it in time, or Dustin would have raped you!” Florence got angry again.

“Dustin?” Dahlia frowned, seeming to have recalled something. She asked, “Where is he?”

“Don’t worry. We chased him away.” Florence reassured Dahlia.

“That’s right. We called the police too. We’ll catch that asshole!” James nodded.

“Why would you arrest him? He was the one who saved me!” Dahlia blurted.

“What? He saved you?” Everyone was shocked to hear that. Exchanging incredulous looks with each other, confusion was written across their faces.

“You’re kidding, right, Dahlia? He can’t be the one who rescued you. We clearly saw him touching you and was about to do something nasty!” Florence obviously didn’t believe Dahlia.

“She’s right, Sis. He tried to take your clothes off while you were unconscious!” James fanned the flames.

“We can all testify that Dustin was the one who did it!” Julie and a few others agreed.

Dahlia shook her head frantically, which made her alcohol-ridden head heavier.

“Who else could it be? There were only two of you in this room when we came in,” Florence said.

“It was Matt Laney, that bastard!” Dahlia struggled to organize her memories.

“You must be drunk, Dahlia. Matt’s a decent man. There’s no way he’d do something like this.”

“Sis, did Dustin slip you a drug? Is that why you’re so confused?”

“I heard that some drugs can cause hallucinations. That must be why your memory got jumbled up.”

One after another, the people in the room refuted what Dahlia said, making her doubt herself.

“Did I really remember wrongly? But how could that be?” she thought. Staring at her injuries, she had a hard time believing that Dustin was the one who did this.

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Chapter 222

“Hey, there’s a phone here, and it’s recording a video.” Julie spotted the phone on the television cabinet and brought it over.

“It must be that asshole’s!” Florence fumed. “He was even planning to record himself assaulting Dahlia! How disgusting!”

“There’s no way that brat can defend himself now that we have this evidence!”

“We have to put that guy in jail!”

The crowd began to hurl insults at Dustin.

“It can’t be. Dustin wouldn’t do that Dahlia shook her head, unable to accept that.”

“Why are you still defending him, Dahlia? Why do you still have feelings for that asshole? I’m telling you, Matt’s the better man for you. He’s leagues above Dustin! I’ll show you Dustin’s true colors right now!” Florence yelled and began the playback, showing exactly what happened. By the time they reached the middle of the video, everyone had frozen in dismay.

“Matt Laney?” Florence was rooted to the spot as she stared in disbelief at the man violently assaulting Dahlia

in the video.

Everyone else’s jaws had dropped as well. Never in their dreams would they have imagined that the person who kidnapped Dahlia and tried to assault her would be Matt, a respectful man from a noble family.

How could this be possible?

However, the video was right before their eyes. It turned out that the despicable person had been the “decent”

man, Matt, instead of Dustin.

Everyone’s faces began to burn in shame as they recalled what they had said just now, and they fell silent.

“I told you it wasn’t Dustin, but none of you believed me! How about now? Who’s the despicable person? Who’s the hypocritical asshole now? I’m sure all of you should know.” Dahlia cried exasperatedly.

“I might have made a mistake, but so what? You two were once married, so it’s his duty

to protect you. We didn’t ask him to do that! Besides, why didn’t he explain himself? We wouldn’t have misunderstood if he had.” Florence insisted stubbornly, having no intention of apologizing.

“Explain himself? Dahlia chuckled mirthlessly. “Would you have believed him if he had?”

“That’s up for us to decide, but it’s his fault for not explaining. He had it coming!” Florence defended herself.

“That’s right! He deserved it! James agreed. So what if they misunderstood a loser?”

“All of you are incorrigible!” Dahlia was utterly disappointed.

She staggered to her feet and bumped past the two of them to run out. She wanted to stop Dustin from leaving. Unfortunately, by the time she reached the hotel entrance, he was already nowhere to be found.

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Chapter 223

At the Laney villa. Phineas paced back and forth in the living room, looking extremely anxious. It was the break of dawn, but he hadn’t slept a wink since he lost contact with Matt, who left at midnight. It was as if Matt had vanished into thin air.

Phineas sent a group of bodyguards to search, but there was still no news of Matt, which told him that something was wrong.

Suddenly, someone’s car beeped at his door. He glanced outside and saw a black SUV parked outside.

The car door opened, and a figure wrapped in a burlap sack was dumped out as the car drove away.

“Huh?” Confused, Phineas nodded to the bodyguards at the entrance, who quickly opened the sack to reveal a

naked man with a swollen nose and bruised body.

“Dad ...The young man opened his eyes dazedly and cried out hoarsely.

“Matt?” Phineas was flabbergasted. “W—what happened to you?”

“It was Dustin Rhys H—he

Matt burst into tears. No one knew what he’d been through last night. There had been many times when Matt wanted to kill himself but couldn’t bring himself to do it. He had no idea how he pulled himself through the agonizing pain.

“Don’t cry. Tell me what happened. I’ll take care of it!” Phineas quickly told his men to bring Matt inside.

Because of the adrenaline shots he received. Matt was still conscious despite his injuries. So, under his

to finish, withholding some details.

father’s questioning, he told Phineas everything that happened from 5/

“That bastard! How dare he do that to you! He’s gone too far!” Phineas slapped the table furiously. A shiver went down his spine every time he thought of what Matt had to endure.

“Dad. I want you to tear him to pieces, no matter the cost!” Matt seethed loathingly.

“Matt, that asshole is being protected by the Harmon family and the Brooks family. It’ll be hard to deal with

him.” Phineas considered.

“Do you expect me to pretend like nothing happened?” Matt scowled, his eyes bloodshot. “I want my revenge

no matter what!”

“Fine, I’ll avenge you!” Phineas decided to light after seeing how miserable his son looked. As long as he was willing to pay a hefty sum to hire a killer, getting rid of Dustin should be easy.

Suddenly, someone knocked on their door. Phineas signaled for the guards to open the door, and three men strolled into the house. One of them wore a dated suit while carrying a cane with a dragon head attached to it. He was followed by Hunter and a burly man with an overwhelming aura.

“Who are you?” Phineas was puzzled,

“Dad!” Matt pointed at Hunter. “That’s the guy who helped Rhys!”

He could clearly recall the man watching him get ravaged.

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Chapter

“So you’re Dustin Rhys’ men. Are you here to apologize?” Phineas growled.

“Well, it doesn’t matter if you grovel. There’s no way I’ll forgive that punk!” Phineas’ expression was murderous. What happened last night would be his nightmare for the rest of his life, so he had to avenge Matt.

“Apologize?” The old man in the suit smiled faintly. “You’re mistaken. I’m here to collect a debt.”

“A debt?” Phineas sniggered. “With just the three of you? You’re delusional!”

He clapped his hands. Immediately, a few dozen ferocious and bulky men engulfed the villa. Phineas had been prepared since Matt went missing, and it came in handy now.

He chortled. “You didn’t expect this, did you? You’ve fallen into my trap! I’ll make sure none of you make it out alive today.”

“How dare you!”

The strong man flung out his arm at lightning speed, and Matt immediately went flying.

“How dare you hit someone on my turf!! You’re dead meat!” Phineas was outraged. Just as he was about to

order his men to attack, a gold badge landed near his feet with a clink.

He picked it up and froze in terror at the sight of the majestic five-clawed golden dragon emblem on the front of the badge. On the back of the badge, “Rhys” was engraved in bold.

In Dragonmarsh, the five-clawed dragon meant utter domination, while “Rhys” was the pinnacle of power. Many people shared the same surname, but there was only one family that held the Emblem of Drakon.

That family incurred fear from countless others, and no one dared to challenge them.

“The Rhys Drakon Emblem! Who are you?” Phineas gripped the badge with both hands, his body began to shake, and beads of sweat ran down his forehead.

“You must be blind! This is Sir Albert Horst!” The large man hollered.

“Albert Horst?” At the sound of the name, Phineas immediately paled in fear.

Not many knew of that name, but that man had a popular nickname—the Executioner!

He had an infamous reputation for being the human butcher who sliced people like butter.

There were three great generals in the Rhys family—the Executioner, the Sword Whisperer, and the Drunken Maniac. Each one of them was enough to shake the country.

The Executioner, Alfred Horst, was the strongest of them all. He was so terrifying that kids would cry at the mention of his name. Rumor had it that he had his first battle when he was 18 years old and ended up slaughtering tens of thousands of foes.

His cruelty and violence earned him the title of the Great Executioner. After he started working for the Rhys family, not many got to see him, but his reputation did not diminish in the slightest. This was because he was the one who got rid of anyone who offended or threatened the Rhys family.

Not many knew what he looked like because the majority of those who saw his face were already dead.

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His ruthlessness made him the leader of the three great generals. And he terrified the officials in Dragonmash. Everyone knew that once the Executioner visited someone's home, that family would never see daylight again.

Still, Phineas couldn't understand what he'd done that led the Executioner to his home.

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Chapter 224

It was at that moment that Phineas felt pure terror.

Who would have thought that the plain old **man** in front of him was the Executioner?

Why had the Executioner visited them personally?

"How dare you hit me!" His head spinning, Matt pulled himself up and **roared**. "You're dead! It's over for all of you! Men, finish them off!"

"Stop!" Phineas yelled before falling to his knees before the old man. He frantically begged. "Sir Albert, we don't know what we've done to incur your wrath, but please forgive us."

"Have you gone crazy, Dad? Why are you groveling?" Matt was in disbelief. He didn't understand why his dad was begging the old man for forgiveness when they were on the winning side.

"What do you know, you moron! We can't afford to mess with them, so hurry up and kneel!" Phineas frantically

signaled Matt.

"I'm not kneeling!" Matt looked around maniacally. "What do you mean we can't afford to mess **with** them? There are only three of them. We'll be able to down them with just the piss of our men alone!"

“Y–y–you dumbass! Do you have any idea what you’re saying? This is the Executioner we’re talking about!” Phineas’ face was ashen. In front of the Executioner, they were merely ants waiting to be squashed.

“What executioner? I’ve never even heard of him! He’ll still die today even if he’s God!” Matt shouted arrogantly.

Alfred chuckled when he heard that. “Interesting. I almost don’t wish to kill you now.”

“You think losers like you can kill me? Arrogant bastards!” Matt sniggered. Last night’s events had twisted him inside, and he yearned to let that hatred **out**.

“It’s over. Everything’s over.” Phineas collapsed onto the floor, his face pale. Why did he have to have such a stupid **son**? How could Matt hurl insults at the Executioner?

“You’re trying to compete in numbers? Alright, then. Let’s see who has more men!” The large **man** waved his arm, and synchronized footsteps were heard immediately.

Soon, armed men charged into the place from all directions, surrounding everyone instantly.

The guards were fully geared up and donned black masks. Their gazes were sharp, and they gave off a murderous aura that made **people** turn their heads away instinctively from fear.

The Laney family guards were nothing compared to these men.

No words or threats were exchanged, but clangs rang out as the Laney family’s guards, who were terrified by

the new arrivals, threw their weapons down and **stood** aside.

Matt froze at the **sight** of the **geared men**, his haughtiness **vanishing** rapidly, **and** terror took its **place**.

What happened? Where did all **those** men come from?

“Aren’t we competing by numbers? Who **has** more men now?” The bulky man **waved** again, and the men drew

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their swords in unison, overwhelming everyone with their presence.

Matt felt the strength leave his legs, and he collapsed to the ground.

“Sir Alfred, please go easy on us!” Phineas crawled toward Alfred and begged . “My son has lost his mind and

doesn’t know **what** he’s doing. Please spare his life!”

“Then, you’ll have to die in his stead.” Alfred drew a sword from the burly man’s back and threw it to the floor.

Calmly, he said. “Only one of you can live. Make your decision.”

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Chapter

In the morning, at the airport. Edwin and Tina waited in front of a Rolls–Royce Phantom. “Dad, we’ve already been waiting for two hours. Why isn’t Joshua here yet?” Tina glanced around, looking anxious.

“It’s normal for flights to be delayed. Let’s wait it out a little longer. Edwin looked calm. Last night, he’d suddenly received a call from Joshua, saying he’d completed his refinement, which meant he was now the Hummer family’s trump card.

As they spoke, a young couple exited the airport. The man was handsome and dignified, giving off an air reminiscent of a sharp blade, making one unable to look him in the eye. The woman beside him was dressed in red and equally outstanding. She was beautiful, elegant, and looked powerful.

“Dad, he’s here!” Tina’s eyes lit up with excitement. She’d been eagerly anticipating his return.

“Josh, you’re finally back!” Edwin approached him with a bright smile.

“Sorry to keep you waiting, Dad.” Joshua smiled and gestured to the woman beside him. “Allow me to introduce you to Jade Grant, my fiancée.”

“Jade Grant?” Edwin looked taken aback before asking tentatively. “Is she the third daughter of the Grant family?”

“Yes, that’s right.” Joshua smiled.

“Nice to meet you, Mr. Hummer.” Jade nodded.

“Yes, yes, nice to meet you, too. As expected of a daughter of the Grant family—
you’re the very embodiment of beauty and grace!” Edwin looked delighted. He never would’ve expected his son to be able to win the Grant family’s favor. The five wealthiest families in Millsburg were known as the Fabulous Five, but there were three other families even more powerful than them—the Tremendous Three. The Grant family was one of them. If the Hummer family could form an alliance with the Grant family through Joshua’s marriage with Jade, they’d have a bright future ahead!

“Dad, why did you summon me home so urgently? Joshua asked when they were all in the car. He’d just completed his refinement the night before when he’d been told to return immediately.

“I hate to say this, but Swinton has a new kid on the block. He’s powerful beyond our expectations and has defeated all my men. Our family’s been having a tough time recently because of him. I had no choice but to summon you home.” Edwin sighed, looking helpless.

“Exactly! You have no idea how obnoxious he is, Joshua. He even beat me up on my birthday over the smallest

things!” Tina started to complain. “Look at what he did to my arm—I’ve yet to fully recover! I’ve never been

treated like this in my life. You have to get back at him for me!”

“Who is this guy? How dare he bully a member of the Hummer family!” Joshua’s face darkened, and a

menacing aura surrounded him.

“His name is Dustin Rhys, and he’s not someone to be taken lightly,” Edwin said. “He also has the Harmon family backing him up.” Edwin said.

“The Harmon family?” Jade chuckled lightly. “They’re only one of the Fabulous Five—they don’t hold much

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“Y—
you’re not keeping your f*cking word! You said you’d let me live, Horst! Why? Why?!” Matt wailed bitterly. However, the only reply he got was the strike of a cold blade.

As
they stepped out of the villa, Alfred asked abruptly, “How many members are there in the Laney family’s main lineage?”

“The report says 35 of them,” the burly young man replied.

“I see. Well, get rid of all of them.”

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Chapter 226

In the morning, at the airport. Edwin and Tina waited in front of a Rolls–Royce Phantom. “Dad, we’ve already been waiting for two hours. Why isn’t Joshua here yet?” Tina glanced around, looking anxious.

“It’s normal for flights to be delayed. Let’s wait it out a little longer. Edwin looked calm. Last night, he’d suddenly received a call from Joshua, saying he’d completed his refinement, which meant he was now the

Hummer family’s trump card.

As they spoke, a young couple exited the airport. The man was handsome and dignified, giving off an air reminiscent of a sharp blade, making one unable to look him in the eye. The woman beside him was dressed in red and equally outstanding. She was beautiful, elegant, and looked powerful.

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"The Harmon family?" Jade chuckled lightly. "They're only one of the Fabulous Five—they don't hold much

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weight. If you need any help, Mr. Hummer, just say the word."

"It's unnecessary for the Grant family to get involved in something as menial as this." Joshua said calmly. Now that I'm back. I won't allow anyone to challenge the Hummer family's authority—not even the Harmon family!"

'Josh, have you have you

have you had a breakthrough?" Edwin asked tentatively.

"Yes, I have. I've now achieved divinity!" Joshua smiled proudly.

“A divine–level martial artist?” Edwin was delighted. “That’s great! I knew you wouldn’t let me down!”

Joshua was probably the only divine–level martial artist in all of Swinton. Low–level martial artists were no match for divine–level martial artists–they could refine their martial arts prowess, but physical abilities could only take one so far.

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Chapter 227

Divine–level martial artists, on the other hand, could manifest their energy externally and use it to harm or even murder others without anyone realizing it. Low–level martial artists weren’t even in the same league **as** them. Even in Millsburg, where powerful martial artists converged, divine–level martial artists were existences to fear. It was no wonder Joshua had won the Grant family’s favor–how could he not when **he** possessed such talent and potential? Which family wouldn’t want to have something to do with him?

“Dad, are divine–level martial artists truly that powerful? How will Joshua fare against Dustin?” Tina asked curiously.

*Joshua can destroy that brat with a snap of his fingers!” Edwin said proudly.

“That’s great! Joshua, you have to teach him a good lesson on my behalf!” Tina said excitedly.

“There’s no hurry to deal with Dustin–he’s a weakling that can be slaughtered at any time. What’s more important now is that we have to give Joshua and Jade a proper welcome.”

“You’re right. Let’s head home.”

At this moment, at Peaceful Medical Center. Dustin received a call from Ruth. “Dustin, something’s happened at Harmon Pharmaceuticals. You’ve gotta get **over** here right **now**.”

“Something’s happened? What is it?” Dustin asked curiously.

“A bunch of people suddenly showed up and demanded that **we** partner with them for the production of Immortunol,”

“Is that so? Where’s your sister? I’ll leave the decision up to her.”

“She went to Millsburg last night and won’t be back so soon. In any case, she was the one who told me to call you, saying that you had the last say.”

“Alright, then. I’ll be right there.” Dustin hung up and **drove** to Harmon Pharmaceuticals. When he arrived, twenty minutes later and strode into the conference room, he saw some people already seated inside. Jessica, Quentin, Ruth, **and** Mr. Wanglely sat on the left, while **a** distinguished man was on the right.

“Dustin, you’re finally here. Have a seat, quick.” Ruth stood up and gestured for him to sit. The others looked at him coolly.

“What’s going on here?” Dustin glanced around curiously.

“I have a question for **you**,” Jessica said. “I heard Natasha gave you 50 percent of the shares for Immortunol. Is that true?”

“Yeah,” Dustin nodded.

“Glad to hear that. Now, hand the shares over,” she said coolly.

“What? Why?” Dustin was taken aback.

“Because you don’t deserve them.” Jessica didn’t mince her words. “The Harmon family handles everything from the production, sales, and marketing for Immortunol. You don’t contribute anything to this process—why should you deserve 50 percent of the profits? Don’t you think you’re being a little too greedy?”

“Mrs. Harmon, there must be a misunderstanding somewhere. Ms. Harmon was the one who decided that the shares-”

Jessica cut him off with a wave of her hand. “That’s enough! I don’t want to hear it. Hand the shares over if you know what’s good for you; at least you’ll be able to walk out of this unscathed.”

“Does Ms. Harmon know about this?” Dustin narrowed his eyes slightly. He knew what was going on now- they’d obviously tricked him here to snatch the ownership of the shares away from him.

“It doesn’t matter whether she knows. This has to do with our family’s interests ; her word isn’t the only one that matters. Rest assured that we’ll compensate you handsomely for this. We’re willing to pay you 50 million dollars if you hand over the shares.” Jessica looked like she was talking about something inconsequential.

“Hey, just hand them over when we tell you to and stop f*cking around!” Quentin said impatiently.

“What if I refuse?” Dustin’s expression became icy.

“Then you won’t leave this room today!” Quentin slammed a hand on the table . The next second, a group of security guards barged into the room, circling Dustin with menacing looks.

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Chapter 228

“What, are you gonna resort to physical violence?” A cold smile curved Dustin’s lips at the sight of the security guards surrounding him. He’d always been the type who was open to persuasion, not coercion. Perhaps he would’ve given in to them if they’d talked to him nicely, but if they wanted to opt for physical violence he didn’t mind teaching them a lesson or two,

well,

“So what if I am? Don’t think too highly of yourself, you brat!” Quentin snarled. He’d always harbored a grudge against Dustin for humiliating him at their first meeting. If not for Natasha keeping him in check, he would’ve exacted revenge on Dustin ages ago. Now that Natasha wasn’t around, it was his chance to get payback!

“Quentin, don’t take things too far!” Ruth couldn’t stand it anymore. “It’s up to Dustin whether he wants to sell the shares. If you dare do anything to harm him, I won’t let you off the hook!”

“Ruth, this has nothing to do with you. Keep your nose out of this! Quentin didn’t back down.

“Why, you-” Ruth was about to say something else when Jessica stopped her.

“Dustin, a wise man knows how to adapt to the situation. You can’t hoard all those shares for yourself, so cough them up when we’re asking nicely, Jessica said. “Many people have gotten into trouble not because of things they’ve done but because they possess things that shouldn’t belong to them. With your identity and ability, you’ll only get yourself into more trouble if you keep these shares.”

“Is that a threat, Mrs. Harmon?” Dustin didn’t bat an eye.

“It’s a piece of advice. One should know their limits—do you think you would’ve achieved what you have if not for my daughter protecting you?” Jessica looked at him contemptuously.

“I won’t deny that Ms. Harmon has given me plenty of help, but I didn’t rely on anyone to get to where I am now,

Dustin said coldly. “As for Immortunol, I think there’s something you need to get straight—

I provided the formula and was the first to develop it successfully. I don’t care about the shares, but that doesn’t mean I’ll

allow you to push me around like this!”

“How dare you!” Jessica slammed a hand on the table and shot to her feet. “Dustin, I’ve tried to play nice with

you. Don’t push me!”

“Who’s pushing who?” Dustin retorted. “When the Hummer family successfully developed and marketed

Eternumax, the Harmon

family had nothing and no way to compete with them. I was the one who helped you

make it past that crisis, yet here you are, burning bridges as soon as you get the chance. Is this how ungrateful the Harmon family—or certain family members, at least—is?

“Why, you- Jessica fumed. She didn’t expect a brat who relied on the Harmon family’s protection to rebuke

her like this.

“Aunt Jessica, don’t waste your breath on this brat. All we need to do is capture him; I have plenty of ways to make him give in!” Quentin fanned the flames.

“Mom, don’t do anything rash. If you lay a hand on Dustin, Natasha won’t ever forgive you!” Ruth warned.

Jessica stiffened. Ruth’s words made her stop to think for a while. Her relationship with Natasha was already strained; if she were to go ahead with this, Natasha would probably sever ties with her.

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At this moment, the man who’d been sitting opposite Jessica and the others spoke. “Mrs. Harmon, I thought it would be easy for you to retrieve the shares, but it seems I was wrong.”

“And who are you?” Dustin gave him a cold look. He’d noticed this man as soon as he’d stepped into the conference room. He supposed this guy was the cause of Jessica’s sudden interference.

“The name’s Williams, Brody Williams. I’m from Boulderthorn Guild; my father’s the second-in-command,” the

man said coolly.

“Mr. Williams is your father, huh?” Dustin raised an eyebrow in surprise. He’d met Oliver Williams earlier, it

seemed Brody was his brother.

“I’m sure you know how powerful the Boulderthorn Guild is.” Brody lit a cigarette and took a drag. Then, he waved a hand around and said arrogantly. “So, y

ou're left with two options—
either you hand over the shares and take the 50 million or make an enemy out
of me.”

“I won't give the shares up unless Ms.
Harmon personally asks me to.” Dustin said coolly.

“Excuse me?” Brody's expression became frosty. “Do you know what you're ta
lking about, you brat? Have you thought about the consequences you'd bear if
you make an enemy out of the Boulderthorn Guild?”

“Firstly, you don't represent the Boulderthom Guild. Secondly, so what if I mak
e an enemy out of you? Do you

think the Boulderthorn Guild runs the world?” Dustin didn't bat an eye.

“I admire your audacity, brat. It's been a while since someone had the nerve t
o speak to me like that. Still you'll have to pay for your arrogance! As for the re
st of you.” Brody grinned menacingly as he turned to Jessica and the others. “I
f you don't want to make an enemy out of the Boulderthorn Guild, you'd better
show me some of your sincerity in forming an alliance. If this brat refuses to gi
ve us ownership of his shares, you're the ones
who'll have to cough it up. Either way, we're definitely getting our hands on 50
percent of

Immortuncl's shares!”

Jessica's expression changed at his words, as did the others. If Dustin refused
to hand over his shares, he'd drag the rest of them down with him. Bouldertho
rn Guild was backing them into a corner.

“I've already said everything there is to say: I'll leave the final decision in your
hands. See you around.” Brody

snorted and stood up.

“Hold it!” Dustin said.

“What, changed your mind already?” Brody sneered. “I thought you were a tou
gh cookie, but it seems you're a bigger pushover than you look.” Then again, i
t made sense. How many people in Balerno dared to stand up

against the Boulderthorn Guild?

“At least you haven’t lost all sense of rationality. Dustin. We could’ve avoided all this hassle if you’d just. agreed to it earlier.” Jessica heaved a sigh of relief. Not even the Harmon family wanted to get on the

Boulderthorn Guild’s bad side.

Quentin scolded. “So you were just pretending to be a tough guy. You had to give in to the Boulderthorn Guild in the end anyway, didn’t you? Stop acting like you’re such a big shol.” The way he saw it, Brody only had to threaten Custin a little to make him pee his pants.

“Brody Williams from the Boulderthorn Guild, right?” Dustin slowly got to his feet. “Do you think you own this

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place, coming and going as you like? Did you bother asking me for permission?”

“What?” Brody raised an eyebrow, “What’s that supposed to mean, brat?”

“Do you think you can march in here, act all high and mighty, then leave whenever you want? What made you think you could do that?” Dustin gave him the stink-eye.

Brody snorted and pointed at his face. “What, do you wanna start a light or something? Go on, then. I dare you

to lay a punch on me, you-”

Before he finished his sentence, he was sent flying by a crisp slap to the face. He spun a few times midair before landing headfirst in a gigantic vase in the corner. It was large enough for his whole body to fit inside. leaving his feet sticking out of the mouth,

Jessica and the others were stunned to see that. Their jaws dropped, and silence descended upon the room.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 229 -

Chapter 229

Nobody expected Dustin to suddenly get physical and attack someone from the Boulderthorn Guild. Had he lost his mind?

“Dustin, are you out of your mind? How dare you attack Mr. Williams’ son! Do you have a death wish?” Jessica glared at him with a mixture of shock and fury. Attacking Brody was equivalent to issuing a challenge to the Boulderthorn Guild.

“You may have a f*cking death wish, but the rest of us don’t! Mr. Williams isn’t someone you can afford to offend!” Quentin bellowed. Though he wanted nothing more than for Dustin to get in trouble, that didn’t mean he wanted to perish with him.

“Dustin, you’ve really done it now!” Even Ruth looked panicked. The Boulderthorn Guild was much too

powerful; even the Harmon family wouldn’t survive a retaliation from them,

“He’s nothing but a piece of trash. What does it matter if I’ve attacked him?” Dustin said coolly.

“You—you’re so thickheaded!” Jessica glared daggers at him.

At this moment, Brody had finally managed to free himself from the vase. Compared to his previous dignified appearance, he looked disheveled, with his face red and swollen from the slap and being stuck in the vase. How dare you lay a hand on me, you brat!” he bellowed, pointing at Dustin. Never in his life had he been on the receiving end of a beating: he was always the one beating people up.

“So what if I did? Do you really think no one has the nerve to teach you a lesson just because you throw Boulderthorn Guild’s name around like it means nothing?” Dustin scoffed.

“You’re f*cking dead!” Brody’s blood boiled. He raised a list and swung it at Dustin, Earlier, Dustin had

managed to get him because his guard was down; now that he knew what to expect, he wouldn't lose

Dustin snorted and caught his fist easily before kicking him in the stomach. Brody howled in pain and bent

over, falling to his knees as the pain coursed through him. He curled into a ball on the floor.

"Dustin, stop it!" Jessica's expression changed drastically. Wasn't it enough that he'd attacked Brody once? He was digging his own grave by doing it again!

"Fucking hell! Capture that psycho!" Quentin roared. At his words, the security guards in the room whipped out electric batons and held them up threateningly.

"I'd like to see you try!" At this moment, Natasha barged into the room. Her domineering aura was

overpowering enough to make everyone stop what they were doing.

"Natasha, thank goodness you're here." Jessica said grimly. "This man was obnoxious enough to attack a member of the Boulderthorn Guild in public. He's unforgivable!"

"That's right! We'll only be keeping a ticking time bomb around if we let him go. I say we get rid of him right here and now," Quentin snarled.

"I've already heard about everything that's happened today. I don't think Dustin did anything wrong." Natasha said calmly.

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"What?" Jessica was taken aback. "Natasha, have you lost your mind? How can he not have done anything wrong when he attacked a member of the Boulderthorn Guild?"

Natasha said calmly, "He had valid reasons for doing so, Brody was throwing the Boulderthorn Guild's weight

around to coerce us into giving up what belonged to us. Doesn't he deserve to be beaten up? If everyone were to throw their weight around and use a measly amount of money to purchase our shares, we might as well.

just give them Harmon Pharmaceuticals for free!"

The others had nothing to say in retort.

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Chapter 230

Buying 50% of the shares with 50 million dollars was like robbing.

It was that they didn't want to displease Boulderthorn. Therefore, relatively speaking, they could only sacrifice Dustin. With that, they didn't really need to pay the price and could also take the opportunity to be on friendly

terms with Boulderthorn.

However, they didn't expect that Dustin would be so unyielding. Not only did he refuse to hand over the shares. but he also attacked Brody, Plus, Natasha also happened to be strongly supporting what he had just done

after she hurried back. Everything was such a mess that they couldn't resolve the situation.

"Natasha

Harmon! Break his arms and legs right now! This is an order! If not, we won't have mercy on the

Harmon family!" Brody stood up and staggered to his feet with a sullen look.

"Mr. Williams, I'm sorry, but I can't do it." Natasha spoke calmly. "Boulderthorn is indeed powerful, but the Harmon family isn't weak either. Nobody is able to harm the family easily."

"So, are you trying to set yourself against Boulderthorn because of him?" Brody gritted his teeth.

“Dustin is the Harmon family’s quest. It is our responsibility to protect him. If Boulderthorn still insists, you’ll

have to defeat me first.” Natasha was uncompromising.

“Very well! Since you must stand in our way, do not blame us for turning against the Harmon family!” Brody threw a note to Natasha, which she threw down the guntlet, and said fiercely, “My father had said that if you refuse to agree, we’ll meet at the battle ring. We will settle things with deathmatches!

“If you win, the Boulderthorn will never speak anything about it again. However, if you lose, you must hand over Immortal’s shares! This is your only chance. I challenge you!” Brody exuded an intimidating aura. He looked like he was sure to win.

“Why not? I will accept it. You’ll decide on the time and venue.” Natasha did not bat an eye.

“We’ll have the battle at Williams Dojo tonight, at eight,” he said coldly and left immediately.

“Natasha Harmon! Have you lost your mind? How dare you provoke Boulderthorn just because of this little boy toy?” Quentin was flustered and exasperated.

“Boulderthorn’s connections were more important than that country bumpkin!” he thought.

“It is not your place to interfere with my decisions,” Natasha sneered, “Do you think I don’t know who involved Boulderthorn in this?”

“You” Quentin, shifty-eyed, looked guilty because of her accusations.

“Natasha, Boulderthorn is one of the most powerful guilds in Balerno. You’ll put yourself in trouble.” Jessica

knitted her brow.

It would be difficult to predict what would happen once the battle started. If they lost the battle, they needed to give the shares away, and it would also bring the Harmon family into disrepute.

“Mr. Williams himself is powerful indeed, but that doesn’t mean we don’t stand a chance of winning against

them.” Natasha replied.

“Win? But how? Skills and strength aside, we don’t even have enough people to fight, Jessica grumbled.

Natasha wasn’t worried about her concern. “Who said so? I’ve already invited an expert from The Hundred Immortals.”

“The Hundred Immortals? Who is it?” Jessica asked. She was desperate for the answer.

Natasha didn’t reply directly. She clapped her hands, and an old man with gray hair and a hawked nose strode out quickly. He was wearing a black shirt with a tall and muscular physique. He made no sound when he walked, exactly like a ghost.

“Is this the King of Kicks, who was ranked ninth among The Hundred Immortals?” Quentin couldn’t help but gasp at the old man’s presence.

The Hundred Immortals, especially those ranked in the top ten, were all equipped with powerful skills. The King of Kicks, ranked ninth, was famous for his kicks. He had worked on his legs for years. His kicks were second to none.

Quentin once saw The King of Kicks flip a car by kicking it casually. There was no doubt that he was extremely skilled.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 231 -

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Chapter 232

The King of Kicks made Mr. Wangle spurt out blood without even using half his strength. If he did it with full

strength, Mr. Wangle would probably die on the spot.

Were experts from the top tenths of The Hundred Immortals so scary?

“Brilliant! King of Kicks, you’ve just blown our minds!” Quentin was surprised at

first, then put up a smile and blew the King of Kicks with flattery. He thought that if he could be on good terms with masters like the King of Kicks, he could solve problems easily in the future with his help.

“Mr. Wangley, are you okay?” Natasha frowned slightly. One of their allies was hurt before the battle even

started. She thought that the King of Kicks had gone too far.

“I’m okay.” Mr. Wangley wiped off the blood at the corner of his mouth and paid his respects. “King of Kicks, I

expected no less from you. I concede defeat from the bottom of my heart.”

“At least you know your limits.” The old man raised his head with a sense of arrogance and defiance.

“Alright. Everyone, time to go back and prepare. We cannot afford to lose tonight’s battle!”

Everyone left right after Natasha gave the order.

As Boulderthorn intentionally spread the news of the battle. Williams Dojo was already crowded with people at 7 pm. Everyone interested in martial arts came to watch the battle. People were dueling at the battle ring before it started. They were excited about the battle.

Dustin and Ruth were the first to enter the dojo. They sat and waited at the seats.

“Rhys, why are you here?” Dustin heard a familiar voice beside him. He turned and saw Julie approaching him

with a crowd of young people.

“You’re here. Why can’t I?” Dustin said calmly.

“Julie, who is this?” a muscular man beside Julie asked.

“Otto, this is my ex-cousin-in-law. My cousin dumped him since he’s useless.” Julie demeaned Dustin intentionally.

“Oh, I see.” Otto sized Dustin up and mocked, “Such slim arms and legs, what a sissy. No wonder no woman

wants him.”

“If I’m a sissy, are you a chimpanzee? Dustin asked coolly.

“Chimpanzee?” Everyone was stunned by the statement and looked at Otto. He was a hairy man with tanned skin. He actually did look like a chimpanzee. However, they recovered from the thought quickly.

“Hey! What do you mean? Otto is such a line-looking man—he doesn’t look like a chimpanzee at all!”

“Do you know who he is? He’s the kickboxing champion of our city! Show some respect!”

“That’s right! Look at your arms and legs; Otto could easily break them!”

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The crowd clamored aggressively.

Otto put on a gloomy face due to Dustin’s comment. “You! You savage! Stop being a smart mouth. Let’s have a battle and fight like a man!”

“I’m not interested in that,” Dustin rejected without hesitation.

“Not interested? I bet you are afraid,” Otto sneered, “Don’t worry. I won’t be beating you to death since we can learn from each other from fighting.”

Dustin replied nothing. Julia macked, “Rhys, aren’t you cocky? Why are you afraid of Otto? You don’t even dare to fight with him.”

“I can just fight with one of my hands if you are afraid. Or only with my legs, if you like. How is it? I dare you!”

Otto provoked.

“Such a coward! He doesn’t dare to fight with Otto even if he’s only fighting with his legs!”

“Definitely! What a shame to us men!”

“Why don’t you just be a woman?”

The crowd of young people laughed as if they had just listened to a hilarious joke.

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Dustin was speechless by the clamoring crowd.

“Where did these psychopaths come from?” he thought. They looked like they had just gone insane and were howling and shouting nonstop, like dogs.

“Hey, enough!” Ruth, who was sitting beside them, couldn’t stand it anymore.

“Gosh, there’s a beauty here!” Otto’s eyes lit up with a burning desire. Her outstanding figure and visuals attracted him.

“Hey beautiful, you should break up with such a coward. He’ll probably be busy saving his own life when you’re in danger,” Otto taunted.

“Exactly! You should find a boyfriend like Otto. Look at his muscles. It’ll make you feel secure!” the crowd jeered.

“He’s so tanned and ugly. Why would a woman like a man like him?” Ruth snorted with a contemptuous look.

“Hey, what nonsense are you talking, you little b*tch! Watch your mouth!”

“Damn it! I’ll probably beat you up if you are not a woman!”

The crowd grew angry after listening to what she had said.

“Enough. Don’t bother her. She’s just a woman. We should act like gentlemen.” Otto held his hand up to stop them from arguing, acting like a gentleman. He didn’t want to lose his manners in front of a beauty like Ruth.

“Dustin, I thought you were hiding your light under a bushel. It turns out that you are a good-for-nothing after all. You’re such a wimp. You only dare to pick up a fight with people weaker than you and even rely on women to protect you. There’s no doubt why Dahlia had to dump you!” Julie scoffed and shooked her head. Her upper lips curled with disdain.

“He didn’t even dare to accept the battle with Otto. How useless!” she thought.

“Are you done? If yes, get as far away from me as you can. You’re so noisy and irritating, buzzing non-stop like a fly.” Dustin stuck his finger in his ear. He thought she was so noisy.

“You” Julie gritted her teeth. Her face flushed. She glanced at Otto and acted coquettishly toward him. Otto, have you heard what he had just said? He said I am a fly! How could he?”

“Insolence! How dare you say something like that to my girl! Apologize immediately, or don’t blame me for being rude!” Otto’s face fell. He had always disliked Dustin, but he never had the chance to make a fuss about it. It was perfect timing for him now as he had the reason to do so, which was to protect Julie, his girlfriend.

“Apologize? Do you think you’re worthy of that?” Dustin sneered. He looked like he was looking at an idiot.

“You! You better give up before it’s too late! I’ll show you the power of a kickboxing champion!” Otto was mad. He said nothing more and attacked.

He made a small step and jumped, preparing to attack with his stealth attack, Hot Knees. That movement of his was strong but cool at the same time. The opponent could easily be defeated if targeted precisely. It was

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the best movement for fronting.

“Such badass! Otto!”

“Did you see that? This is Otto’s masterstroke! He’s unstoppable!”

“One must stay as far away from him as possible when he uses Hot Knees!”

The crowd was flattering Otto when he had just started his movements.

However, the next moment, Otto’s body, which was still in midair, was flipped by Dustin

with a smack and hit the ground. He took a huge spill and was lying on the ground, motionless, like he was dead.

“Otto!” They were stunned by the scene. They didn’t expect Otto, a kickboxing champion, to be defeated by just

one move. It was insane.

“How weak.” Dustin dusted his hands off and sat down. He thought that he could finally be in peace.

“Otto! Otto!”

The crowd of young people quickly helped Otto up after they realized what had happened. They tried waking him up by slapping and pinching him.

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After struggling for a while. Otto gradually regained consciousness. Since he’d fallen face—
first. he had lost his front teeth, contributing even further to his disheveled appearance.

“What happened?” He shook his head, confusion lining his features.

He remembered the surge of power he felt as he reveled in his mastery barely seconds ago before weakness

seized him, and he found himself lying on the floor

“Otto, you were knocked out by that guy just now!” Julie told him, her expression strange. She’d initially thought Otto would be able to defend her—contrary to her beliefs, the first punch found him sprawled on the floor, unconscious the next instant.

“Knocked out?” Otto was slightly taken aback. He touched his throbbing face, an argument bursting forth.

Fuck that! I must have slipped and lost my balance. That brat would never have been able to hurt me otherwise!”

His declaration elicited a flurry of nods through the crowd.

“That’s right! With Otto’s strength, it would’ve been beyond effortless for him to take that guy down. If it hadn’t been for a moment of carelessness on his part, how else could that guy manage to sneak in an attack?”

“Exactly! Otto must’ve been careless and didn’t dodge it on time!”

Otto’s strength and skills were common knowledge among them all. After more than a decade of professional kickboxing training and championship titles under his belt, his capabilities were unquestionable. If it hadn’t been for him underestimating the opponent, he would never have been taken down in just one move.

“Oh, just admit that you lost and move on. What’s the use in trying to make all sorts of excuses for yourself? With your mediocre martial arts skills, you wouldn’t even be able to hold your own against Dustin even if he only used one hand.” Ruth rolled her eyes.

She’d never seen anyone so shameless—his defiance and feigned bravado despite having been taken down squarely by the opponent irked her to no end.

“Hey! Don’t talk to me like that!” Otto glared in response. “People make mistakes. Hell, even the strongest horses stumble. You think that little brat is impres

sive? You think he's better than me? Fine! Let him fight me again—fair and square. I, for one, am interested in seeing what he's capable of.”

“What he said! If you have the guts, let Rhys fight Otto in the battle ring and see who's the real man!” Julie and

the others chimed in.

At the end of the day, all of them were convinced that Dustin had only won out of sheer luck. When it came to

strength and pure skill, Otto reigned superior.

“What? Do you not have the guts to face me like a man?”

The longer Dustin remained silent, the more arrogant Otto became. “I knew it! That brat had always been all

talk and no show. He would never be able to stand up to the challenge!”

“He only knows how to attack when someone's back is turned. He's evidently too much of a coward to fight.

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head-on. Guess that's the most people like him can ever achieve anyway.”

Disdain took over the room instantly. Any surprise they'd initially felt was soon replaced by contempt. To them, Dustin's reluctance to rise to Otto's challenge was the greatest sign of his guilt.

“Look! The Harmons are here!” someone exclaimed out of nowhere.

The rest of them followed the direction of their gaze, only to behold a group led by Natasha entering from the passageway on the left.

The King of Kicks, Mr. Wangle, Stephan, Jessica, and Quentin, among others, were present as well.

“No way! I didn't think they'd bring Mr. Chapman along today. Now that they did, they must be determined to win!” Otto's face was a picture of surprise when he caught sight of Stephan in the crowd.

“Who’s Mr. Chapman? Is he a good fighter?” Julie asked tentatively.

“He is much more than that,” Otto began. “Mr. Chapman is the best of the best. He’s one of the best among The Hundred Immortals—skill-wise, it’s hard to find someone in Swinton who can rival his abilities!”

“The best among The Hundred Immortals? No wonder his aura stands out! The way he carries himself is truly remarkable.” A group of disciples watched Stephan make his entrance fervently, their eyes gleaming with

respect.

After all, anyone who could make it into The Hundred Immortals demanded every shred of respect they could possibly offer.

“Otto, do you know Mr. Chapman?” Julie asked with interest. It was, undoubtedly, an honor to be acquainted with such a renowned master of martial arts in Swinton.

“Do I know him? I don’t just know him—I had the privilege to learn a few tricks from him, and I’m still reaping the benefits from his invaluable lessons today!” Otto’s voice dripped with pride.

“Of course you did! To have learned from Mr. Chapman is such an incredible achievement in itself. I envy you!”

“No wonder you fight so well, Otto. The apple doesn’t fall far from the tree, indeed!”

The praises lavished upon him made Otto feel rather high and mighty.

As they were still engaged in conversation, Stephan walked over suddenly.

“Otto! Here comes Mr. Chapman! He seems to be walking toward you!” Julie said with excitement.

“Quick! Prepare to welcome Mr. Chapman properly!”

Otto’s face lit up. He adjusted his clothes hastily and went up to Stephan with the rest of his followers.

“Mr. Chap-” he began fawningly.

Unexpectedly, Stephan barely spared him a single glance. Instead, he sidestepped him and, under the watchful and somewhat astonished gaze of the bewildered group, the renowned master walked up to Dustin, raised his arms in the universal gesture of respect, and intoned gravely, "Greetings, Mr. Rhys—"

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"Mr. Rhys?"

Otto and his company were entirely dumbfounded by Stephan's display of respect toward Dustin. Never in

their wildest dreams had they ever anticipated the renowned Mr. Chapman to have come forward specifically for Dustin, let alone greet him with such reverence..

What was happening?

"Mr. Chapman, it's been a while. Your abilities seem to have improved." A quick glance from Dustin drew his attention to the differences he spotted in the other man almost at once.

"It's all thanks to the Gemiphen you gave me, of course. Not only did it heal my internal injuries, it gave me ample power to have a small breakthrough." Stephan's face was filled with gratitude.

"Really? I suppose congratulations are in order, then." Dustin smiled faintly.

"Mr. Rhys, where you're sitting now doesn't seem befitting for your status. How about we head over to the reserved seats for the Harmon family?" Stephan gestured with one hand, still courteous as ever.

"Very well. This place is infested with flies anyway. I'd rather sit amidst humans—less tiresome." Dustin nodded, not refusing the offer.

Just as they prepared to leave, Otto couldn't help but speak up. "Mr. Chapman—"

“What?” Stephan turned, his expression cold. The way he treated Otto was the complete opposite of when he’d been conversing with Dustin earlier.

“Mr. Chapman, I’m Otto Marsh. We met before, and you gave me a few pointers too.” Otto attempted to turn the

situation in his favor.

“I’ve given pointers to a lot of people. As for you— I have no recollection at all.” Stephan left after replying

dismissively.

Otto stood paralyzed, awkwardness creeping up his features. To have boasted for so long only to be brutally rejected was humiliating beyond words.

“Who’s that little brat anyway? How could he turn out to be acquainted with Mr. Chapman?” someone asked.

“He looks like a pretty boy taken in by Ms. Harmon. If it hadn’t been for his relationship with the Harmons, Mr.

Chapman would never stoop down to this level otherwise, let alone treat someone like him so respectfully!”

Julie said indignantly.

“After all that fuss, he turns out to be nothing but a leech, basking in the glory of the Harmon family. To think that I, for a second, genuinely believed him to be someone important!” Otto released a sigh of relief, though his

expression was contemptuous.

There was no glory in depending on women to climb the ranks. A real man depended on no one else but himself and his own strength!

“Finally, Come sit.” As Natasha caught sight of Dustin, she immediately patted the seat next to herself,

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signaling for him to sit.

Dustin didn't hesitate either. He gracefully took his seat and said, "Boulderthorn is well-prepared this time. I advise you to be more cautious."

Natasha had yet to reply when Quentin, who was sitting beside her, scoffed. "Don't worry about it. With the King of Kicks on our side, victory is guaranteed to be ours!"

"If that is indeed the situation, I suppose it couldn't be more perfect, then." Dustin smiled lightly and said no

more.

Amid the low hum of conversation, another group emerged from the right passageway. At their very front was a man about thirty years of age, clad in white. The man's eyebrows were sharp, his demeanor commanding along with those strongly piercing eyes. The crowd parted around him easily, allowing his presence to stand out with minimal effort.

This man was the principal disciple of Mr. Williams, Maximus Kane. Behind him, Brody Williams and his tropes followed as well.

As soon as the two sides met, tensions rose immediately.

"Ms. Harmon, I admire your courage to rise to my challenge, but today, victory belongs to none other than Boulderthorn!" Brody was the first to speak.

"Words are futile. Prove it to me with your actions if you really believe so." Natasha returned indifferently.

"I will! Today's fight will be something else—there shall be no limits on the number of rounds and participants. The last person standing in the battle ring is the victor. How does that sound?"

"I have no objections to that." Natasha nodded. In order to make it count, they had to make the other party submit to them wholeheartedly.

Upon reaching an agreement, both sides began their preparations.

Shortly after, the first match commenced.

Boulderthorn

was the first to mount the ring. Their first contestant was an exceedingly heavyset beast of a man. Every step he took sent shudders down the loosely-hanging flesh on his body.

The sight of him was rather comical, to say the least.

When he climbed up the battle ring and took his position, he even held the leg of roasted mutton in one hand. his teeth tearing into the meat voraciously.

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“What’s going on with Boulderthorn? Why would they send that chunkster on stage? With his physique, he’ll be out of breath after taking just a few steps—can *he* even handle the Battle Royale?” Quentin scoffed.

“Don’t underestimate the opponent. Since Boulderthorn dares send him into the ring, he must have some extraordinary qualities that could potentially push the tide in their favor. Which one of you wants to go first?”

Natasha asked the three of them.

“Ms. Harmon, let me handle the first round.” Stephan stood and strode into the battle ring.

Among the three of them, his strength appeared to be the weakest. Because of that, it was only natural that he took the lead. After all, if he could secure their victory in the first match, he might as well have laid the foundation for their eventual win,

“Dustin, who do you think would win? Ruth asked curiously.

“It’s hard to tell. The chunkster looks peculiar enough, but if Mr. Chapman can find his weaknesses and attack. focally, he might still stand a chance.” Dustin analyzed.

“Hmph! That’s so close—minded!” Quentin pursed his lips. “What right does he have to fight against Mr. Chapman? A few rounds of simply running around, and he’ll be as good as dead!”

Dustin did not argue against that. Instead, he fixed his gaze on the battle ring, seemingly deep in thought.

Meanwhile, in the battle ring, both parties prepared themselves as the referee mounted the stage.

“There are no rules in this ring. Live or die—that’s on you. Surrendering, severe injuries, death, or being thrown out of the ring will result in a loss of said round. Do the both of you understand?”

The referee threw his hands down as soon as the two contestants nodded.

“Let the games begin!”

With a frenzied shout, the atmosphere around the ring instantly surged to a new peak.

“I’ve long heard about the many talents cultivated under the lead of Mr. Williams. I’m honored to be able to

witness them with my own eyes today!”

After a firm salute, Stephan took a step forward and launched his first attack.

The strategy he elected was to take control of the fight and exhaust his opponent. As the man’s physique was beyond massive, his strength was apparent. Direct attacks were not a smart option if he wanted to last in the

ring.

To be on the safe side, he had to fully leverage the advantages of his lightweight body and the subsequent agility it inevitably brought him.

Stephan inched closer toward his opponent but did not launch a frontal attack. Instead, he rounded to the back of the chunkster and slapped him on the back.

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A crisp slap rang out, but the chunkster stood unmoving. Throughout his body, his flesh rippled and trembled shudderingly. The force brought down by Stephan’s palm had been completely dissipated by the violent

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shudders of flesh, leaving the man completely unaffected by its magnitude.

“So, this is what it is then?” Stephan’s gaze narrowed, but he didn’t stop. He delivered two more sharp,

consecutive slaps—

one to the chunkster’s waist, the other to his back. Both of them landed on spots that

should’ve been vulnerable had it not been for the protection of his voluminous flesh and body fat that shielded

him from even remotely sensing the impact of Stephan’s punches.

Contrary to what Stephan expected, his opponent paid him no heed despite his efforts to garner his attention. From the start, he simply chewed on the roasted mutton leg he held in one hand, completely disregarding Stephan’s presence.

Stephan was beginning to get mad. His palms transformed into brutal fists that pounded wildly from top to bottom in rapid succession. The series of punches he launched after that was almost crazed and merciless. and yet the chunkster continued devouring the mutton leg with the fervor of a famished man.

Stephan’s pride, having suffered the fall it did, transmuted into wild fury. As his rage suffused him, he delivered

a swift kick to the mutton in the chunkster’s hands and watched with satisfaction as the man turned to him.

stunned at first.

Then, a roar followed as he charged toward Stephan with astonishing speed, his actions reminiscent of a

distraught bear.

A moment of carelessness had him colliding head—on with the chunkster’s advance—his body air—bound the

next moment and his gut churning.

Midair, the chunkster’s head struck him squarely in the chest, sending him flying even further, a mouthful of bright—red blood spilling from his lips.

Before he knew it, he was already on the ground, thrown out of the battle ring before he'd even gotten the chance to retaliate.

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“How could this happen? Mr. Chapman lost?” Quentin’s face was slack with shock as he beheld Stephan’s injuries and the blood he was still coughing up as a result of the man’s attack. He’d never anticipated the strength the chunkster had shown—not even Mr. Chapman could rival that kind of power.

“Who is that chunkster? Not even Mr. Chapman could break through his defenses-

Natasha’s face grew serious. She was well aware of the extent of Stephan’s capabilities. He was a martial artist who specialized in harnessing the body’s internal energy, and his punches were enough to break through stone.

And yet, for someone of his expertise to have not been able to impact the other man in the slightest—it was evident that his opponent would not be easily defeated by ordinary means alone.

“If I’m not mistaken, he’s Mr. Williams’ second disciple. They call him Rotund Tiger.”

Mr. Wanglely stroked his beard and said nonchalantly. “This person might seem simple-minded, but the talent he possesses when it comes to martial arts is extraordinary. His body is capable of both attack and defense- it’s tough yet flexible. It’s very difficult for someone unfamiliar with his fighting style to take him on successfully.”

“Mr. Wanglely, can you take him on?” Natasha asked in return.

“I can’t guarantee a win, but I think I have an eighty to ninety percent chance of holding my own against him.” Mr. Wanglely’s tone was proud.

“Good. Please do your best then, Mr. Wangley.” Natasha nodded imperceptibly.

“Mr. Wangley, the man’s weakness lies on the crown of his head. If you time your attacks well and seize the opportunity when it presents itself, you might be able to take him down in one strike!” Dustin spoke up

suddenly.

It’d only taken him a single round to discern the opponent’s vulnerable spots.

If they wanted to win, it was crucial to strike where the opponent was the weakest—

not only would that ensure an easy win, but it would also further guarantee their overall victory.

“What? Are you trying to tell me what to do?” Mr. Wangley peered at Dustin out of the corner of his eye, his

tone displeased.

“I’m just offering a friendly reminder.”

“A reminder? Do I look like I need your reminders? Mr. Wangley sneered. “Who do you think you are, boy? What right do you have to tell me how to take this man down? Do you think you’re stronger than me?”

“Dustin! Shut your mouth if you don’t know what you’re talking about. Does Mr. Wangley look like he needs

your advice to win? Really, it’s about time someone put you in your place for a change!” Quentin was equally

impatient.

“If you don’t believe me, it’s your call. Forget it, then.” Dustin shrugged. There was no point in trying to reason

with them anyway. He’d only thought to offer a suggestion out of pure goodwill. Since none of them

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appreciated it, he wouldn't scramble to make them listen, either.

'Little brat! Keep your eyes wide open and look at how it really is done!' Mr. Wangley turned and sprang away, leaving Dustin with those words. The older man sprang into the battle ring like a proud eagle, landing steadily amid the feverish applause from the audience.

Someone whistled, raucous cheers erupting all over in response to Mr. Wangley's elegant move.

The chunkster, however, paid him no attention. He picked up the fallen mutton leg and continued devouring it vehemently.

"Young man, that Adamantine Shield of yours is undeniably impressive, but unfortunately, you're faced with me tonight. It is only fate for you to end up as my stepping stone!" Mr. Wangley placed both hands behind his back, arrogance permeating his features.

"Chunkster! Knock this old man out of the ring, and I'll treat you to a whole roasted lamb in return!" Brody shouted from the audience.

"Lamb... lamb!"

The chunkster's eyes lit up as he turned to Mr. Wangley. At present, it was not a renowned fighter who stood before him but the promise of a fragrant, whole roasted lamb.

"Defeat you eat lamb!" He struggled to utter a few words from his limited vocabulary before launching his first attack. With a stomp, the chunkster charged toward Mr. Wangley like the sputtering engine of a car, violently aiming for a collision.

"Ineffectual amateur!" Mr. Wangley flexed his soles and sprang, landing not a moment later on the chunkster's back. Then, without pausing, he extended his fingers and struck the pressure points present on the chunkster's back relentlessly.

The chunkster stumbled along with Mr. Wangley's momentum. He swayed, seconds away from losing his balance.

"Lamb! Meat!" The chunkster was growing impatient now. His assault became crazed and

frantic, but Mr. Wangle was smart enough not to meet them head-on. Instead, he ducked agilely, launching a few sneak

attacks here and there as he egged his opponent on.

When it came to manipulating the pressure points of his opponent to turn the situation in his favor, he was, no doubt, an expert.

He believed that no matter how strong the chunkster's defenses were, he could effectively

target his pressure points and bring him down, once and for all! At the end of the day, those were the points he believed to be the chunkster's weaknesses.

His idea was undeniably a good one, but as time passed, Mr. Wangle couldn't help but feel that something was off.

Because of the chunkster's build, his defenses were different from the patterns exhibited by the usual adamantine shields wielded by the opponents he'd faced in the past.

The lat on his body was key in dissipating the impact of his attempted attacks.

As for the pressure points he'd been targeting all this while, they only proved to be mildly effective for a short period of time before fully

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recovering shortly after, rendering most of his strikes ineffective.

After their long-

withstanding struggle, the chunkster appeared to be spirited while Mr. Wangle seemed more

out of breath than ever.

The consumption of energy after channeling the internal energy he possessed drained him to the core.

"This is impossible!" Mr. Wangle exclaimed inwardly, his brow knitted.

The chunkster's appearance was unremarkable, but he was extremely tenacious.

“Mr. Wangle! Try targeting the crown of his head! That’s where his weakness lies!” Natasha’s voice rang out

from the audience.

No one believed Dustin but her.

“That brat speaks nothing but nonsense! He’s just trying to disrupt the state of my mind!” Mr. Wangle’s

expression was icy.

Not even he could identify the chunkster’s weaknesses, let alone someone whose name he hadn’t even heard of in his entire life. He was not about to believe his words just like that.

“I need to finish this soon! And quickly!” His stamina was swiftly waning, and he couldn’t afford to waste any

more time.

Mr. Wangle threw himself forward boldly, targeting a punch toward the chunkster’s throat. That area had the least amount of flesh—it must be his opponent’s weakest spot.

If it landed where he intended to, the subsequent effects would be extraordinary.

“Gotcha!” The chunkster grinned as he grabbed ahold of Mr. Wangle’s wrist.

“Shit—” Mr. Wangle’s expression changed as the magnitude of the situation he was caught in dawned upon him. He was about to pull back, only to realize he couldn’t break free.

“Up you go!” The chunkster bellowed and tossed Mr. Wangle up in the air, spinning him around. About ten rounds or so later, he swatted the old man like a fly and sent him crashing to the ground.

A loud boom reverberated around the arena, shaking it momentarily.

Mr. Wangle coughed up blood as he convulsed on the ground before stilling completely. He was severely injured, rendered motionless by the impact of his fall. That plummet must have also broken a great number of

his bones.

“Mr. Wangley!” Quentin stood up immediately. Shock and, inexplicably, fear had taken hold of his features.

When he'd watched Mr. Wangley's attempts to take control of the situation earlier, he thought victory was theirs at long last. Never in his wildest dreams would he imagine the tides to turn on them.

“Quick! Get a doctor over here!” Natasha's expression was stern as she ordered someone to lift Mr. Wangley

off the ground.

“Even Mr. Wangley lost to this chunkster, Could he actually be invincible?” Ruth's brows were perpetually furrowed, worry evident on her face.

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The situation was far from optimistic after losing two rounds in a row.

“Another great master from the Harmons has fallen. Looks like their loss today is inevitable! Otto shook his

head.

“Exactly! Competing against Boulderthorn today was a surefire way to bring disgrace upon themselves. Not even the Harmons could emerge victorious against an opponent this powerful!” Julie grinned gleefully.

After knowing that Dustin had connections with the Harmon family, she couldn't help but take pleasure in the misfortune of said family.

“I wouldn't be so sure about that.” Suddenly, a man spoke up from beside them. “I heard the Harmons still have their biggest trump card to turn this around!”

“What trump card?” Otto asked tentatively.

“This trump card of theirs is none other than the warrior ranked ninth among the Hundred Immortals, the King

of Kicks!”

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“The King of Kicks?”

“The one ranked ninth on The Hundred Immortals?”

Everyone looked astonished upon hearing the mention. They had clearly heard of the King of Kicks—those who ranked on The Hundred Immortals were extraordinary talents, not to mention the legends who made it into the top ten!

A powerful man like the King of Kicks would command respect anywhere he went. His presence at their unremarkable guild was akin to an attack from a higher level. Not even the Boulderthorn disciples could overshadow him.

“Wow! I’m surprised that the Harmons have hired the King of Kicks! They are indeed wealthy!”

“With the King of Kicks around, the Harmons are definitely winning the battle.”

“He can take on every single opponent at the scene with his capability!”

After the initial shock, the spectators started to anticipate the fight. After today, they could boast that they had witnessed the King of Kicks in action.

“Ms. Harmon, your martial artists seem weak. Why don’t you send the top gun?” Brody challenged her with a sneer. Winning two consecutive rounds boosted his confidence.

“Sir Cavaliere, I’ll bank on you.” Natasha looked at the hawk-nosed elder.

“Hmph! Didn’t I tell you not to waste your time? What are those two good-for-nothings doing here?” The man appeared disdainful. His remark upset Stephen and Mr. Wangle, who were being treated for their injuries on the side. Still, they dared not talk back to him.

“Sir Cavaliere, you’re right. These two aren’t at the same level as you. They’re just here to fill up the quota,” Quentin quickly sucked up to the King of Kicks..

“Please, Sir Cavaliere.” Natasha, refusing to engage in more talk, gestured to ward the battle ring.

“Sure! Since I’m paid to do this, I’ll walk around the ring!” He smiled and marched right into the ring. His appearance led to a huge commotion among the audience.

“Fuck! It’s truly the King of Kicks! Am I dreaming?”

“That’s unexpected! The Harmons must have spent a fortune to get him here!”

“When you have one of the top ten from The Hundred Immortals in the ring, it’s practically a massacre, isn’t it?”

“I thought the Harmons were going to lose! But the tables have turned!”

The atmosphere in the guild reached a climax due to the presence of the King of Kicks.

“Although this has cost us a fortune, it is worth it solely for the shock factor. The corner of Jessica’s lips

curled into a rare smile.

“That’s true! Once the King of Kicks defeats the lineup from Mr. Williams’ side, no one will look for trouble with

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us anymore!” Quentin concurred with a nod.

“Too bad the King of Kicks is an egotistical lone wolf. We can’t work with him for long.” Natasha shook her head regretfully.

“Oh, what do you know? Legends are special and act in their own ways. That’s why they’re different from us!” Quentin sounded like a know-it-all and was promptly ignored by Natasha.

“Silence!” The hawk-nosed elder pressed on the floor of the ring. When the audience quieted, he announced, “I have caught the flu and felt sick today. Therefore, I shall surrender and forfeit the battle today!”

Chaos erupted among the audience.

“What? Is he surrendering?”

“That can’t be! He’s the King of Kicks and ninth on The Hundred Immortals. How could he give up because of flu?”

“Fuck! That’s no surrender. He’s doing it on purpose!”

The audience was stunned and confused as they didn’t expect the King of Kicks to act in such a way. After going into the ring, he surrendered before the battle. What was that? Was there some shady deal going on?

“What’s wrong? Why did he surrender?” Jessica and her group exchanged astonished glances. The King of

Kicks had received the payment but surrendered before he rendered his services. He had crossed a line!

“Did he switch sides at the last minute?” Dustin narrowed his eyes, looking hostile. He had not expected the King of Kicks to pull off that trick.

“Sir Cavaliere! What was that?” Natasha shot up from her seat, looking frosty. The whole reason she accepted

the invitation to the battle was because she had him as an ace card. His unexpected behavior had messed up

her plans.

“Ms. Harmon, you paid me to join the battle, but you did not specify that I have to win. Isn’t it a normal thing to fall sick and give up on the battle?” He flashed a half smile at her.

*Sir! You are a respected senior in the martial arts world! Aren’t you worried you’d be the butt of the jokes if you flip-flopped on your promises?” Natasha chided him.

“The butt of jokes? I am an honorable and upright man. No one dares to joke about me.” His eyes swept across the area, and those who felt his gaze quickly lowered their heads in deference.

“Sir Cavaliere, I believe I have treated you generously. Why would you do this?” She furrowed her brow. At that moment, she was no longer oblivious to the fact that she had been fooled. The King of Kicks agreed to join the battle, only to surrender at a critical moment, catching her off-guard. It was a cruel and raw betrayal!

“Ms. Harmon, I do not see the need to hide the truth from you.” The hawk-nosed old man straightened his shirt and said to her, “I play fair, and I work for the highest bidder. This time around, someone has offered me a higher price. So, I can’t help you out. Of course, I can reconsider my decision if you’re willing to bid for my

service at a higher price.”

“Are you marking up the price now?” There was a wintry look in Natasha’s attractive eyes.

“Since this is a transaction, it’s only normal to mark up prices at the last minute.” He showed no guilt in his

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behavior.

“You’re shameless!” She sneered, feeling aghast at the rotten character of the King of Kicks she had painstakingly hired.

“Ms. Harmon, if you refuse to offer a higher price, I shall leave the ring.” He looked like he was about to leave.

“Wait! We’ll do it!” Jessica’s face fell apart, and she immediately stopped him. If the King of Kicks surrendered, the Harmones would lose the battle without a doubt! They had to accept the fact, even if he had demanded more money at the eleventh hour.

“I’m sorry. Your reply comes too late.” He sneered at them and walked up to the Boulderthorn guild gang in front of everyone. The Harmons instantly paled upon witnessing that.

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The Harmons were shocked that the handsomely-paid King of Kicks had tricked them instead of lending them a helping hand. At that moment, they were lost and helpless.

Meanwhile, the Boulderthorn guild was all smiles, a stark contrast to the anger and indignation on the Harmons’ end.

“Hahaha Ms. Harmon, your family has lost three rounds. Anyone else wants to get into the ring? If not, we’ll declare victory!” Brody laughed insolently. Very few knew the fact that the King of Kicks was a good friend of Mr. Williams. The betrayal was part of his plan as well. That would force the Harmons into a corner!

“Oh no! Are the Harmons leaving in defeat?”

“I was looking forward to a great battle tonight. Who knew we’d witness such a botched situation!”

“At the end of the day, the Harmons have fallen into a trap. The King of Kicks that they wasted the effort on recruiting turns out to be a rat from the Boulderthorn guild!”

“Might is right! There’s no point arguing over this. The Harmons are destined to lose!”

There was a lot of gossip surrounding the sharp turn of events. People were shocked and sympathetic; some were even gleeful at the disaster.

“Natasha, your King of Kicks is a sham! What do we do now? Do we take the defeat?” Quentin put on an odd

and critical look.

Natasha bit her lips but said nothing. The situation had unfolded beyond her control, and she wondered if

there was anyone who could save the day.

“Ms. Harmon, is anyone from your side going into the ring? Just admit defeat if you have no one else to send. Stop wasting time,” Brody challenged her again.

“Yeah! Just admit defeat! Don’t waste our time!” Those from the Boulderthorn guild chanted, and the Harmons

had nothing to say in return, only upset looks on their faces.

“I’ll go!” A voice boomed and echoed in the guild. Everyone looked at the handsome man who emerged from

the crowd. It was Dustin Rhys!

“Huh?” The audience standing beside him was puzzled.

“Rhys! Are you kidding? The audacity to join the battle!” Quentin was taken aback before sniggering as he

gave Dustin a look of disbelief.

“Dustin, stop fooling around! Even Mr. Wangsley and the rest were no match for the Boulderthorn guild. What can you do up there? Losing your life?” Jessica rebuked, but she was more concerned about the reputation of the Harmons than Dustin’s safety. If he lost the battle, the Harmon family’s reputation would suffer.

“Dustin, you don’t have to take the risk. If they want our stocks, we’ll give it to them.” Natasha was worried for

her man. No amount of stocks or benefits was worth risking his life for.

“Don’t worry. I’ll be fine.” He smiled. “I will not offer them our stocks, and I’ll save our reputation!” With that, he

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marched into the ring. He wasn't planning on getting involved, but he was forced to do so after the King of Kicks switched sides at the last minute.

"Sis, do you not want to stop him?" Ruth was a little concerned.

"He's not a reckless man. If he's fine with joining the battle, he must be confident in his chances of winning." Natasha put on a brave face, but her eyes betrayed her worry. However, she had no choice but to trust him unconditionally in such a critical time.

"Kiddo, you must be on a suicide mission! How dare you come into the ring?" Brody laughed like a maniac and stared at Dustin like he was looking at a dead man. He had been thinking hard about getting revenge against

Dustin, but Dustin made it easy for him.

"Who is that?" Maximus questioned.

"Max, that's the inventor of Immortunol. He was the one who slapped me this morning." Brody explained.

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"Oh, it's him."

Maximus smiled coolly. "It's really gutsy of a physician to join the battle. Looks like the Harmons have run out of candidates."

Dustin's appearance came as a shock to the members of the Boulderthorn guild as well as Julie and her group.

"Is he crazy? He can't even beat me. What makes him think he's capable of fighting the Boulderthorn masters?"

to Marsh was dumbfounded by Dustin's decision. Even Mr. Chapman was beaten to a pulp in the ring. Where did a weakling like Dustin get the courage to enter the ring?

“Hmph! He still wants to show off at this point in time. That’s just courting death.” Julie chuckled gleefully. She looked forward to Dustin being beaten up badly onstage.

“You’re damn right! Even Otto knows better than to show off at this serious event. That dude is on a suicide mission!” The group of youngsters scoffed at Dustin, whom they believed was an attention-seeker. An average person should never get involved in the battle of the masters, for a tiny slip-up could cost one’s life.

“Young man, are you sure you’d like to fight on behalf of the Harmon family? The hawk-nosed elder suddenly questioned in a threatening voice. Everyone in the guild could hear him well, even though he wasn’t speaking loudly. The elder had made it clear that anyone who represented the Harmons would be his enemy.

“Well, at least I’m not as shameless as those who took the money but refused to make good on their promise and even stabbed others in the back!” Dustin taunted him mercilessly. “Even dogs are thankful to the hand that feeds them. I guess that somebody is worse than an animal.”

The audience gasped and murmured upon hearing the remark. They were already startled when Dustin went on the stage, but they were once again shocked by his audacity to mock the King of Kicks in public. Was Dustin Rhys playing with fire?

“You punk! Do you even hear what you’re saying?” The old man’s expression crumbled.

“Why? Can’t stand being criticized for your actions? You’re just a greedy, dishonest, and ungrateful bastard, aren’t you?” Dustin jeered at him.

“You have a death wish!” The old man stared coldly at Dustin, but he was stopped by Maximus before he could make a move. “Sir Cavaliere, we cannot break the rules of the battle. You should leave any personal grudges for post-battle.”

“You punk! I sure hope you survive!” The hawk-nosed old man scoffed and begrudgingly took his seat.

“Sir Cavaliere, calm down. That punk is certainly going to be dead today.” Brody cackled and yelled in the direction of the ring. “Chunkster, smash him! I’ll give you two more mutton legs if you cripple him!”

“Mutton leg! Mutton leg!” Chunkster giggled, his eyes shining bright when he stared at Dustin. Before the referee even officiated the match, he had hurled himself toward Dustin at high speed and with explosive energy like an invincible human tank. Compared to Chunkster, Dustin was as thin as a rail.

“That punk is going to die! Not even Mr. Chapman could beat Chunkster. Dustin Rhys is going to be minced meat in the ring.” Otto chuckled with anticipation.

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“He deserves it for being a show-off.” Julie crossed her arms on her chest and waited for ill fate to befall

Dustin.

Just when everyone thought that it was a David and Goliath battle with a clear winner, Dustin suddenly made

a move. He kicked against the ground and launched himself forward like an agile serpent. When he was near Chunkster, he quickly leaped into the air, tapping his index and middle fingers on the Meridian point on top of Chunkster’s head with precision.

With a grunt. Chunkster immediately blacked out in the ring. Due to the momentum, his ball-

like figure accelerated for a good ten feet before coming to a stop and dropping off the platform with a thud. The

audience watched on, their jaws dropping on the floor.

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“What the f*ck? Has the battle ended?”

The audience in the guild stared at Chunkster, who was lying flat on the ground lifelessly. They looked at each other in disbelief. At first, they thought that Dustin would never win, but the battle ended with a huge twist. More importantly, Dustin had only made one move throughout the battle, which was terrifying, to say the least.

“Fuck! That dude won? What happened?” Otto’s **eyes** widened, and he looked incredulous. Dustin Rhys beat Chunkster, who had defeated Mr. Chapman. Would that mean Dustin was more powerful than Mr. Chapman?

“I—impossible! That guy must have pulled some tricks. Why else could he win without breaking a **sweat**?” Julie vehemently shook her head, refusing to accept the outcome.

“What happened just now? Why did Chunkster collapse after the touch?” Brody was confounded. Chunkster’s defense should have been impenetrable for most, except for Maximus and the King of Kicks. What trick did

Dustin pull to win?

“He’s quite something. He **found** Chunkster’s weakness in no time.” **Maximus** narrowed his eyes and appeared

quite taken aback. The others might be oblivious to the strategy behind the move, but Maximus knew that Dustin had found Chunkster’s weakness and focused his attack **on** it, which resulted in the surprise victory.

“No wonder he was so confident. He came prepared.” The hawk-nosed old man scoffed. He would have acknowledged Dustin’s talent if the latter had taken down the opponent with his skills, but the trick that Dustin pulled was cowardly.

“Hahaha! He won! Dustin, you’re awesome!” After overcoming the shock, Ruth jumped up and down with joy.

“What’s so great about it? He had to thank Mr. Wangley and Mr. Chapman for exhausting Chunkster. He wouldn’t have taken advantage of Chunkster otherwise.” Quentin was a little jealous about Dustin’s win. In his opinion, Dustin merely beat the opponent due to luck.

“Mr. Wangley, Mr. Rhys was right. Chunkster’s weakness is on the top of his head.” Stephan, who was being treated for his injury, shot a glance at Mr. Wangley, who seemed embarrassed and quiet.

The unexpected victory set the crowd ablaze. Most were confused and doubtful about Dustin’s move, but he proved that the Harmons still had a chance to fight and win.

“Is that all the Boulderthorn disciples **have** to show?” Dustin stood boastfully in the ring with a disdainful

smile on his lips.

“That insolent bastard!”

“How dare you?”

“This is too much!”

Upon hearing the **insult**, the Boulderthorn **gang** stood up in rage. Anyone who looked down on their guild would be playing with fire!

“You punk! You’d better tone down **your** ego!” Brody angrily slapped the table and shot up,

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“Quit the nonsense. If you can, take me on.” Dustin **was** as calm as ever as he looked down upon those

beneath him.

Right then, the hawk-nosed elder suddenly cackled menacingly. “Kid, did you really think you could show off a couple of amateur moves over here?”

“If you do not believe me, come try it out for yourself.” Dustin wiggled his fingers at the old man provocatively.

“Great! If death is what you’re after, I shall grant your wish.” The old man finally lost it and walked up to the ring. At the sight, everyone at the scene cheered enthusiastically.

“Great! The King of Kicks finally joins the battle!”

“How dare that dude challenge the King of Kicks? He doesn’t know his limits.”

“Either way,

he’s going to lose. At least he’d lose with glory if he is defeated by the King of Kicks.”

“Hmph! The King of Kicks is known to be violent. He wouldn’t go easy on that kid.”

The crowd was murmuring about the scene in the ring.

Otto snickered. “Well, at least the punk will die an honorable death in the hands of the King of Kicks!”

“He’s too reckless! Did he think he could call the shots after his one lucky victory? Facing off **the** King of Kicks is the same as staring at death!” Julie couldn’t resist the touch of schadenfreude. But she admitted that Dustin had given her many surprises. At the end of the day, she believed that he wouldn’t escape his fate of being butchered.

“That old fart is utterly despicable! When he was repping the Harmons, he immediately ceded the fight. Now, he’s fighting against us. He’s the ultimate definition of shameless!” Ruth was irritated. Just when there was a sliver of hope for the Harmons, the King of Kicks showed up to give them a blow. It was disgusting.

“There’s no point talking about that. Let’s think about what we’re going to do after the loss.” Quentin shook his head. He obviously decided that Dustin would be defeated.

“Hey, little punk! I’ll give you **a** chance to live. If you bow to me here, I’ll spare your life!” the King of Kicks announced evilly in the ring.

“Bow to you? Are you asking me to bow to a filthy animal? You don’t deserve that.” Dustin chortled.

“You’re a brave one. I bet you’ll only regret it when you’re staring at death!” Looking offended, the old man took one step after another toward Dustin with an imposing air.

An average martial artist would have cowered under the pressure, but Dustin stood firmly on the ground. unaffected.

“To avoid accusations of bullying the young, I **shall** only make three moves on you. If you successfully block all the attacks, I’ll consider you victorious,” the old man said coldly.

“Bring it on.” Dustin gestured at him.

“The first kick is **to** destroy your **core!**” After snorting, the old man suddenly launched the first kick. He propelled himself like an arrow projecting from the bow. He was moving at an unbelievably high speed that the crowd could not make out his figure.

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When the old man was near enough, he quickly gave Dustin a kick in the abdomen. The strength of the kick was comparable to the destructiveness of a bullet. It was so powerful that it could make a hole in a metal board, not to mention destroying a human.

Seeing that, Dustin merely smiled and **swayed** aside, narrowly avoiding the attack.

“Hmm?” When the kick didn’t **land**, the old man looked quite perplexed. He had applied only half of his full strength in the first kick, which made it impossible to dodge. “He is something No wonder he’s so bold.” The old man scrunched his eyes and scoffed. “But that’s the end of it!”

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With that, he moved across the ring again, launching his second kick with 80 % of his full strength, aiming at Dustin's head this time. He was confident that Dustin would be annihilated after being struck.

A figure flashed across the ring quickly. Like an apparition, **Dustin** twisted his body and narrowly escaped the second kick.

"Why? Are you starving? Why are you moving so slowly?" Dustin jeered **at** him as though **he** was staring at a clown. His disdainful gaze had completely infuriated the old man.

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"You're asking for death!" Incensed, the King of Kicks finally decided to give it his all. He leaped into the air and served multiple flying kicks as he landed in Dustin's direction. This time, he did not only attack Dustin point-to-point—he was undiscerning in his moves, offering no escape for his opponent.

"You punk! Let's see how you're going to dodge this!" He laughed maniacally as the number of kicks increased and covered a wider scope. Dustin, who was targeted, stood there without fear.

"It's clear who's the winner here." Maximus shook his head and stood up to leave. He was initially surprised by Dustin's agility, but even that was no match for the King of Kicks. No level of agility could save the young man from the indiscriminate attacks by the King of Kicks. In the face of actual talent, Dustin's tricks would be

of no use.

All of a sudden, they heard a deafening explosion from the ring. The kicking legs in the air were nowhere to be seen. Instead, The King of Kicks stopped his leg right by Dustin's ear, but it wasn't an attempt to show mercy to Dustin. Unfortunately, his shin was locked in Dustin's grip, immobilizing him.

"Did I ever say I'd dodge your attacks?" Dustin grinned as he grabbed the leg of the King of Kicks.

“Did he block the kick?” Maximus, who was ready to leave, stood still, looking astonished. Not even he would think of blocking a full-strength attack from the King of Kicks, but Dustin seemed to have grabbed the opponent’s leg with much ease. Maximus wondered what had happened. Was the King of Kicks conserving his energy on purpose, or did he underestimate Dustin’s capability?

“How is that possible? How did you block that move?” The old man widened his eyes in utter disbelief, knowing he had not held back on the attack. Even though the kick wasn’t his most fatal move, it **was** more than enough to fight against most martial artists in the field. Therefore, he was shocked to see Dustin holding his powerful leg with one hand. It was too eerie a scene to make sense of.

“Is there even anything great about that kick of yours? It’s so weak that even a three-year-old could block it,” Dustin remarked, looking unbothered.

“Nonsense!” The old man was a ball of rage **as** he leaped into the air and struck again with an earth-shattering force.

“Hey! You used up your three moves! You lost!” Ruth yelled at the old man, but he ignored her reminder and capitalized on the force of gravity to strike Dustin on the head. This time, he was confident that Dustin wouldn’t be able to fend it off.

“You never learn, do you?” Dustin snorted and lifted his arm to block the kick without as much as moving aside. The collision between the leg and arm resulted in an explosive sound. An invisible blast wave spread across the space from the core of the collision while strong gusts of winds roared. Dustin stood on the ground without moving an inch. He looked **poised** and unhurt, but multiple cracks had formed underneath his feet.

On the other hand, the old man had **placed** one **leg** on Dustin’s arm as he mustered up all his energy in an attempt to press his opponent onto the **ground**. No matter **how** much force he exerted, Dustin’s arm remained motionless, like it was made of metal.

“Is that all?” Dustin raised a **brow**, looking disdainful. “Is that all the King of Kicks have to show?”

“No! This can’t be! How could you possibly block that attack? You aren’t even ranked on The Hundred Immortals!” The old man had shock written all across his face. He was sure **that** Dustin wasn’t ranked because he had fought the top ten in the ranking.

“The Hundred Immortals?” Dustin chuckled and whispered, “Let me tell you a secret: I made it to The Heavenly Immortals ten years ago.”

“The Heavenly Immortals?” The old man was stunned by the revelation. The Heavenly Immortals were levels above The Hundred Immortals, and those ranked on that list were the *creme de la creme*. It sounded impossible that a twenty-

something like Dustin managed to make it to that list. One must know that the martial artists who made it to The Heavenly Immortals were the ones who achieved divinity, at the very least!

“No! Impossible! You must be bluffing!” The old man refused to believe Dustin’s words. It was rare to run into martial artists ranked on The Heavenly Immortals, and a ranked martial artist wouldn’t have lived in a small town like Swinton, to begin with.

“Look out for my Phoenix Kick!” The old man put a distance between them, followed by kicking himself off the ground and launching himself into the **air**. Through consecutive kicks that morphed into **shadows**, he initiated a crazed attack on Dustin.

“All show and no go!” Dustin scoffed at the move and sent a punch into the sole of the old man’s foot. Following another explosive sound, the old man was sent flying across the air like a soccer ball. With another thud, he collapsed underneath the ring, bleeding from the orifices on his face and suffering from fractures **in** his legs.

The crowd went dead silent at the sight of the lifeless King of Kicks on the ground. People were gaping with alarmed looks. They could not believe that the King of Kicks, from the top ten of The Hundred Immortals, had lost a battle in record time and without warning. Some of the spectators had not even recovered from the blow.

More importantly, Dustin seemed to have attacked only once throughout the fight, apart from all the defensive

moves and the dodging. That **was** the scariest observation of the night. Had the crowd not witnessed it with

their own eyes, they would have scoffed at the idea of the King of Kicks losing to an obscure **young** man.

“Has the King of Kicks

lost?” Brody’s mind went blank. He could not comprehend the situation and even went as far as to suspect the King of Kicks of staging the loss.

“My lord! Where **did** that guy come from?” Otto swallowed hard as his disrespect for Dustin was replaced by

shock and fear, Dustin defeating the King of Kicks was a testament to his capability. At the thought of his previous provocations toward Dustin, Otto suddenly felt a prick of fear. Thankfully, Dustin **did** not take the remarks too seriously. Else, Otto might **have ended** up as **dead** meat.

“I’m

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impossible!” He’s just a good-for-nothing! Since when has he become a master? Julie was both dumbstruck and doubtful. She refused to believe that Dustin **was** capable of such powerful moves. The only

possible explanation was that the two men in the ring were putting on a show. The King of Kicks must **have been** bribed by Dustin and played out his part as the **loser**. Right! That must be it!

“Haha! He won! We won!” Ruth squealed in excitement and showed off to the others, “See **that**? That’s my brother-in-law in the ring! Isn’t he amazing?”

“Wait, he won? How did he do it? Quentin stared on, eyes widened into saucers.

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“Never have I thought that he was a hidden talent. Since he’s beaten the King of Kicks, I believe he is capable of being ranked within the top eight in The Hu

ndred Immortals, Jessica mused. She admitted that she had missed the unpolished gem. Dustin Rhys was more remarkable than she had assumed.

“He’s my man! So impressive!” Natasha’s lips curled into a dazzling smile. Her lovely eyes were filled with

affection. Curiosity grew in her—she started wondering about Dustin’s real identity.

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In the ring. Dustin stood tall with hands behind his back, exuding an imposing and majestic air. He no longer hid his talents and shone from the full display of his powers. No one dared to meet **his** eyes. The fact that he had defeated the King of Kicks with one move made everyone look at him with awe.

“Surprising! The Harmons have an ace under their wings.” Maximus narrowed his eyes, putting on a serious face. Dustin had won his respect through the display of strength. Not even Maximus could easily beat the King of Kicks with bare hands.

“Weakling!” Dustin dusted and straightened his sleeve. Then, he coolly announced, “**Next?**”

The Boulderthorn disciples exchanged furtive glances. They knew they weren’t Dustin’s match, especially after

he had defeated the King of Kicks.

“Max, what do we do? That punk is wild!” Feeling aggrieved, Brody clenched his jaws.

“Looks **like** I’ll have to go.” Maximus stood up slowly, his eyes **shining** with excitement. He had shown up to the battle **as** the ace and wasn’t originally planning to fight. In his eyes, the battle was child’s play and offered no challenge. However, Dustin’s presence shocked him and introduced some excitement. Maximus was not in the martial

arts practice for fame or wealth: he was in search of excellence in swordsmanship. Every time he

crossed paths with an ace, he would be combative.

“Max, he’s quite strong. Are you confident in beating him?” Brody questioned cautiously.

“I am not his match if we fight bare-handed, but I have full confidence if I fight him with a sword,” Maximus

remarked mildly.

“Great! Max, give it your all! He’s just trouble. We should get rid of him as soon as possible!” Brody sniggered with malice. Maximus **was** one of the rare talents in the art of swordsmanship, ranking sixth on The Hundred Immortals before reaching thirty years of age. He was levels above the King of Kicks and especially invincible when fighting with a sword.

Once, Brody’s father predicted that Maximus would achieve divinity within three years. By that time, Maximus would already make it to The Heavenly Immortals.

“What’s up? Is there no one else from Boulderthorn?” Dustin scanned the space with a sharp glare.

“I’ll go!” Maximus leaped into the air, and when he was close to landing, he tapped the tip of his feet on the shoulder of a spectator before bouncing back up in the air with extreme nimbleness. His movements were fairy-like, making the group of women in the guild squeal in admiration, their eyes sparkling in awe.

“Wow! He’s so cool!”

“A young man who looks **great** in white—he’s my type!”

Not only was Maximus blessed with good looks and gentlemanly, but he also pulled off a spectacular

entrance, giving off the impression of a young knight.

“Who are you?” Dustin scanned him from head to **toe**.

“I’m Maximus Kane, one of Boulderthorn’s disciples. I’m here for the experience.” Maximus bowed at him

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politely. His self-introduction **caused** a commotion within the guild.

“Maximus Kane? Isn’t he ranked sixth on The Hundred Immortals?”

“That’s right! He’s the famous ‘Lightning Blade’ in Balerno. I had the honor of witnessing him in action!”

“Oh, f*ck! It’s Maximus ‘Lightning Blade’ Kane! I heard that his sword moved as fast as lightning. He’s never lost a battle ever since he gained his fame. This is going to be fun!”

The crowd discussed Maximus with great interest, for Maximus was an ace ranked sixth on The Hundred Immortals, much stronger than the **King** of Kicks, who ranked ninth.

The gap in their rankings was huge, even though they were three places apart. It was hard to climb up in the ranking once a martial artist entered the top ten. The top five names in the ranking barely changed—they practically maintained the same ranking all year round.

“Ah, finally, a normal opponent.” Dustin looked amused and gestured, “Please .”

*Just a minute. Maximus said with seriousness. “I’m good at swordsmanship. Shall we change the battle into an armed fight?”

“Hey! You can’t change the rules **as** you wish! We disagree with that!” Ruth instantly protested unhappily at the suggestion. Any sane person knew that a bare-handed fight was totally different than fighting with weapons. An average man armed with a weapon could beat a group of opponents, not to mention that the person in question was Maximus “Lightning Blade” Kane.

“Why? Are you afraid that he’d lose to Max?” Brody jeered at her. “If you’re scared, just admit defeat right now! Stop wasting our time!”

“We’re not! You guys are the ones who break the martial arts code! Ruth argued the facts.

“Nonsense! We never banned weapons from battles. Why don’t you get Rhys to use a weapon too?” Brody laughed frostily.

“You-” Ruth choked in anger.

“Sure! Use a weapon if you’d like. It doesn’t make a difference.” Dustin **was** unconcerned and agreed to the change without fuss. A frustrated Ruth felt that his remarks went against all her effort to fight in his interest.

“Many thanks.” Maximus bowed again and drew his sword out of the sheath from the back. He even introduced it. “My sword is three feet and six inches **long**. It is made from deep iron and has been my companion for five years. It is so solid that it penetrates almost everything!”

“Come at me.” Dustin waved.

“Where’s your weapon?” Maximus raised an eyebrow quizzically.

“My bare hands are my weapons.” Dustin **answered**.

“Are you sure?” Maximus narrowed his **eyes**, thinking that his opponent was capable but overconfident. Dustin would be humiliated if he wanted to block the sword attack with bare hands.

“Of course. I’ll give it to you if you manage to injure me.” Dustin waved at him once more. “Come on!”

“Okay! Be my guest!” Without further ado, Maximus propelled himself forward with the unsheathed sword in

hand. When he got closer to Dustin, he plunged his sword at the opponent, creating glimmers of metallic

reflection and stirring gusts of wind in the quill.

“Great move!”

Most of the martial artists exclaimed in astonishment, Maximus sword moved fast and was unusually sharp. It was hard to tell the sword from its shadows, hence it was hard to defend oneself. Even skillful martial artists at the same level dared not fight bare-handed against the sword. However, Dustin stood in the same **spot** and appeared as though he hadn't noticed the attack.

“That rascal is bold! Why isn't he dodging Maximus **sword** attack?”

“Did he think he's invincible after beating the King of Kicks? He has no idea how powerful Maximus is!”

“Right! There is a huge gap in capability between each member of the top ten of The Hundred Immortals! Looking down on Maximus is the same **as** digging your own grave!”

Amid the murmurs, everyone heard a soft clunking sound as Maximus' sword came to a halt. The sharp blade came to a stop an inch before Dustin's throat, unable to move. When the crowd took a second look, their faces turned white because they realized that Dustin had caught the sword between his two fingers.

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Chapter 244

“Hmm?” Maximus's pupils dilated. He didn't expect Dustin to grab his sword with bare fingers. It appeared that he had underestimated Dustin's sheer talent and confidence. Still, he was unflustered by the strength of his opponent. Quite the opposite—the stronger the opponent, the more excited he felt. He was getting more belligerent as a result.

“Return!” With the wave of a hand, Maximus called his sword back from Dustin’s fingers. The sword came flying back like a serpent.

“Oh?” Dustin was rather surprised by the move. Although he had reined in his capabilities to match his opponent at the earthly level, he acknowledged Maximus’ talent from how Maximus managed to free the weapon from his grip.

“Look out! I’ll show you my Illusory Sword Technique!” Maximus dropped a reminder before waving his sword again. In one move, his sword split into hundreds **and** thousands of different swords. The gleaming blades danced around, weaving a confusing web of swords within ten meters around them. The mind-boggling amount of swords made it hard to discern the actual sword from the illusory ones.

“Wow! It is the Illusory Sword Technique! Looks like Maximus Kane is getting serious!”

“I heard that no one could fight off the Illusory Sword Technique. That punk is going to lose!”

“Kill! Kill! kill him!”

There was an uproar among the audience. Some were shocked, some were concerned, and some were merely adding insult to injury. Soon, Dustin vanished in the midst of the illusory swords in front of their eyes. He and Maximus were nowhere to be seen, leaving only the blinding shine of blades dancing in the ring. The audience **glued** their eyes to the match and struggled to figure out which of them was making the moves. Even so, they couldn’t take their eyes off the climactic fight for fear of missing out on the highlights.

Dustin, the black horse, had garnered all the attention that night by fighting alone against Mr. Williams’ lineup. Earlier, he took down two masters in the top ten of The Hundred Immortals. Even if he lost the fight against Maximus, he still won himself the right to feel proud of his accomplishments.

Three minutes later, the audience heard the clanking of metal as the web of illusory swords suddenly vanished. A figure, who seemed to have taken a bad blow, stumbled speedily toward the edge of the ring.

where he finally managed to steady himself.

Everyone focused on the figure and realized that it was Maximus! As for Dustin, he stood in the middle of the

ring without moving, remaining in the same position as before.

“What happened? Who won?” The audience exchanged glances in confusion. Dustin and Maximus looked

unharmed, but one appeared **poised** while the other looked grim.

“Sir, you are indeed talented, I’ll give you that. I concede defeat.” After a long silence, Maximus finally opened

his mouth.

“He conceded?” The audience gasped. What was going on? The two of them **stood** there uninjured. No one had the upper hand yet, but why did Maximus concede defeat? Could he have been bought off by the Harmons, just like the King of Kicks?

Chapter 244

“Max, what is that nonsense? Us Boulderthorn guild men never concede defeat! Murder that punk!” Brody stood up and bellowed after recovering from the initial shock.

“Shut up!” Maximus scoffed. “You have to admit defeat when you know it. There’s no shame in admitting you’re not **as** good as your opponent!”

The audience might not be able to tell, but he was well aware of the truth.

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Chapter 245

Maximus witnessed how Dustin handled the Illusory Sword Technique with ease. Even if he maxed up his powers and executed the complete set of moves in the technique, he still failed to harm a hair on Dustin’s head, not to mention that Dustin had only fended off the attacks with one hand. To Maximus, these were proof that Dustin **was** greatly ahead of him in terms of capability.

“You have indeed mastered the illusory Sword Technique, but unfortunately, there are three flaws. Dustin suggested mildly. He accorded Maximus respect due to the latter’s humbleness. Else, he would have sent him flying out of the ring.

“What are the three flaws?” Maximus furrowed his brow.

“The third move, the ninth move, and the twenty-sixth move.” Dustin deliberately offered a reminder. “The flaws you exhibited in the three moves were extremely subtle. They will go unnoticed in the eyes of an average martial artist, but they will also put you at a huge disadvantage when you are fighting the real masters.”

“Impossible! I have been practicing the technique forever. How could there be fatal flaws?” Maximus was in disbelief.

“Sure, you have spent a lot of time on the practice, but it is also true that you exhibit those flaws. If my guess is right, your mentor did not teach you everything— he hid part of the three moves from you. Plus, the three moves are extremely crucial and damaging. The mentor must have wanted to put you in harm’s way. Why else

would anyone do that? You’d better look out.” Dustin lowered his voice into a whisper that was only audible to

both of them.

The revelation was a huge blow for Maximus. “That’s **nonsense!** My mentor sees me as his son. He’d never

put me in danger!”

“I’m not going to say more. Believe me or not, it’s all up to you.” Dustin shrugged and sank into silence. The only reason he gave Maximus the advice was because he saw potential in the guy. Whether Maximus trusted his word and whether the man **lived** or died, Dustin would not be affected in any way.

“We lost the battle today. Hence, we shall not bring up the topic of Immortals. Farewell!” Maximus nodded at

Dustin and left the ring in strides.

“He won! The Harmons won again!” Ruth squealed in delight at the sight. Who else would beat Dustin when even Maximus, ranked sixth on The Hundred Immortals, admitted defeat?

“You punk! We shall see! This is not the end!” After shooting a death glare at Dustin, Brody fled the scene with his group of men, looking demotivated. He thought that their plan was perfect, only to be ruined by a formidable opponent out of the blue. Talk about bad luck!

“Otto, have we gotten ourselves into trouble? The young **men** and ladies, who had previously mocked Dustin, trembled at the sight of the victorious man in the ring.

“Fuck! He’s a monster. Let’s leave now!” Otto was covered in a cold sweat and fled the scene immediately. He would be easily crushed by Dustin, Judging from how the man had defeated the King of Kicks and Maximus “Lightning Blade” **Kane**.

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“Young man, congratulations on the win. I am the leader of Humminghill. I wonder if you’d be interested in joining us as a consultant? Our pay and benefits are among the best! Right after Dustin exited the ring, a group of martial artists circled him to poach the talent.

“Humminghill? That’s a really tiny guild. Better not stunt the growth of our handsome dude here. Well, in my opinion, you should join us at the Valley of Joy! We have hot chicks around, and we offer a wealth of resources. I guarantee you’ll be on cloud nine after joining us!”

“Young man, I am the Falcon King of Glenstead and have a good-looking and well-educated granddaughter. If you’re willing. I will offer you her hand in marriage —”

Dustin was speechless by the greedy expressions on their faces. His excellent performance in beating the King of Kicks and Maximus “Lightning Blade” Kane had attracted a high level of attention. He made a mental note to keep a low profile moving **forward**,

“Get out of my way. At that moment, Natasha squeezed her **way** through the crowd with her people. Then, she took Dustin by the arm and publicly declared their relationship, “First of all, I’d like to introduce him as my husband. You’d better give up if you’re trying to matchmake!” Not only that, she kissed Dustin on the cheek as a reward, causing him to turn red in the face. Her action was embarrassing and rather improper in front of the crowd.

“Darling, let’s go!” She ignored the eyes on them and left the guild with Dustin in tow, looking gleeful, proud, and boastful.

The battle, which was full of twists and turns, ended with a victory for the Harmon family. From that moment, a new talent rose in Balerno’s martial arts scene. After beating Maximus, Dustin naturally assumed his opponent’s ranking, and he was subsequently ranked sixth on The Hundred Immortals, which **was** a brilliant feat for a newcomer.

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Chapter 246

After the battle concluded, Dustin, Natasha, and some members of the Harmon family had supper together. It was midnight when he returned to the medical center, which **was** still brightly lit. He entered the center and immediately saw the stunning Dahlia Nicholson, who was merrily chatting away with Caitlyn Lamer. At that moment, she appeared more easygoing than how she usually presented herself—icy.

“Mr. Rhys, you’re back. Seeing Dustin, Caitlyn stood up and greeted him. “Have a chat with Ms. Nicholson. I’ll serve supper.”

“It’s okay. I had supper before I came **home**.” He smiled and turned his attention to Dahlia. “Why are you here?”

“I’m here to thank you.” She flashed him a rare **smile**. “If you hadn’t saved me yesterday, I would have been screwed. Never in my life would I have thought that Matt Laney was a phony bastard.”

“You’re most welcome. I’d offer the same help to anyone in that situation,” he replied unemotionally.

“Why? Are you still upset?” Her tone softened. “My mom was a little rash. There was a misunderstanding. I’ll apologize to you on her behalf. We’re sorry.”

Dustin **was** rather surprised by her action. In his recollection, Dahlia **was** never one to back down. It was unusual of her to offer an apology. Still, the apology arrived too late.

“There’s no need to apologize. After all, this is not the first time I’m misunderstood. It doesn’t matter to me.” He shrugged, looking unbothered.

“Dustin, I know you were treated unfairly and went through hard times. I promise that I’ll never treat you badly again,” she declared with a serious face.

“What was that? That **was** out of the blue.” He stared at her funny.

She took a deep breath and mustered up her courage to say. “Come home with me. Alright?”

His body froze at the simple suggestion, and complicated emotions clouded his eyes. Had Dahlia asked him earlier, he would have agreed to her suggestion without hesitation. Alas, after experiencing a series of challenging **events**, he was bone-**tired**, scared of being hurt, and had moved on.

Although he still had feelings for her, he refused to experience the past anymore. His life in the past was one of silent suffering.

“I know you’re in a difficult position. You don’t have to give me an answer now.” Dahlia merely beamed at him. “I have thought it through. **From now** on, I will take back what’s mine! Even if I have to fight against Natasha Harmon, I will never back down! You know me well. I never give up until I get what I want!”

He was taken **aback** by the serious expression on her face. “Did you drink tonight?”

Dahlia **was** known to be distant and haughty, never sparing anyone a display of friendliness. It was hard to believe she’d make that remark with a belligerent attitude. What **had** gotten into her?

“I’m not drunk. In fact, I’m very sober. When you’re free, relay my message to **Natasha**—let’s compete fairly. and we shall see who’s the winner!”

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With that, she stood on tiptoe and gave him a sudden peck on the lips. She coolly marched out of the medical

center, but her flushed face betrayed her emotions.

“Uh...” Dustin was frozen on the spot as **he** tasted her sweetness on his lips. Was he ambushed just now?

Since when did Dahlia learn to flirt? He wondered if women were all fickle-minded.

“Mr. Rhys, if it’s inconvenient for you to relay that message to Ms. Harmon, I can help.” Caitlyn, blushing in

embarrassment, twiddled with the hem of her top. After all that was a scene only found in TV shows.

“What nonsense? Go to bed!” He glared at her, to which she responded by sticking out her tongue. She ran into the guest room but soon poked her head out and questioned timidly. “Mr. Rhys, which one of them do you love?”

“You little rascal! Why do you keep running your mouth?” Dustin grabbed a duster and acted as though he

wanted to give her a good whopping, and she quickly disappeared into the room out of fear.

After a quiet night, Dustin woke up early the next morning, stirred by the memory of the kiss from the day before. He had tossed and turned in bed, feeling disturbed by it.

“Oh, Dahlia, why did you show up from nowhere just to mess with me?” he wondered.

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Chapter 247

Dustin decided that Dahlia must have had nothing better to do. He tossed his head, washed up, and opened the door to the medical center as usual.

As the door grated and groaned, a blood-soaked figure suddenly collapsed on the floor of the room. The injured man was dressed in white, which was drenched in blood. He carried a broken sword on his back and appeared to have fainted for some time.

Dustin approached the man to check him out, only to realize that it was Maximus Kane!

“I did not recall hurting him yesterday. Or did I?” Dustin rubbed his chin in confusion. Although Maximus, ranked sixth on The Hundred Immortals, was not exactly the cream of the crop, he was still one of the best in tiny Swinton. How did he get himself beaten up this badly?

“Consider yourself lucky.” Dustin mumbled and lifted Maximus into the medical center. After all, he couldn’t turn a blind eye to a dying man at the entrance of **the** medical center.

Maximus suffered from multiple external injuries, but those were simple wounds that could be treated with some bandages. However, he suffered huge damage to his nerves, including the energy in his core. Whoever did this to him wanted to cripple him for good. Thankfully, years of extensive martial arts practice resulted in a solid foundation that protected Maximus from being completely crippled by the attack. With Dustin’s medical

skills, he was confident to heal Maximus within a few weeks.

First, Dustin gave Maximus an injection, followed by feeding the patient some medicine. About **half** an hour later, Maximus finally regained consciousness as he slowly opened his eyes.

“Hey, you’re awake. How do you feel?” Dustin casually asked him.

“Did you save me?” Maximus was a little taken aback. Last night, he sustained severe injuries and found a

medical center on the street in between consciousness. Before he had a chance to knock on the door, he

blacked out at the entrance.

“Who else? Do you see anyone around?” Dustin was a tad speechless at the thoughtless question.

“Thank you.” Maximus struggled to get up and bow.

Dustin forced him back onto the bed and chided him, “That’s enough. Stop moving around when you’re badly

injured.”

“He’s on the brink of death, yet he is hung up on manners. What’s wrong with this dude?” Dustin wondered.

“You’re not bad at martial arts. So, how did you end up getting beaten up?” Dustin asked. Maximus clenched

his teeth as he struggled to open **up**. “It’s fine. Don’t tell me if you don’t feel like it. I’m not that curious either.”

Dustin waved at him dismissively and proceeded to leave.

“Wait ...” Maximus **took** a deep breath and finally confessed, “What you said yesterday was right. I had three

fatal flaws in my Illusory Sword Technique.”

“Oh, really? Did you meet a worthy opponent that fast?”

Dustin was quite surprised to learn that his prediction came true after he **dropped** a casual mention of the flawed **moves** during the battle.

Chapter 247

“It wasn’t just any stranger It was my mentor, Luther Williams! Maximus gritted his teeth, his face clouded

by a grim expression.

“Your mentor?” Dustin was astounded. “Why did he hurt you for no good reason?”

“That’s because ... I caught him having an affair with my female mentee!” Maximus said, filled with resentment. “I went home after the defeat, thinking to question Luther Williams about the flaws in the technique he taught me, but instead, I caught him going at it with my young female mentee in the bedroom!”

Maximus continued, “So, I kicked the door open out of anger and confronted him loudly. He was probably humiliated and provoked, and he fought me with his sword, slashing me twice. I had no choice but **to** fight him with my sword. Silly me. I thought that, given my expertise in swordsmanship, I could at least fend off his attacks even if I couldn’t win.”

Then, he hissed, “I realized how naive I was when we started fighting. It wasn’t practice or strength that I lacked he took advantage of my flawed moves! The third, ninth, and twenty-

sixth moves. Whenever I put these moves into action, Luther was able to spot my flaws and destroy me. It was at that moment I found out that Luther, the mentor I was so proud of, had set me up from the very beginning! I am nothing but a tool to him; he has **never** treated me from the heart. When I am upset at

him, he'll exploit my flawed moves to kill me off and save himself from trouble!"

Maximus' eyes reddened and brimmed with tears. He had always regarded his mentor as a father figure. Who would have thought that the kind and generous old man was nothing but a hypocrite?

"Well what can I say, except that you have a scoundrel of a mentor?" Dustin shook his head sympathetically. Maximus' situation was commonplace in the martial arts world. History was full of cases where disciples and mentors of the same guild tore each other apart. The human heart is the most deceitful of all things.

"I'm fine with being taken advantage of. He could have sent me on a dangerous mission, and I would have taken on the task without complaining. But why? Why did he have to sully my female mentee? She's my fiancée!" Maximus bellowed and smashed a hole in the wall out of rage.

Dustin gaped at the confession. He opened his mouth a few times but was unable to speak.

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Chapter 248

Justin felt sympathetic as he stared into Maximus' reddened eyes. Not only was the poor chap taken advantage of by his mentor, but he also had his fiancée taken away. How miserable!

No man could endure the humiliation and resentment of losing his future wife. Heck, not even anyone could **stand** losing a future spouse. It was hard to imagine that the second-in-command of Boulderthorn was, in fact, a wicked and dishonorable man.

"Just focus on your recovery for now. When you're fully recovered, it'll be time to take back what you lost." Dustin gave Maximus an encouraging pat on the shoulder.

To that, Maximus howled with a desolate expression, "I'll never get better again, not after my core was shattered and my nerves damaged! After losing my in

ternal energy, I have nothing left in me to take revenge. I'm trash! I'm a worthless piece of trash!"

He rolled his fists, digging his fingernails deep into the flesh of his palms until blood trickled from between his thumb and index finger. He badly wanted to take his revenge and seek justice, but he had lost the opportunity to do so.

"Who said you're trash? I can heal your injuries," Dustin interjected coolly.

"W—what did you say?" Stunned, Maximus lifted his head almost instantly.

"I said I can heal your injuries and rejuvenate your core," Dustin repeated himself.

"Are you sure? You're not kidding me, right?" Maximus was wide-eyed with a mix of shock and anticipation.

"Your core suffered some damage, but it's not utterly ruined. There's still a chance. Rejuvenating your nerves is even simpler. As long as you stick to my treatment, you'll regain full strength within ten days." Dustin

promised.

Maximus' face lit up with joy upon hearing that. He thanked Dustin profusely. "If you heal me. I shall owe my life to you. Be it scaling mountains or diving into the deep

ocean, I'll do whatever you ask of me without a complaint!" He seemed serious about his promise. As a martial artist and **a geek** for swords, he never had an interest in much else but the pursuit of excellence in swordsmanship. The moment he learned that his core

was destroyed, he fell into deep despair and even contemplated ending his life. However, Dustin's remark

reignited his hope and his will to live.

"Okay, that's enough. I'm not a sadist. Why would I send you to the mountains and the ocean?" Dustin helped him up. "Consider it fate that you fainted right in front of my medical center. It was **God's** will to have **me** rescue you. Get some good rest, and remember not to **harness** your internal energy in these two **days.**"

“Thank you. You’re my savior!” Maximus bowed a few times to Dustin, who said **nothing** more but wrote a prescription for Caitlyn and reminded her to prepare the medicine according to the schedule.

At that moment, they heard a deafening crash from the outside. They jumped in shock and hurried out to check the situation. Two cars—one red and one white—collided on a street not far away. The red BMW, it appeared, had reversed and crashed into a white Honda, causing the latter to flip. Both cars were mangled beyond recognition, with debris scattered all across the **ground**.

Chapter 248

“Help! Please help my daughter!” A bleeding woman clad in white clothing climbed out of the white Honda. Due to the impact of the collision, she looked dizzy and feeble. At the same time, a young girl was in the front passenger seat; she had lost consciousness. The girl **was** no older than eight years old, and she seemed to be in a critical state because her abdomen was pierced by a sharp object.

The woman in white called for help while attempting to save her daughter, but she failed to open the car **door** because it was too misshapen.

“Crap!” Dustin’s face fell, and he jogged toward the Honda. By then, a crowd had formed around the accident, and a few good samaritans offered help. Unfortunately, the collective strength of a few people was insufficient to pull the girl out because the Honda was flipped over, and the car door remained locked.

As the smoke started billowing from the car, the situation became dire. “I’ll give it a try.” Dustin went up and yanked at the door handle. They heard a crack, and the entire car door came detached, much to the surprise of the onlookers.

After Dustin pried the door open, he unfastened the seat belt and quickly lifted the young girl to the side of the road. She suffered from head trauma, multiple fractures across the body, and massive blood **loss** in the abdomen. The situation did not look good at all.

“Quick! Call an ambulance and get her to the hospital!” someone yelled.

“We have no time for that. I’m a doctor. Let me give it a try.” After Dustin announced his identity, he took out a gold needle and immediately applied first aid to the girl.

“Get out of my way! All of you!” Right then, two women exited the red BMW. The mother **was** a plump lady in her fifties, and the daughter was an attractive woman in her twenties. One could tell that they were wealthy from their branded outfits **and** the way they were decked in jewelry, like walking Christmas trees.

“Hey! Do you even know how to drive? Are you blind?” Jane Engleton, the plump lady, pointed a finger at the woman in white and started scolding her.

“Do you know how much our car costs? One million dollars! And it’s a new car!” She added, “You have to compensate us after turning our car into scrap metal! If you refuse, I’ll

send your family to prison!”

The woman in white was taken aback by the ferocity of Jane Engleton and apologized profusely. “I—

I’m sorry. I didn’t do it on purpose. I did not see your car just now.”

“Is saying sorry enough? Do you take us as pushovers?” Jane pressed on. “I’m **warning** you now. You’ll pay me what the car’s worth. Add the compensation for

mental damages on that, and you’re looking at at least 800 thousand to a million dollars in compensation to get this settled!”

“I—I don’t have that money!” The woman in white almost cried helplessly from the harassment.

“I don’t care! Sell **your** house or your **organs**. Do what you need to gather the **money**, or I’ll teach you a lesson!”

Jane threatened the poor woman.

Finally, Dustin had had enough and blurted out, “Can you be more shameless? It was you who **reversed** and

crashed into the white car. How dare you demand compensation from the victim?”

The truth immediately **woke** the onlookers up. Upon examining the scene of the accident, it was the BMW that reversed and crashed into the Honda. Therefore, the BMW driver should be held fully accountable for the

collision, but she had instead held the victim responsible.

Chapter 246

“Nonsense! She crashed into my car!” Jane remained unfazed and coercive. “So what if I reversed my car? Her eyes were not focused on the road! Look, the lives of commoners like you **are** not worth much. Even if **they**

died in a crash, they totally deserved it!”

The crowd instantly gasped at her outrageous remark.

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Chapter 249

“Hey, you’re being unreasonable!”

“Right? How dare she scolds the others when she’s the culprit? I’ve never seen someone as outrageous as her!”

“Talk no more. Let’s report her to the police!”

The crowd was annoyed at Jane’s arrogance and pointed fingers at her.

“Shut up! All of you!” Hands on her waist, **Jane** yelled at them, “Do you know that we’re the Nicholsons from Glenstead? Even your mayor has to show us respect, let alone you worthless plebs! Make more fuss, and I’ll get you arrested!”

The accusatory voices instantly died down. An average citizen would not want to get on the bad side of the famed aristocratic Nicholson family from Glenstead.

“Mom, just ignore those peasants. Look at this. I’m hurt.” The young woman, Dakota Nicholson, suddenly spoke up as she pressed against her wound and winced.

“Are you hurt? Let me take a look!” Jane’s expression crumbled, and she hurriedly checked out Dakota’s injury. “Gosh, it’s bleeding. This is not good. Her face paled, and she scanned the surroundings until her eyes landed on Dustin. “

Hey, you're a doctor, aren't you? Quick, give my daughter a checkup! She's hurt!" Anyone would have thought that Dakota contracted a terminal disease from the worried look on Jane's face.

"She's fine. It's just a scrape on the elbow." Dustin turned around and glanced at Dakota's injury before looking away.

"What do you mean? A scrape?" Jane immediately looked irritated. "My precious daughter has never suffered injuries. But she has a huge wound now. Of course we'll have to treat it with caution. What if an infection happens?"

"If you're worried about wound infection, buy a bandaid at the pharmacy next door. If you keep dilly-dallying, the wound's going to heal by the time you get to it," Dustin mocked her. He had never seen a woman as ridiculous as Jane, who kicked up a fuss over a tiny wound.

"What did you say? How could you ignore my daughter's injury when you're a doctor? Are you even human, you f*ckface?" Jane was truly cross. No one had ever turned **down** her requests ever since she married into the wealthy Nicholson family.

"I have to set my priorities. This girl is fighting for her life. Your daughter's wound is nothing compared to hers!" Dustin chided her.

"How dare you compare that **peasant** to my daughter?" With a glare, Jane rebuked him, "Dakota is the daughter of the Nicholson family—she's important and precious! You cannot compare her to a commoner!"

"Yeah! She's just a nobody. Well, if she dies today, just consider it her wretched fate!" The haughty Dakota towered over them. "Treat my wound **now!** It's an order. If I get a scar from this, I will not let you off the hook!"

"Are you even human? Nobody speaks in that **way.**"

Chapter 249

"That's right. Is a life worth less than your minor scrape?"

The indignant crowd gave their opinions.

“What now? Are you testing me? The audacity to talk back to the Nicholson family! Come here! Which one of

you wants to be the hero?” Jane hissed maliciously as the onlookers held in their rage in silence in the face of her insolence. Indeed, the average citizens were helpless when harassed and bullied by the rich.

“Madam, my daughter is in a critical state. Can you kindly allow her to get the treatment? **Just** think of this as my plea!” The woman in white plopped onto the ground with teary eyes.

“Hmph! Knock it off! I don’t care! My daughter has to be treated first!” Jane refused to budge.

“Are you deal? Do you hear what my mom said?” Dakota kicked Dustin but was infuriated when the man showed no response. “So, you’re refusing to treat my wound. Great! Don’t bother saving anyone today!” With

that, she went up to the young girl and pulled out the gold needle.

With the gold needle removed, the young girl started bleeding profusely again, and her face grew paler

because of that.

“Hm?” Dustin frowned and spun around with a deadly stare in his **eyes**. “Do you know what you’re doing? You might kill someone by pulling out the needle without thought!”

“So what? You can’t save any life without my permission.” Dakota crossed her arms on her chest, looking bold and arrogant.

Jane chimed in with the same attitude. “That’s right! If you don’t treat my daughter’s wound, you won’t get to

save that useless commoner!”

“Please Please show mercy and stop making things difficult for the doctor. I beg of you!” The woman in

white kneeled and pleaded to the Nicholsons, all while hitting her head on the ground. She knew she could not

afford to get on the bad side of the wealthy; her only wish was to keep her daughter safe.

“Try messing around again, and I won’t go easy on you next time!” Dustin warned Dakota.

She scoffed. “Oh! You got **the** guts, don’t you? Do you know who I am? How dare you speak to me in that way? Did **you** tell me not to touch anything? Well, I’m going to do it anyway!” While speaking, she moved to remove the needle again.

“Get lost!” Fuming. Dustin gave her a slap across the face. She yelped as she was flung ten feet away, even rolling on the ground after landing. Her fair skin was red and swollen. She even **lost** a few of her dental

laminates.

“Shit! That doctor is mad! How dare he slap a Nicholson?”

“Being hot-blooded is one thing; offending the Nicholsons is another. He might suffer because of it.”

The crowd murmured and cast sympathetic glances at Dustin.

“How dare you hit me?” Dakota got up from the ground, still a little dizzy and utterly baffled by Dustin’s move. From a young age, she **was treated** like a princess wherever she went. She had never been slapped, not to mention being slapped in public.

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“So what? Don’t you deserve the slap for being rude?” Dustin wore a hostile expression on his face.

“How dare you hit my daughter? I’m going to fight you!” After the initial shock, Jane recovered and, her blood

boiling, she launched an attack on Dustin. He merely slapped her, and she collapsed from the impact. The

mother and daughter both fell flat onto the ground.

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“Mom! Are you alright?” Dakota’s expression crumbled as she quickly helped her mother up. She was both alarmed and enraged.

“Ouch! My teeth!” Jane wailed while pressing a hand against her face, feeling the stinging sensation. Her mouth was throbbing after it almost went out of shape from the slap.

“How dare you hit us? You’re dead! Your entire family is damned! Be a man and stay where you are! I’ll teach you a lesson!” An incensed Dakota started making calls and requesting backup, but Dustin had no time for her as he continued applying first aid to the poor young girl. Thanks to the magical needle, the young girl’s condition stabilized soon. At that time, the ambulance arrived at the scene.

“Your daughter is fine now, but her wound needs bandaging and careful care to heal.” Dustin placed the young girl onto the stretcher. Seeing that, the woman in white thanked him profusely before leaving in the ambulance.

“You enjoy being the hero, don’t you? Just wait and see. You’ll get flamed.” Jane and Dakota fixed their keen eyes on him, looking as though they wouldn’t let it slip.

Dustin scanned them from head to toe and commented mildly, “Rather than wasting time on me, you should really get checked at the hospital. From the looks of it, you’re suffering from blood stasis. You don’t have much internal energy, and your eyes are those of dead fish. I’m afraid your days are numbered.”

“Nonsense! You’re the one who’s dying! I’m fine!” Jane glared at him.

He raised a brow, looking amused, “Oh, you don’t believe me? Have you been feeling dizzy and weak these few days? And do you suffer from nosebleeds now and then?”

“How did you know?” Her expression crumbled a little. Indeed, she had been feeling sick, and the symptoms

matched his descriptions. However, she went for a checkup at the hospital and found no issues. Hence, she had put it to the back of her mind.

“It’s no cause for concern. Just a terminal illness,” he added nonchalantly.

“T–terminal illness?” The color drained from Jane’s face. She was stunned by the diagnosis. How was a

terminal illness not a cause for concern?

“Mom, don’t listen to his nonsense. He’s obviously scaring you because he worries we’ll get back at him!” Dakota suddenly jumped in to assuage her. “You take supplements all the time. Why would you fall sick? And no sick person would be full of energy like you!”

“That’s right... I do not suffer from any illness! I’m in the pink of health!” Jane nodded furiously and jeered, “You bastard! I’m warning you– you’d better quit all that nonsense!”

*Judging from the progression, you’ll face a life–threatening situation in three days. On the first day, you’ll lose consciousness, followed by coughing up blood on the second day. You’ll be paralyzed on the third day. Three days later, you will be staring at death,” he remarked quietly.

It made Jane feel oddly anxious, and her heart skipped a beat. Still, she bit the bullet and bellowed at him, “Do you think I’m a coward? Tell you what– you can’t bluff your way out of this!”

“Believe it or not, it’s up to you. Take care.” He was uninterested in engaging further with the Nicholsons and

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left.

“Hey! Stand there! I didn’t tell you to leave!” Dakota was frustrated and went up to stop him, but his glare immediately put her in her place. She promptly stopped in her tracks out of consideration for her safety.

knowing that Dustin was a madman.

“Let him leave. He won’t run far. When our backup arrives, we’ll double down on him.” Jane had a hostile look

on her face.

During their conversation, they noticed a few black SUVs stopping by the intersection. The door slid open to reveal Florence and James. The two marched toward Jane and Dakota.

“Gosh! Jane! Dakota! What happened?” Florence, acting humbly, immediately started with pleasantries. Henry Nicholson’s family was a branch of the Nicholsons of Glenstead. However, due to Henry’s protest against an arranged marriage, he eloped to Swinton with his lover. The two families were not in frequent contact. After the demise of the Glenstead patriarch, Edgar Nicholson, the family in Glenstead sent two representatives- Jane and Dakota—to meet with Henry in Swinton, mainly to fulfill Edgar’s wish. Edgar’s last wish was for

Henry, the second son, to return to Glenstead.

“Hmph! How dare you ask us?” Jane was ashen-faced. “We came all the way to this tiny town of yours. Not only did you not host us well, but you also made us go through humiliation! It looks like your family doesn’t

want to reunite with us at Glenstead!”

Florence, James, and their companions almost peed themselves after hearing that. They were well aware of the perks of reuniting with the Nicholsons of Glenstead. The move would elevate the status of the Nicholson

family of Swinton, and they would never let the opportunity slip.

“Jane, please calm down. Let us know if you need anything else. I promise I’ll take care of it for you!” Florence hurriedly put on an apologetic smile.

James echoed her with confidence. “That’s right! We’ll take action on that rascal who hits you no matter who

he is!”

“What’s the use of saying that? He’s gone!” Dakota pouted crossly. If her grandfather hadn’t ordered them to get the task done, she wouldn’t have visited a small town like Swinton with her status.

“It’s okay! There’s a surveillance camera by the intersection. I will get someone to check on it right away and catch the culprit tomorrow to ensure justice is served!” Florence promised.

“Hmph! That’s more like it.” Dakota’s features softened, and she added. “Oh, and get the best doctor for me.”

“Dakota, are you hurt?” James looked shocked. He stole a few glances at her but did not see any tears on her outfit or any visible wounds.

“That’s nonsense! Didn’t you see that I’m bleeding from my elbow? Are you blind?” She scoffed while showing everyone the graze on her elbow. When they took a better look at it, they were baffled at what she described as an injury, for that was a wound that only required a bandaid.

“Why are you standing there? Get the car and send Dakota to the hospital! I’ll give you a whopping if you miss

the golden hour!”

Florence was quick to slap James on the back of his head. Jane Engleton and Dakota Nicholson had the final say on whether or not Florence’s family could rejoin their Glenstead relatives. Therefore, she would treat the

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two women with the utmost respect.

“Okay” James dared not object. Along with a few other relatives, he helped Jane and Dakota into the SUVs

like they were royalties. Then, they rushed the two women to the hospital.

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In the afternoon, several black SUVs abruptly screeched to a halt right in front of the entrance to Park Place.

The doors opened, and the first to get out was a young man dressed in bright-colored clothes. With his handsome features and lofty demeanor, he carried an imposing presence. Following behind him were a group

of martial artists clad

Watching their departing figures, Stephan shouted out. 'Inform Mrs. Harmon immediately!'

in eccentric uniforms, each of them emanating an intimidating air with their controlled breaths. It was evident

that they were far from ordinary.

"This is the Harmon family's territory. All of you, leave immediately!" the two bodyguards by the entrance warned them.

"Too loud." With a wave of his hand, the two bodyguards flew away as blood spurted from their mouths. It was as if they were hit by a speeding car.

The group of people then strutted into Park Place.

In the hall, Natasha was enjoying tea, and a copy of a financial report was in her hands. These past few days, because of the invention of Immortinol, business was going very well for the Harmon family, and the company stock prices were skyrocketing.

If this continued, Natasha would be able to replace Edwin's status within a year and a half, becoming the first

woman to be the wealthiest person in Swinton.

“Ms. Harmon, enjoying your day. I see.” She suddenly heard someone by the entrance and looked up, finding

the group of eccentrically–
dressed men. Leading them was a young man standing right at the center.

“Who are you?” She raised her eyebrows.

“Hummer. Joshua Hummer,” he smiled faintly.

“So it’s you..

Natasha narrowed her eyes. “Mr. Hummer, don’t you think it’s too much for you to barge into

my residence like this?”

“Is it? I don’t think so.” With an ambiguous smile, he continued, “Ms. Harmon, I’ll go straight to the point. I’m here for three things. First, Immortunol has caused considerable loss to the Hummers. Hence, you are to hand over the formulation. Second, my sister was humiliated some time back, which brought shame to the

Hummers. All thanks to a bastard named Dustin. Get your men to bring his head to the Hummer’s residence

as an apology, and for the third. It’s simple. All you need to do is be a guest at Hummer’s residence tonight.”

Joshua spoke lightly like a master giving orders to his servant.

Even the usually composed Natasha lost her cool when she heard him. “Joshua Hummer, did you hit your

head somewhere? You want my man’s head? Who gave you the courage to speak that way?”

To spout unreasonable demands as soon as he walked through the door, this guy was too much!

“Natasha Harmon, I’m not negotiating. I’m giving you a chance. Know your place.”

“Hmph! Do you think you are in Hummer territory?” she slammed the table with force. Instantly, a huge number

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of bodyguards came out from different directions and surrounded the Hummer entourage.

“Ms. Harmon, what happened?” Stephan asked as the leader.

“Mr. Chapman, we have a few uninvited guests at home. Kindly show them the way out,” Natasha ordered

coldly.

“Yes, ma’am.” Then, he glared directly at Joshua. “Dear guests, you are not welcome here. Please leave.”

“Hmph! A pity.” Joshua smirked. He suddenly disappeared like a ghost and appeared in front of Stephan.

“You Stephan’s pupils dilated. He was about to make a move when he realized he was already held in a chokehold. The next thing he knew, it became hard to breathe, and his limbs turned limp. He wasn’t able to

muster an ounce of energy.

“The audacity of a low-level martial artist like you. Kneel!” Joshua lifted him single-handedly and slammed him to the ground,

An explosion-like sound echoed through the room, and the floor cracked open, leaving a crater in its wake while Stephan’s incapacitated legs sprayed out blood.

“Scram!” Joshua delivered a kick, aiming straight at his core.

With a grunt, Stephan was thrown a few meters away. He violently crashed into the wall, and blood spurted out of his mouth. That kick had dissipated Stephan’s internal energy.

“How insolent! Get them!” Natasha was furious. Under her orders, the bodyguards took out their batons and

charged.

“Ants,” Joshua muttered in disdain.

With a wave of his hand, a surge of energy that could move mountains and seas burst forward and rippled toward them. Before the bodyguards could reach him, they were sent flying by the impact and fell to the ground. During that moment, groans could be heard all around.

“An external manifestation of energy? Have you achieved divinity?” A seriously injured Stephan locked on in

horror.

Countless martial artists dreamed of achieving divinity. Skilled low-level martial artists could split open rocks and lift thousands of pounds of weight. However, compared to divine-level martial artists, their differences were like the sky and earth.

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Low-level martial artists were restricted to only channeling their energy through physical attacks, while divine-level martial artists surpassed human capabilities. With the ability to manifest energy externally, they were

able to strike across space itself!

In the face of a divine-level martial artist, even the best low-level martial artists paled in significance. They

existed on different planes of status and prowess.

The strange thing was that Joshua was only in his twenties. His talent in martial arts was terrifying for him to

be able to achieve divinity at his age.

“Ha You’re quite perceptive.” Joshua smiled proudly, “Since you’ve realized I’m a highly–skilled, divine–level martial artist, you should understand my words carry weight.”

Natasha’s brow furrowed. So they’d come prepared, laying low all for this day.

“After you, Ms. Harmon. Don’t make me go on a massacre,” he smiled teasingly. A wealthy princess was

nothing in his eyes.

“I hope you won’t regret it.” Natasha walked out with a sneer. She knew if she didn’t obey, everyone here today

would die.

“Tell the Harmons to fulfill my demands, and Natasha will be safe. Otherwise, there’s no telling what I’d do to

her.”

He took out an envelope. With a swipe of his hand, it shot out like a dagger and stabbed right into the door

frame.

Watching their departing figures, Stephan shouted out, “Inform Mrs. Harmon immediately!”

“What? Natasha has been kidnapped?”

After the news arrived and Jessica was briefed about the situation, her expression hardened, along with the

rest of the people present.

“How could that happen? We have dozens of bodyguards. How could Natasha be taken away?” Ruth was in

disbelief.

“They were too strong. We were no match for them.” Stephan mourned. His legs were crippled, and his core was destroyed. He was as good as useless.

“Who was it? The audacity to kidnap my daughter!” Jennifer was furious.

“We’re not sure of their true identity, but they left a letter.” Stephan signaled his men to give the letter to Jennifer. She opened up the letter, and her expression grew dark as she read it.

“Mom, what does it say?” Ruth asked impatiently.

“It says, before the sun rises, bring the formulation of Immortunol and Dustin to Hummer Villa as ransom.” Her tone was almost a growl.

“Hummer Villa? Isn’t that Edwin’s territory?” Ruth frowned. Did this have to do with the Hummer family again?

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“Inform headquarters immediately. Get them to deploy the shadow guards for support!” Jennifer was solemn, “Make a call to Dustin as well. Ask him to come here immediately!”

“Mom, you can’t be thinking of surrendering him to them, are you?” Ruth implored.

“This happened because of him. Why should he be free?”

“But

“No buts. Natasha’s safety comes first. Go now!”

“Okay.” She pursed her lips as she made the call, not daring to go against her mom.

Meanwhile, at Peaceful Medical Center, Dustin’s expression turned solemn as he listened through his phone. He felt a surge of anger rising within him.

“I’ll be there right away.” He spared the nonsense and hung up, leaving the house in a fury immediately after.

He stepped on the gas pedal for the entire journey. Within 20 minutes, he arrived at Park Place. As soon as he walked in, the first thing he saw was the casualties lying on the floor. Stephan’s

injuries were the worst. His face was pale as he constantly coughed up blood, and his core energy had been completely destroyed.

“Dustin, you’re finally here!” Ruth found solace in his appearance.

“Who did this?” Dustin’s piercing gaze could kill

“See for yourself!” Jennifer threw him the letter.

Dustin read it, and his temper flared. “The Hummer family are all pigheaded! It seems like they will never learn

their lesson!”

“My daughter has been pulled into your mess. What do you plan on doing?” Jennifer questioned.

“I will definitely rescue Ms. Harmon,” he assured her.

“And if you fail?” she retorted.

“Then I’ll pay with my life!” Dustin’s expression grew solemn.

“Hmph! At least you’re able to man up. My daughter’s affection has not gone in vain.”

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Suddenly, she clapped. Right on **cue**, a group of domineering martial artists clad in all-black gear strode in proudly.

Taking the lead was a woman with short hair. She had striking features that gave her a cool look. Because of her tight-fitting outfit, her figure appeared exceptionally curvaceous and left an impact.

Jennifer said impassively. “This is Isfrid. She leads team five of the Harmon family’s shadow guards and is highly skilled, Bring her team with you so you have each other’s backs.”

“Mrs. Harmon, forgive me for my bluntness, but our team is enough to ensure Ms. Harmon’s safety. Why do we need to involve outsiders?” Istrid gave Dustin a contemptuous once over. “Team five is well trained, and our teamwork is unparalleled. Having our members are more than enough to save Ms. Harmon. We can’t afford to bring along baggage since it will make the operation riskier. I hope you will reconsider, Mrs. Harmon.”

“Dustin is a good fighter, and the Hummer family asked for him personally. He has to be there,” she replied frankly.

“If that is the case, please have him listen to our orders and not get in our way, lest it affects our operation,” Istrid said unfeelingly.

An exceptional fighter, she was extremely confident in her abilities. Her team always worked in the shadows. but her skills were comparable to the highly skilled martial artists of The Hundred Immortals.

“Suit yourselves. I only have one demand—bring my daughter back to **me** alive,” she ordered solemnly.

“Yes, Mrs. Harmon.” Isfrid bowed before leaving arrogantly with her team behind her.

“Mr. Rhys, be careful. The Hummers have a highly skilled martial artist among them. He’s possibly achieved divinity,” Stephan warned Dustin.

“Achieved divinity? They’re mere ants to me.” With that, he left.

Night gradually fell.

Meanwhile, in the square outside Hummer Villa, a group of armored fighters sat around a bonfire, roasting a

whole lamb. Beside them was a dog cage, and inside the cage was a ragged woman. Her hair was disheveled, and her body **was** covered in injuries. It **was** clear that she had been tortured.

There was even a collar around **her** neck, which was attached to a dog leash held by an elderly man. That man

was Fletcher Lawson.

“Mr. Lawson, it’s about time. It seems like he’s too scared to come since he hasn’t shown up till **now**.” A bald man smirked.

“Of course! With so **many** of **us** keeping guard here, who would send themselves to death? That punk has long fled!” Everyone chimed in, laughing heartily. Who would barge in foolishly when they knew it was a trap?

“Mr. **Lawson**, the **woman** in the cage is exceptional. Why don’t you allow us to enjoy her first?” the bald man

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said with an evil grin.

“That’s right. Mr. Lawwon. We’ve been deprived for too long. How can we give up the chance when a beautiful woman is present?” the rest jeered.

It wasn’t the first time they’d engaged in acts of arson, murder, **and** looting.

“Play around if you must, but keep yourselves in check,” Fletcher said calmly.

“No problem.” The bald man chuckled, then approached the cage eagerly. He ripped the woman’s skirt apart, exposing her white thighs.

“What a beauty! Just as we thought!”

He licked his lips and pounced with a devilish smile. Just as he was about to carry out his intentions, a fleeting flicker of light sliced through the air with a faint whistle. Emerging from the darkness and piercing through the bonfire’s glow, a golden needle found its mark between the man’s eyebrows.

With a groan, his eyes widened as he convulsed. Soon, he turned stiff. He was rooted in place with no signs of

breath.

“Hey! What are you dawdling for? If you can’t do it, we’ll go instead. Don’t make us wait longer!”

“That’s right! There are so many of us waiting for our turn. Can **you** be faster?”

Nobody noticed anything strange. They were rushing him instead.

“Hey! We’re talking to you. Are you deaf?”

A muscular man walked up and nudged his shoulder. Immediately, like a statue that had lost its balance, the bald man toppled to the ground.

The muscular man was shocked and extended out his hand. “What the f*ck? He’s not breathing!”

He’d just finished his sentence when another faint whistle was heard. A second gold needle sliced through the air and embedded straight between his brows. Falling to the ground with his head up, he died instantly.

“What’s happening?” Everyone looked at each other in dismay. They only reacted when they saw blood

between the victims’ **eyebrows**.

“We’re **being** ambushed! Stay alert!” Following the shouts, the fighters took out their swords, looking around in

all directions.

“Who the f*ck is it?”

“**Step** out if **you** dare! You’re a pussy for hiding!”

The crowd **roared** incessantly.

Right then, a sudden, powerful gust of wind whipped through the surroundings. Illuminated by the street lights,

a tall, slender figure **walked** into the villa with deliberate steps.

Fletcher took a closer look and suddenly let out a laugh. “How brave. He really walked into the lion’s den.”

“Release her immediately!” **Dustin** ordered coldly. His voice **wasn’t** too **loud**, but it reverberated across the

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whole villa. His expression was impassive, but his gaze was as cold **as** ice.

“Know your place! There’s no need to think about being a hero when you’re dying soon.”

Fletcher **waved**, “Get him! Whoever brings me his head first will be rewarded 100 million!”

100 million?” The crowd of fighters was excited.

There was nothing money couldn’t solve, and a lavish reward would certainly give birth to brave warriors.

People would kill friends and relatives for 100 million, not to mention a stranger.

Get him!”

The crowd roared and rushed forward without delay.

“Attack!” Suddenly, a group of all-black, masked assassins emerged from the darkness. They had a knife in

one hand and a crossbow in the other. Although they were few in numbers, all of them **were** well-trained.

Pushing forward, they surrounded the Hummer family’s fighters. It **was** like nothing could stand in their way. They were the shadow guards led by Istrid.

Although the Harmon family’s shadow guards were not well-known, they were all handpicked talents among hundreds of candidates. They were specifically tasked with removing obstacles and eliminating dissidents for

the Harmon family.

“See that? This is the true power of the Harmon family’s shadow guards!” Istrid emerged from the darkness

and stood beside Dustin.

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Coldly, she said, “Wait here, and don’t run off. I don’t want you to cause us any trouble. Understand?”

“They have highly skilled fighters among them. Your men won’t be able to handle them.” Dustin responded. flatly.

“Ha! What a joke! I’ve fought in countless battles, and I’ve seen it all. A burn like you will never understand how strong we are.” Her expression grew colder.

“Having confidence is commendable, but don’t be too blind. You should always believe there is someone better out there,” he reminded.

“Shut your nonsense. Just stay here as I told you to. I won’t forgive you if you ruin our operation!” she shouted coldly before joining the fray.

Dustin didn’t say anything more and narrowed his eyes, staring silently at Fletcher. Seated behind him were a few martial artists clad in eccentric clothing. From their breathing patterns, Dustin could tell that **they** were all the best low-level martial artists, with two of them already considered a high-level martial artist.

“So he has backup. No wonder he **dared** be so wild.” Even though his men were going down, Fletcher wasn’t anxious. In fact, his expression showed one of amusement.

It didn’t matter if they died since they were just cannon fodder. The real fighters were seated right behind him. There weren’t many of them, but they were all ranked on The Hundred Immortals.

Especially the twin brothers with the code name Darkwrath and Lightwrath. They were the **seventh** and eighth on The Hundred Immortals, respectively. They practiced the dark arts, and their moves were terrifyingly lethal. When they f

ought

separately, they were comfortably ranked in the top ten. When they joined forces, their power

doubled.

Of course, besides the twins, another highly skilled martial artist was hidden within the villa. That person was ranked third on the Hundred Immortals—Judge. Whenever Judge appeared, only a trail of death would follow.

Regardless of how many fighters the Harmon family sent, they were all going to meet their demise.

After a brutal fight, hundreds of the Hummer family's fighters were left lying on the ground. The shadow guards of the Harmon family, on the other hand, had suffered only a single casualty and five injuries. Their losses were relatively minimal in comparison.

"Hmph! You dare kidnap Ms. Harmon with these pitiful weaklings? You should have known better!" Istrid stood with a sense of pride. With a swift downward flick, droplets of blood glistened as they splattered off her sword. She looked gallant **and** imposing.

"**Impressive!** The Harmon family's shadow guards **are** indeed impressive! Fletcher applauded with a smile.

"Since you're aware of our skills, why aren't **you releasing** the hostage yet?" Istrid pointed her sword forward.

commanding attention,

"The **person** you're looking for is right here in this cage. Come save her yourself if you have the guts."

Fletcher overturned the **dog** cage with a kick, **and** the woman inside trembled in fear. However, her disheveled

appearance made it difficult to discern her **features**.

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“Ms. Harmon?” Istrid’s expression hardened, and she rushed forward with her men. As they neared the cage. Istrid drew her sword and severed the chains with a resounding clang.

“Ms. Harmon! Are you okay?”

Istrid opened up the metal door and was about to save the woman **inside** when the woman suddenly flashed an evil grin, With a sudden wave of her hand, she threw out a barrage of yellow powder that was highly toxic. Any ordinary person who came into contact with it would surely meet their demise.

Istrid’s pupils constricted, and she immediately stepped back, covering her mouth and nose to avoid inhaling the dust.

“Hah... You reacted quickly. You almost fell into my trap,” the woman chuckled lightly, pushing her hair aside to reveal a pale and unfamiliar face.

“Who are you?” Istrid’s brow furrowed. It was fortunate that she dodged in time, or she would have been in trouble.

“That’s not important. What’s important is how much your head is worth.” the woman replied and launched another attack, thrusting her knife forward.

“Hmph!” Istrid’s longsword quivered as it severed the woman’s arm and, at the same time, pierced through her chest with lightning speed.

“So fast. The woman’s eyes widened **as** she toppled backward.

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“How weak.” Istrid wore a disdainful expression as she scanned her surroundings.

“Anyone else?”

“Interesting”

Leering at her curvaceous figure, Darkwrath licked his lips in excitement. "Hey, pretty lady, let me have a taste of you!" As he spoke, his toes tapped the ground, propelling him forward like a ghostly shadow. His body flickered in and out of existence, making it hard to figure out his movements,

Istrid bellowed, "Die!"

With a flick of her sword, two blades that were both swift and deadly danced forward. Just as her attack was about to hit their target, Darkwrath suddenly vanished from thin air.

"Hey, pretty lady, where are you looking?"

She heard a sinister voice behind her, and her expression changed slightly. Without looking back, she thrust her sword backward. She was fast, but Darkwrath was faster, and her sword sliced through the empty air.

Taking advantage of her distraction, Darkwrath grabbed her butt forcefully. Chuckling obscenely, he remarked, "Soft and supple. What a treasure." He didn't harm her, clearly reveling in playing with his prey like a game of cat and mouse.

Fueled by the humiliation, Istrid erupted in fury. "You will pay with your life!"

Her sword danced with rapid speed. In an instant, she was enveloped in a whirlwind of swirling blades that radiated with shimmering brilliance.

Yet, Darkwrath continued to flicker in and out of existence, appearing to be at ease and in control.

Istrid was out of breath when Darkwrath suddenly wrapped her in an embrace from behind. His tongue slithered out on her face, and he licked her slowly and forcefully.

"Beauty, you're delicious! I'm going to eat you tonight!" He chuckled devilishly, his face full of lust.

"You're seeking death!" Her eyes were red from a mix of anger and embarrassment. She redirected her sword toward her own abdomen, intending to deal a severe blow to Darkwrath through herself.

However, Darkwrath **was** obviously prepared as he **pressed** a finger onto a **pressure** point on her body. She let out a muffled groan and collapsed to the ground, her arm feeling so numb that she was unable to hold up her sword.

“Who... who are **you**?” she asked in shock and anger. She didn’t expect her opponent to be that strong.

“I am Darkwrath, ranked eighth on The Hundred Immortals.”

Realization

struck Istrid, and her **expression** changed. It was no wonder he **was** so formidable—

he was among the top ten highly skilled martial artists on The Hundred Immortals.

“Pretty lady, what’s the point of serving the Harmon family? **You’d** be better off with me. I’ll make sure you live

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luxuriously, and every night will be like our honeymoon!” Darkwrath licked his lips, smirking obscenely.

“How dare you!”

“You insolent bastard!”

Seeing their leader humiliated, the shadow guards behind Isfrid couldn’t hold back any longer and brandished their swords, charging toward him.

“Fools.” Darkwrath sneered and propelled out into their midst. With a swift motion, two steel claws extended out from his sleeves, piercing through the throats of two shadow guards. He then yanked back forcefully, painting the air with blood and flesh.

The two shadow guards let out an anguished shriek before dying an immediate death.

That wasn't the end, as his steel claws continued to strike fiercely and relentlessly. Like a violent storm, he was unstoppable. In the span of a few breaths, the entirety of the shadow guards were left lying on the ground. Half of them were dead, and the other half were seriously injured.

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Chapter 256

“It’s over. It’s all over now.” Looking at the scene before her, Isfrid’s face turned ashen, and her expression **was** full of despair. She had barged in full of confidence, but she didn’t expect to encounter Darkwrath here. In

terms of raw strength, ultimately, she was the loser.

“Allow me.” Dustin had somehow ended up beside her.

“You?” She frowned.

“I’m not even his match. What can you do? Leave immediately! Don’t throw your life **away** like that!” Even though she looked down on him, she didn’t wish for him to die in vain. “Hey! I’m talking to you.” Seeing his lack of reaction, Isfrid’s frustration **grew**.

“This guy is unpredictable. He’s also ranked in the top ten of The Hundred Immortals. You’re no match for him.

I’ll buy time for you. Escape while you can! When you get back, ask Mrs. Harmon to send a highly skilled

fighter. Go!” She bellowed out her last word.

As the leader of team five, naturally, she wouldn’t leave her teammates behind and escape on her own. That

was why she needed someone else to deliver the message.

“So what if he’s ranked eighth? He’s nothing but a mere ant.” With a frosty expression, Dustin pushed forward.

“Hey! Are you crazy? Do you know what you’re doing? This is not the time to try to be brave. You’re never going

to beat him. What you’re doing is sending yourself to certain death.”

Istrid was both anxious and angry. She'd never seen anyone so foolish to choose to light a losing battle. This

guy was hopeless.

"Kidido, you should have taken her advice. If you'd escaped earlier, you might've had a chance at living. But now, goodbye." Darkwrath's mouth curved up in to a sinister smile. While he spoke, he licked the blood on his

steel claws like a maniac.

"Where's Natasha? Let her go, and I'll let you live. Dustin ordered coldly.

Everyone present was stunned. Nobody expected those words to come out of his mouth.

"Kidido, you're pretty wild for someone who's about to die. It seems like I need to teach you a lesson for you to

recognize my **prowess!**" Darkwrath finally lost **his** patience as his expression turned cold.

With one step forward, he propelled out like a rocket, charging toward Dustin with sheer force. Once he was

near, he waved his hand, and his steel claws shimmered like rays of light, aiming straight for Dustin's throat.

"Run!" Istrid shouted. That was the move that killed **most** of her team. Even so he might have difficulty dodging

1. it.

"Can you outrun me?" Darkwrath grinned devilishly and sped up.

"Lend me **your sword.**" With a tap of his foot, the sword on the floor sprung **up and** landed firmly in his **hands.**

He flicked his wrist, and the blade pierced Darkwrath with a shimmer and a thunderous whistle.

What followed was the sound of a deafening clang of metal. The shimmering blade shattered Darkwrath's

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steel claws, and without stopping, pierced through his neck. His body stiffened as if he had turned to stone. A thin line of blood formed slowly at his throat. Soon, the bloody line grew larger, quickly turning into a gaping wound.

The next second, his head, like a ball, rolled off the ground with a thud and straight to Istrid's feet, his widened

eyes staring right into hers. He had died a regretful death.

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"Uh..." Isfrid was bewildered at the sight of the head beside her feet.

Who would have imagined that the mighty and incomparable Darkwrath would be killed so easily? He was ranked eighth of The Hundred Immortals! He had decapitated the entirety of team five on his own. It was preposterous for him to be killed with one strike of the sword.

"What?" Looking at the headless body. Fletcher was taken aback as well. He knew

Dustin **was** strong but didn't realize he was that strong. With just a strike of his sword, he killed Darkwrath, ranked eighth of The Hundred Immortals. It seemed like only Judge, who was ranked third, would be able to suppress his formidable strength.

"You ... you killed my brother?" Lightwrath finally stood. His pale face appeared ghastly.

He allowed his brother to play his game of cat and mouse without intervening since victory was within reach. He didn't expect a highly skilled martial artist to be hidden among them. On top of that, that highly skilled martial artist unexpectedly brought about his brother's demise.

"I gave both of you the opportunity to attack together. He's the one who didn't appreciate it," Dustin responded flatly.

“You’re seeking death!” Lightwrath flew into a rage. He took out two pistols and charged forward violently.

“All of you, go!” Fletcher commanded.

Finally, the remaining few highly skilled, ranked martial artists joined the fray and flanked Lightwrath to protect him as they surged forward, attempting to encircle Dustin.

From their perspective, even if Dustin’s skills were formidable, he wouldn’t be able to hold back their collective assaults. After all, he only had four limbs.

“It’s over. It’s really over this time!” Istrid grew increasingly worried as she watched the martial artists, all ranked on The Hundred Immortals, join forces in the attack.

Although she was surprised by Dustin’s performance, she knew that victory and defeat in a battle between skilled martial artists hung by a thread. Dustin could turn out victorious if it **were** a one-on-one battle, but when going against numerous opponents, only certain death would face him.

“Hmph!” Faced with the approaching Lightwrath and his group, Dustin remained still **and** swung his sword once **more**. With a sharp whistle, the sword glimmered across the air.

Lightwrath and the others **appeared** to have been cursed in place, their movements coming to a halt. Their legs gave way, and they collapsed to their knees. Finally, heads rolled off onto the ground in succession, splattering blood all over the **floor**.

Immediately, a dead silence engulfed the area. Istrid and the rest of the shadow **guards** looked on in shock and disbelief.

If Darkwrath’s death was described as the result of an ambush or a surprise attack, then, right now, it would be described **as** the **result** of sheer strength. One single strike had slain a number of skilled martial artists ranked on The Hundred Immortals. It was truly terrifying!

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When Istrid thought of how she had looked down on him, she was filled with shame. It turned out that she was

the true bum.

“Release her, or die!” Dustin ignored the lifeless bodies on the ground, staring straight at Fletcher. It was as if

he **was** looking at a dead man.

“You

How could you. Fletcher broke out in a cold sweat, looking terrified. Dustin’s prowess made him

see the man in a new light.

“Release her!” Dustin repeated. He spoke straight to the point, yet it was exceptionally domineering.

“You just you wait!” Fletcher panicked. Without another word, he rushed into the villa.

Hummer Villa was vast, with an entire hill enveloped within its grounds. While the outer square was filled with chaos, inside, it was bustling with music and wine. A group of esteemed guests was gathered in the luxurious villa, attending the Hummers’ party that was currently underway. Their focus was all on Joshua and Jade.

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Chapter 258

“Mr. Hummer! Something terrible has happened!” Fletcher suddenly rushed in, stumbling in **his** steps. His

disheveled **and** panicked appearance looked extremely out of place.

“What’s with the commotion?” Joshua’s expression turned cold, and he appeared upset. “Speak **up**. What’s

wrong?”

“D—Dustin is out here on a killing spree!” Fletcher reported in a whisper.

“Oh?” Joshua raised an eyebrow. “He dares barge in here despite knowing it’s the lion’s den? Is this kiddo really that brave?”

“What do we do now, Mr. Hummer?” Fletcher **asked** anxiously.

“What do you mean? Get Darkwrath and Lightwrath to kill him. Don’t let him interrupt our party.” Joshua waved

him **away**.

“Mr. Hummer he’s already killed them both!” Fletcher **was** somber.

“Huh?” Joshua frowned. “When Darkwrath and Lightwrath join forces, even Judge would need to exert his full

strength. Is this kiddo that skilled?”

“It would have been great if they joined forces, but they were too arrogant and gave him a chance to defeat

them,” Fletcher sounded helpless.

“Those fools! What useless trash!” Joshua was displeased. He was upset to have to expend extra effort on an

ant that was supposed to be easily squashed.

In the midst of their conversation, the huge doors to the villa were kicked open with a deafening crash. A tall figure strode in with a murderous look.

“Listen up, Hummers. I’m giving you three minutes. Let her go immediately. Otherwise, nobody is leaving this place alive.” Dustin scanned his surroundings, his voice cold.

The hall exploded in a frenzy when they heard him.

“Who is this punk? How dare he make a scene at the Hummers“? Doesn’t he value his life?”

“If you don’t want to die, scram right now. Otherwise, your end will be near!”

“Fuck! Who is **this** punk? He’s so wild.”

Everyone present whispered and pointed in righteous indignation.

“Everyone, please calm **down**. I’ll handle it.”

Joshua walked slowly to the center, a faint smile playing on his lips. “You must be Dustin. Kneel and apologize to my honored guests tonight, and I might **spare** your life.”

“Who do you think you **are**? You’re **not** worthy for me to kneel before you,” Dustin responded coldly.

Joshua’s expression turned dark. “Kiddo, do you know who you’re talking to? Do you think **you** can act recklessly **here** just because **you** defeated Darkwrath and Lightwrath? Let me tell you, those **two** are just like

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you, mere ants in my eyes.”

“You have two minutes left.” Dustin was stone-faced.

Joshua chuckled, “I’ll give it to you. You’re fearless for someone nearing death.” With a sneer, he ordered. Judge, I’ll leave this person to you. Deal with him cleanly. I don’t want blood to stain the floor.”

“No problem!”

—

Right then, a middle-aged man in a long robe suddenly leaped

down from the second floor. He had a tall stature and wore a mask. He held a relatively short, steel spear in his hand, exuding a chilling air around him.

“Damn! Isn’t that Judge, who **is** ranked third on the Hundred Immortals? I can’t believe he’s here!”

“With Judge here, there is no escape. This punk is dead for sure!”

After the long—
robed man appeared, the hall erupted in another frenzy. Judge had a well—
known reputation to his name, and his sudden appearance was bound to bring forth a torrent of bloodshed.

“Dustin! We’re here to assist you!” At this moment. Isfrid and a few injured shadow guards staggered into the

room.

“You won’t be of any help. Go wait at the side,” Dustin remarked flatly.

Isfrid frowned after hearing him. It was the first time in her life being shunned as such.

“Even though we’re not as skilled as you are, we still have our merits. It would be advantageous to have more numbers,” she said with a resolute expression

“Suit yourselves. Just don’t stand in my way.” Dustin couldn’t care less.

“You” She pursed her lips. As an exceptional female fighter, she’d never experienced such blatant

disregard. No matter what, she was determined to showcase her full strength, to prove to the person before her that women were as formidable as men.

Just as the thought crossed her **mind**, she glanced ahead and noticed Judge standing right in the center. She

froze on the spot.

“What’s going on? Why is Judge here? Did the Hummers invite bystanders to the fray?” Isfrid was secretly apprehensive and worried at the same time.

With the warrior ranked third among The Hundred Immortals here, they **were** going to suffer an immeasurable loss. That was because Judge’s skills far surpassed those of Darkwrath and Lightwrath—they weren’t even on

the same plane.

This screamed trouble!

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“Kiddo! I’m giving you two options. Either you kneel before Mr. Hummer or die!” Judge’s tone was frosty, and his gaze was stagnant like a pool, calm and impassive. He’d been killing since he was ten and had a body count of hundreds, if not thousands.

“I choose death. Come at me if you can.” Dustin beckoned him forward with his finger.

“How insolent!” Judge’s gaze turned increasingly frosty as he launched his **sp**
ear forward. Like a canon, it shot

straight for Dustin’s chest.

Dustin stood unmoved and grabbed the spear, flinging it back. With a sharp whistle, it shot back out toward Judge with greater speed.

Judge sneered and mirrored Dustin’s stance, grabbing his own spear. However, as soon as he grabbed hold of it, it was as if he was struck by lightning. He staggered backward, his feet skidding along the ground, leaving deep imprints with each step.

“How could this be?” Judge’s expression changed, and he exerted his entire strength in an attempt to stop the

momentum of his steel spear.

A gaping wound was forming between his thumb and index finger, and his fingers were turning into a bloody

mess of flesh and blood from the sheer force of energy. Even so, he didn’t dare let go.

“Ahhh!” As he realized that no amount of force would be able to stop his weapon, he let out an anguished

scream, and his expression was full of despair.

“Save me, Mr. Hummer!” he screeched loudly, losing his previous arrogance.

Before the crowd could react, his spear trembled and escaped from his grasp, piercing straight through his

chest. With a final whistle, it embedded into the wall, disappearing out of sight, leaving only a hole the size of

an egg.

Moaning

painfully, Judge looked at his wrangled hands and the gaping hole in his chest. His mouth opened like he wanted to speak, but no sound could be heard. Falling backward onto the ground, he died in grievance.

In the end, the mighty, third-ranked Judge met his demise at the hands of his own weapon.

Silence engulfed the scene as the crowd looked on in shock, their eyes fixed on the lifeless body of Judge sprawled on the ground. This outcome **was** beyond anyone’s imagination. They had been certain that Dustin would meet his end with Judge’s appearance. However, with just a casual flick of his hand, Judge was

impaled by his own spear.

Nobody reacted as the entire situation happened abruptly. Some of them couldn’t even believe it. Just like that, the warrior ranked third **among** The Hundred Immortals had fallen. His death **was** so sudden and bizarre that they wouldn’t have believed it if they hadn’t seen it with their own eyes.

“Oh my goodness, where did this monster come from?” Istrid was completely dumbfounded, her eyes wide

open.

Darkwrath, Lightwrath, and Judge were **all** highly-**skilled** experts ranked on the Hundred Immortals. However, Dustin handled them like they were mere vegetables on a chopping board.

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It was truly terrifying!

“Damn it! Who is this kid? He actually killed Judge!”

“Who knows? He’s truly talented for his age and skills.”

Whispers filled the air, and they took in Dustin’s figure with tinges of awe.

“Kid. I didn’t expect you to have skills like that. I underestimated you.” Joshua was slightly taken aback but sneered again after a brief moment.

The Hundred Immortals was a power ranking for low-level martial artists. However, compared to divine-level martial artists, they fell short by more **than** a mile.

At present, Joshua was already a divine-level martial artist and had the potential to challenge the ranks of The Heavenly Immortals. In his eyes, a low-level martial artist like Judge was no different from an ant. Just like how Dustin had killed him instantly with a single strike, he could do the **same**, and with even less effort.

That was the true power of a divine-level martial artist.

“Release her, or die,” Dustin said coldly.

“Kid, don’t be too arrogant! Do you think you **can** act recklessly in front of me just because you killed Judge? Let me tell you honestly, I’m already a divine-level martial artist. I can destroy you, ordinary people, with

nothing more than a flick of my finger!”

As Joshua spoke, his arms trembled, and a terrifying air emanated from him.

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Chapter 260

Under Joshua's impressive prowess, the guests in the hall began to retreat involuntarily. It felt as if rocks were

pressing on their chests as their breathing **grew** heavy.

"Damn! Mr. Hummer is impressive. He's already achieved divinity!"

"He's truly deserving to be Boulderthorn's genius. To achieve divinity before the age of thirty, he's truly a

terrifying man."

"Although a low-level and divine-level martial artist only differed in a single word, the disparity in strength,

just like their name, was like heaven and earth. This kid's strong, but he's still a weakling in front of Mr.

Hummer."

The **crowd** started a frenzied discussion as they witnessed Joshua's imposing presence and arrogance.

At that moment, Tina, who **was** among the crowd, burst into laughter. "You f*cking bastard! How dare you

cause a scene at Hummer Villa? Look at yourself in the mirror! Give him a good beating for **me**, Joshua!"

"I have good taste in men. He's so cool." Jade's lips curled up into a smile, and she looked at Joshua with a

gaze full of affection.

A divine-level martial artist in their twenties was a desirable catch anywhere. Not to mention, he was Boulderthorn's direct disciple. Talent, skills, background—

he had it all. Promising individual like him was few

and far between in the whole of South City.

She was proud and pleased with her choice. Her man would definitely make a name for himself in the future.

As long as Joshua married her, he would definitely receive the full support of the Grant family. As long as the family focused on nurturing **him**, then there would be **a** chance for him to be the second Tyler Grant.

Edwin chuckled heartily, “The Hummer family has experienced consecutive setbacks, but today is the day to restore our prestige.”

Edwin watched the entire scene happening below from the second floor of the villa, a proud smile adorning his face. How could he not be happy with such a talented son?

“What? The Hummer family has a divine–level martial artist in their midst?” Istrid paled from the **shock**. As she took in Joshua’s commanding presence, her legs started trembling involuntarily.

Divine–level martial artists were one in a million. It wasn’t something that could be achieved through sheer

effort, and it also required exceptional talent. **Some** practitioners **would** spend their entire lives without attaining divinity. However, once **they** did, it would completely transform their lives for the better!

There were more than a hundred martial artists among the Harmon family’s shadow guards, but only one had

achieved divinity. And that was the commander of the shadow guards.

“Istrid, what should we **do** now? With a divine–level martial artist as our opponent, we won’t be a match for

him even if all of us **joined** forces.” The shadow guards behind her also had terrified expressions.

Istrid remained silent, **looking** at Dustin instead. Even though **she** wanted to save Ms. Harmon badly, with the

Hummer’s divine–level martial artist **present**, it was inevitable for them to retreat.

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Joshua was smugly pleased to see Dustin fall silent. “Hey, kiddo! Are you afraid now? You **must** be feeling

terrified! This is the disparity between us. To me, you’re just a mere ant! I’ll give you a chance now. If you don’t want to die, kneel immediately!”

He’d never shown himself since he became a divine-level martial artist, which explained why not many people

knew about it.

Today was a good opportunity for **him** to make a name for himself and rise to prominence!

“So what? If you don’t let her go today, I will kill you!” Dustin was stone-faced. It was as if he was looking at a dead man.

“Kill me?” Joshua scoffed. “Kiddo, it seems like you haven’t realized the gravity of the situation. Since you don’t seem to value your life, allow me!”

With that, he waved his hand, and a burst of violent energy ripped toward Dustin with full force. Dustin didn’t dodge it, allowing the burst of energy to crash into him as he stood unmoved.

“Hmm?” Joshua narrowed his eyes, looking slightly surprised.

When a divine-level martial artist manifested energy externally, even a minor attack was not something a low-level martial artist could take on. Since his opponent could use his body to hold off the attack, it meant he was highly skilled.

“I didn’t expect you to have such abilities up your sleeves. No wonder you were able to kill Judge. But it’s too bad that you have to go up against me! Today, I will let you witness the difference between low-level martial artists and divine-level martial artists. Watch me!”

Joshua grunted lightly as his body soared into the air like an eagle, aiming a slap toward Dustin’s forehead.

The wind howled fiercely as his clothes fluttered **in** response. Under his terrifying prowess, the crowd retreated once again, afraid of being entangled in the conflict.

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Chapter 261

Isfrid and her team, who were standing behind Dustin, had it worse. They had difficulty breathing and staggered backward involuntarily.

“Is this what a divine-level martial artist is like? How frightening!”

The crowd looked at each other in apprehension, silently worried.

“Fool.” Dustin sneered coldly at Joshua’s oncoming attack and made a move, landing a fierce **slap** on his face. The thunderous slap sent Joshua into a back flip in the air, and he landed head first onto the ground.

At that moment, everyone was stunned into oblivion.

“What the f*ck!”

Everyone **was** shaken by the abrupt **scene**. No one could have imagined that the previously heroic Joshual would fall by Dustin’s slap, and they wondered if it was a coincidence or an accident.

“Josh!” Jade and Tina’s expression paled as they rushed up to him. They helped him up to his feet while he was still feeling dizzy.

*Josh, are you alright?” Jade was taken aback and worried.

“What happened just now?” Joshua shook his head, appearing dazed. Everything happened so suddenly that he didn’t notice Dustin’s movements. He only felt his sight go dark, and the next thing he knew, he was thrown to the ground.

“You

—

were beaten to the ground **by** that bastard,” Jade explained with a strange expression.

“No! That’s impossible!” Joshua could never believe it. “How could he have hit me? I must **have** slipped and fell on my own!”

“That’s right! You must have slipped!” Tina nodded furiously beside him.

“Kiddo! That didn’t count. Let’s go again!” Joshua couldn’t admit defeat. With a tap of his feet, he launched himself out again.

Another clear, booming slap rang out before he was launched back with even greater speed. Joshua suffered a crushing defeat and was badly battered.

The crowd was shocked once again. They could have explained his first victory as the result of a coincidence or accident. But the second victory was absolutely remarkable.

“Let her **go**,” Dustin spat out coldly.

“You

—

y—

you’ve gone too far! I won’t be able to sleep if I don’t kill you right now!” Joshua flew into a rage and, pushing the two women beside him away, launched himself toward Dustin for the third time.

This time, instead of **his** empty lists, he took out a dagger from his **waist**. With a weapon in hand, his attack would be exceedingly lethal!

“Go to hell!” As he drew near, Joshua swung his dagger forcefully. A **sharp** whistle was **heard**, and only the

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gleam of the dagger was seen. It aimed toward Dustin’s forehead with fierce velocity.

Dustin stood still, allowing the incoming assault to occur. With a loud bang, the dagger exploded as it came into contact with his forehead, dissipating into sparks of light.

“What?” Joshua’s pupils dilated in horrified shock.

How was that possible?

Dustin had taken his slash head-on, literally. But Joshua was the divine-level martial artist! Any slash of his

would break open boulders. Even a block of steel would slice in half with his previous attack, but Dustin

blocked that attack with his head!

“Impossible! I must have been mistaken!” Joshua shook his head furiously, unable to believe it.

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Chapter 262

Joshua gritted his teeth and brandished his dagger again.

“Die!”

He exerted all his strength into this attack, channeling every ounce of his internal energy. He believed Dustin wouldn’t be able to block the attack even if he was made of steel.

“Hmph!” Dustin had clearly lost his patience. As he watched the oncoming assault, he moved and grabbed the blade firmly. Tightening his grip, two crisp metallic crunches were heard, and the dagger made of refined iron was crushed into pieces.

“What?” **Joshua** was bewildered.

Before Joshua reacted, Dustin extended out his arm again, pressing a finger on his chest.

“Boom!”

The next second, it felt as if his bones had disintegrated as he fell limp to the ground. Feeling numb all over,

he couldn't move an inch.

“You What did you do to me?” Joshua was shocked and horrified. He never dreamed that he would be defeated by an unknown kid.

He was a divine-level martial artist! Boulderthorn's direct disciple! He should have been invincible in Swinton

after his return.

Why? Why couldn't he even defeat this punk? Where the hell did he come from?

“Let her go!” Dustin ignored him, looking at him condescendingly **from** above as it he was looking at an ant.

“Punk! You can't be my opponent. What trick did you use?” Joshua still couldn't believe it. He couldn't accept that a small fry like Dustin would destroy an exceptional fighter like him.

“You speak too much nonsense!” Dustin **was** irritated and stomped violently on Joshua's knees.

With a crisp crack, his knees sprayed blood everywhere. Joshua screamed in agony as his face contorted in pain and beads of sweat dripped down from his face.

“How dare you!”

“You insolent bastard!”

When they **saw** Joshua getting injured, the crowd erupted in anger.

A large number of the Hummer family's guards swarmed in from different directions, surrounding Dustin in no time. These **guards** were armed with guns. They had clearly made preparations in advance.

“Rhys! Let **go** of my brother! Otherwise, after my command, you will be shot to oblivion!” Tina screeched, putting on a front.

Even though Dustin **was** powerful, he **was** still a mass of flesh that could get **injured** and bleed. With so many armed guards surrounding him, he wouldn’t be able to escape unscathed.

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“Fire if you dare. I’d like to see who’d die first.” Dustin remarked coldly, without a hint of fear.

“You

fire.

Tina was exasperated. Since Joshua was right beside Dustin, he would also get shot if they opened

“Dustin Rhys! We’re in Hummer Villa. This **is** not a place for **you** to behave atrociously. Let him go! Otherwise, you will regret it!” Jade’s expression was stone cold. She didn’t expect Joshua to be defeated by Dustin either.

However, in this world, bravery changed nothing. Power was more important. Joshua had the Hummer family and Boulderthorn behind him. After she married him, he would also **have** the support of the Grant family. Who

would dare challenge him then?

“I’ll regret it? I’d like to see how much I’ll regret it

!” As he spoke, he stomped on Joshua’s other leg, breaking it.

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Chapter 263

After a short moment of astonishment, Joshua let out an ear-piercing scream. He sounded like a pig sent for slaughter.

“How dare you, you imbecile!” Edwin’s eyes almost popped out of their sockets. He couldn’t believe Dustin had the guts to chop Joshua’s arm off in front of everyone. He’d crossed the line!

“You—
how dare you harm Josh!” Jade shrieked. How could a peasant like Dustin dare to rebel against them like this? Did he have a death wish?

“Rhys! You’re dead meat!” Tina screeched. Dustin had humiliated her before: now, Joshua was the one suffering. How could the Hummer family possibly face the world if they didn’t get revenge for this?

“Let her go,” Dustin said coldly.

“Fuck you! You have hell to pay for harming my brother!” Tina snarled.

Dustin didn’t waste his breath. Instead, he brandished his sword and swung it lightly, slicing Joshua’s other arm off. Blood splattered over the floor, and Joshua’s right arm landed in a pool of it. He howled again, his face contorting in a mask of pain. Sweat beaded on his forehead. Now, he was no different from a lamb up for slaughter. His earlier arrogance and dominance had dissipated.

“You abomination!”

“How dare **you!**”

“This is outrageous!”

Dustin’s second attack brought about more furious exclamations. It was bad enough that he’d chopped

Joshua’s left arm off; he’d now made things worse by chopping off the right one as well. It **was** an insult to the

Hummer family’s dignity and pride!

Amidst their fury, the members of the Hummer family came to a conclusion—Dustin was a madman!

“Let her go!” Dustin brandished his sword again. This time, he pressed it to Joshua’s neck. The cold, steely

look in his eyes made the onlookers subconsciously shudder. They'd seen the
ir fair share of nefarious

characters, but this was their first time coming into
contact with the cold, inhumane look in Dustin's eyes. He

wasn't mad, nor had he raised his voice.

On the contrary, he'd been calm and collected throughout the whole exchange
. However, the more he acted

like that, the more terrifying it was. There was no doubt in everyone's minds th
at he would behead Joshua if

the Hummer family didn't do **as** he **said**.

"Let ... let her go!" Edwin forced out through gritted teeth, ultimately choosing t
o give in. He couldn't take this

bet, not with Joshua's life on the line. He'd **already** witnessed **how** ruthless D
ustin could be.

"Dad!" Tina couldn't believe her ears. Were they, the almighty Hummer family,
going to give in to a brat?

"I said, let her go!" Edwin turned to bellow at her. Nothing mattered more than
Joshua's life.

Tina bit her lip **and** loosened Natasha's ties.

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As soon as she was free, Natasha gave Tina two tight slaps. Tina stared at he
r, dumbfounded. "That's only the interest you owe me. I'll
collect the **rest** of my debt later."

With that, she turned and strutted toward Dustin. She'd never been the type to
suffer in silence—since she'd been slapped, she had to return the favor.

"Why, you- Tina gnashed her teeth, looking humiliated. Dustin and Natasha w
ere too obnoxious for words!

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“Dustin, we’ve already let her **go**, so it’s your turn!” Edwin tried his best to suppress his rage. If not for Dustin pulling such dirty tricks, he wouldn’t be in this situation!

“I didn’t say anything about letting anyone go.” Dustin obviously wasn’t going to let the matter slide. “You

abducted Ms. Harmon and harmed members of the Harmon family. Do you think I’ll let you off the hook so

easily?”

“Rhys, I’m warning you— don’t take this too far!” An ugly look crept onto Edwin’s face. “This is the Hummer

family’s territory; you’re dreaming if you think you can walk out of here unscathed! Now, I’m giving you **a** chance. Let Josh go, and I won’t begrudge you for everything that’s happened before this. Otherwise, **you**

won’t step a foot out of here without getting injured!”

Jade added, “He’s right! Let Josh go, or you’ll be making an enemy out of the Grant family!”

Dustin didn’t say anything and glanced at Natasha. If she were to give the order, he’d behead Joshua without batting an eye. However, Natasha said calmly, “Losing both arms is good enough to teach him a lesson. Leave

him alive for now.”

She wanted nothing more than to kill Joshua, but he was an esteemed disciple of the Boulderthorn Guild and

Jade’s fiancé. If she were to take his life, she’d only be causing trouble for herself. Dustin **would** also become

public enemy number one to the Boulderthorn Guild and the Grand family. Things wouldn't be so easily

resolved then.

Dustin nodded. "Alright. I can let him live, but he still **has** to pay for what he's done." With that, he kicked Joshua in the abdomen, sending him flying as he howled in pain.

Edwin and the others cried out his name and ran over to him, helping him up. He spat out a mouthful of blood

as his face contorted in a mask of pain. He forced out through gritted teeth, "Dad, he—he destroyed my

cultivation!" That earlier kick had shattered his core.

"What?" Edwin and the others were horrified. Joshua would be no different from a cripple with his cultivation and core destroyed. Edwin's eyes bulged with rage as he roared. "How dare you ruin my son's future, you brat!" They could find a way to reattach Joshua's limbs, but there was no way to recover from a shattered core.

"Dustin, you and your whole family s

dead meat! From this day onward, you're the Grant family's biggest enemy! I'll chase you to the ends of the earth!" Jade shrieked, her face filled with deep hatred. Joshua had been her ticket to a great future: Dustin's kick had ruined everything.

"I bet you didn't think karma would come back to bite you in **the** ass when you bullied and murdered innocents. *Dustin said coolly. "What **goes** around comes around—since you committed crimes against others, I'm here to commit **crimes** against you and give you a taste of your own medicine."

'Dustin Rhys! From this day onward, the Hummer family, the Grant family, and the Boulderthorn Guild will be

out for your blood! We **won't** rest until you're dead!" Edwin roared.

“Come at me with everything you have. I’d like to see what you have in store for me.” Dustin didn’t even flinch. He would’ve beheaded Joshua with the first swing of his sword if not for the consequences it would bring Natasha. Then again, he didn’t intend to let the Hummer family off the hook. If they really chased him to the

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ends of the earth, he’d eradicate them.

“Shoot him! Hurry!” Tina shrieked.

“Yes, ma’am!” A team of gun-wielding bodyguards cocked their guns and aimed them at Dustin. However, before they could pull the trigger, Dustin **swung** his sword. A beam of light shot toward the bodyguards, slicing them clear through their waists. In that instant, pained cries pierced the air. That was only a portion of Dustin’s ability, and he’d taken out more than twenty people with a single swing of his sword!

“T–this...” Everyone else was dumbfounded—they didn’t dare move.

“Let’s go.” Dustin didn’t linger. He kept an eye on Natasha and the others to ensure their safety while walking out. Tonight, he’d singlehandedly dealt a devastating blow to the Hummer family. He was invincible!

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As they walked out of Hummer Villa, Natasha, who’d put up a strong front earlier, suddenly felt her knees buckle under her. She almost fell flat on her face. Dustin quickly caught her and asked worriedly. “Are you

okay? Do you feel sick?”

“No. I’m just out of strength. My knees feel like jelly.” She shook her head. She’d been on edge earlier; now that

she could relax, she felt weak.

“Ms. Harmon, I’ll carry you!” Istrid stepped forward and volunteered to help her

.

“I don’t want to inconvenience you when you’re seriously injured,” Natasha **said**.

“I’m fine. These injuries mean nothing.” Istrid patted her chest to show she was okay.

“You’re seriously injured if I say so!” Natasha’s tone suddenly became stern. She glared at Istrid.

“Huh?” The realization dawned on Istrid when she glanced at Dustin. “Oh, uh, yeah. I feel really dizzy.”

“I’ll do it.” Dustin looked helpless as he swept Natasha into his arms. She had a strong personality but was only an ordinary woman—she had to be in shock after experiencing an abduction.

“Thanks for tonight.” Natasha smiled sweetly and leaned her head against his firm chest. His masculine pheromones made her heart race. Perhaps this was what people meant when they talked about a sense of

security.

“It’s no big deal. I couldn’t stand by and watch when a friend’s in trouble, right?” Dustin smiled.

“Am I only a friend?” Natasha raised an eyebrow, looking slightly bitter.

“What else could you be?” Dustin pretended not to know what she was talking about.

“Hmph! You’re so dense!” Natasha frowned and chomped down on his shoulder. Dustin hissed in pain but didn’t dare retaliate. “This is a mark I’m leaving on you. You belong to me for as long as this is around. I’ll bite you to death if you dare reject me!” She bared her teeth as she spoke.

Dustin grimaced but didn’t dare say anything to refute her. He savored the feeling of

her soft and pliant body in his arms; he couldn't help feeling aroused as her sweet scent enveloped him. They hadn't known each other long, but he'd unknowingly

started to fall for the vivacious woman. That was why he'd been so anxious when he heard about her being abducted. It was also why he'd devastated the Hummer family.

At this moment, Hummer Villa **was** in a mess. Dustin had crashed the place and slaughtered their men with a single blade, even **crippling** Joshua, who was the Hummer family's pride and joy. The Hummer family's dignity and arrogance had been flung to the ground and repeatedly stomped on.

"Dad, I'm crippled I'm crippled!" Joshua howled as he lay in bed. With his core shattered and cultivation destroyed, his life was over.

"Josh, don't panic. I'll immediately have our men search for a miracle doctor. I guarantee I'll spare no expense and pay any price to have you cured!" Edwin said.

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Jade nodded vigorously. "He's right, Josh. You'll definitely recover from this! The Grant family has an abundance of rare medicines. I'm sure **they'll** help to restore your core!"

"A full recovery isn't the only thing I want—I also want to get revenge! I want that Rhys brat to pay for this!" Joshua snarled.

"Don't worry, I've already informed Mark about this. He'll be here in no time. That brat will be **dead** meat when

Mark arrives!" Jade said.

"Mark?" A trace of hope flashed in Joshua's eyes at this. "No matter how powerful that brat is, he's no match for Mark!" Joshua had only achieved divinity a few days ago. He'd yet to fully adapt to this change, and his foundation had been shaky. That was why he could only manifest 50 to 60 per cent of his abilities. Marcus Kent, on the other hand, had already achieved divinity thr

ee years ago and had even ranked among the Heavenly Immortals. He was more than enough to deal with Dustin.

“Killing him swiftly would be letting him off easy. I say we go after everyone related to him so that he can see what it’s like to be public enemy number one!” Tina spat.

“You’re right. Issue an order for everyone to focus on catching Dustin and his posse. Whoever brings me his

head on a platter will receive a reward of a billion dollars!” Edwin commanded. With that, everyone in the

Hummer family got to work. As the word spread, everyone was raring to go, especially when they heard about

the reward.

At Park Place.

Jessica paced the living room, looking worried. Ruth also fidgeted restlessly, obviously anxious. Quentin was

the only one who looked unruffled. In truth, he’d been delighted by the news of Natasha’s abduction. If

anything were to happen to her, there was a high chance of him taking over the company. Of course, in a best-case scenario, both Dustin and Natasha would die at Hummer Villa. **That** way, Quentin would finally have

gotten his revenge!

“Mrs. Harmon!” The butler ran into the living room.

“So? Is there any news on Natasha?” Jessica’s heart leaped to her throat. Though she believed the Hummers wouldn’t do anything rash, she couldn’t be absolutely sure.

“The shadow guards just sent word back that Ms. Harmon’s been rescued. She’s a little roughed up but is fine

as a whole,” the butler said.

“That’s **great!**” Jessica **heaved** a sigh of relief, looking joyful.

“I knew she’d be fine! How could anything happen to her?” Ruth laughed.

Quentin gnashed his teeth, looking pissed. He’d stuck around for so long to receive such terrible news—

what **was wrong** with the Hummer family? **How** weak could **they** be, allowing Natasha to get away so easily?

“As expected, we made the right choice by mobilizing the shadow guards. Otherwise, this rescue mission

wouldn’t **have** been so successful.” Jessica smiled.

“Mrs. Harmon, the shadow guards weren’t the **ones** who rescued Ms. Harmon,” The butler’s expression

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became a little odd.

“Who else could it be? Don’t tell me the Hummers voluntarily let her **go.**”

“The Hummers didn’t free her of their own volition, **and** neither did the shadow guards

contribute to rescuing Ms. Harmon,” the butler said. “Mr. Dustin Rhys was the one who singlehandedly saved her. He slaughtered Darkwrath, Lightwrath, Judge, and the Hummer family’s elite army. No one in the Hummer family **was a** match for him!”

His words dumbfounded Jessica and the others. Dustin had singlehandedly defeated so many people? Was he truly human?

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The following morning, at Peaceful Medical Center.

Dustin got up early, washed up, and started preparing breakfast. As usual, it was his signature dish, deviled eggs. It was simple but smelled amazing. He'd just brought the food to the dining table when someone walked in.

"Wow, that smells great!" It **was** Dahlia. Today, she wore a smart suit and heels. Her hair was in a ponytail, revealing her fair **and** slender neck. She looked happy to see the food. 'Are those deviled eggs? How did you know I hadn't had breakfast yet, Dustin? Since you prepared this for me, I won't stand on ceremony!" She sat down and started to dig in.

"This isn't "Dustin was about to say something when his bedroom door swung open to reveal a gorgeous **woman** standing there.

"Darling, I'm starving. Is breakfast ready yet?" It was Natasha. She had on an oversized shirt. As she stretched, it dipped to reveal her cleavage. "Hmm?" She and Dahlia met each other's gaze. They were both equally

stunned.

"What are you doing here?" they asked simultaneously. The air crackled with electricity, and the tension was

so thick one could slice it with a knife.

"Dustin, what's going on here?" Dahlia looked hostile. She could tell that Natasha was wearing Dustin's shirt. **That**, coupled with the fact that Natasha **was** coming out of Dustin's room, was more than enough for even a

fool to tell that something was afoot.

"Don't get the wrong idea. It's not what you think." Dustin wanted to explain, but Natasha cut him off.

"Darling, since she's caught us redhanded, we might as well come clean. There's nothing to hide, anyway!"

“So, you slept with her? Dahlia bit her lip, looking jealous. She’d always thought Dustin could keep it in his

pants; she was obviously wrong.

“Why bother asking when it’s obvious?” Natasha tugged the shirt lower to reveal more of her cleavage.

“Nothing of the sort happened.” Dustin felt a headache coming on. “Ms. Harmon was injured yesterday, so I brought her back here to treat her. Nothing else happened.”

Dahlia took a closer look at Natasha and noticed the wounds on her body. Even so, she couldn’t keep the jealousy from her tone as she said, “Why didn’t she go **to a** hospital if she was injured? Why come here?”

“I can go wherever I want. It’s up to me.” Natasha smirked. “Correct me if I’m wrong, but you two are divorced,

right? If so, it’s none of your business even if anything were to happen between me and Dustin.”

“So what if we’re divorced? We can always remarry!” Dahlia glared at her, refusing to back down.

“Do you think marriage and divorce is a game? What do you take Dustin **for**?” Natasha’s smile faded. “Ms. Nicholson, one shouldn’t be too greedy. Since you’re the one who chose to give up, you should bear the

consequences accordingly.”

“Everyone makes mistakes; it’s fine as long as they realize where they **went** wrong and correct them. I made a

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mistake in the past, but now, I’ll do whatever I can to make it up to him!” Dahlia glanced at Dustin as she

spoke, seemingly hinting at something.

“Since you refuse to give up, let’s see who’s better at this.”

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Natasha shrugged and sat at the dining table. She pulled the deviled eggs to her and said with a smile, “Thank you for breakfast, darling. You’re so considerate!”

“That’s where you’re wrong. These eggs are mine.” Dahlia pulled the eggs back. “It’s been three years, but I’ve yet to fall out of love with Dustin’s cooking. Besides, he knows I love deviled eggs.”

“Ms. Nicholson, stop thinking so highly of yourself. What’s in the past is just the past. These eggs belong to me now.” Natasha didn’t back down. She dragged the eggs to herself again.

“Ms. Harmon, robbing someone of something they love isn’t the best habit to have. These eggs have been cooked to my taste; they only suit me!”

“What makes you think I don’t like deviled eggs? I love anything Dustin cooks!”

“Hmph! Just because you like them doesn’t mean they suit you!”

“It’s up to me to decide whether they’re suitable!”

The conversation between the two women became increasingly heated as they dragged the plate of deviled eggs back and forth. Neither of them wanted to back down. It was as if they’d lose something precious if they were to give in. Dustin felt a headache coming on as he watched them duke it out. Honestly, he didn’t think he was worthy of their affection.

At the entrance to the guest bedroom, Caitlyn stuck **her** head out to peek at the commotion. She asked in confusion. “Max, what do you think Ms. Harmon and Ms. Nicholson are doing? Do they need to act like this over some eggs?”

“Caitlyn, you’re too **young** to understand the intricacies of a relationship between a man **and a** woman,”

Maximus mysteriously said as he stroked his chin. “They’re not fighting over the eggs, but their dignity as

women!”

“Dignity?” Caitlyn still didn’t get it.

“Dustin personally cooked those eggs; whoever gets to taste them first **wins** the round.” Maximus looked in awe. “As expected, he’s truly admirable—beautiful women surround him, yet he remains unaffected by them.

Look, they’re about to get into a brawl, but Dustin still looks so calm and collected. He truly is someone to **look**

up to!”

Dustin, with his sharp senses, heard this. He turned around to glare at **Maximus** and Caitlyn. The two heads immediately shot back into the room. A few seconds later, they sneaked out again.

“Dustin, you decide! Who do these eggs **belong** to?” After an inconclusive argument, Natasha and Dahlia

turned to look at Dustin. They looked like they wouldn’t give up until they had the answer they wanted.

Faced with the toughest question he’d ever been asked, Dustin’s lips twitched, sweat beaded on his forehead.”

“Uh these are my eggs!” he blurted out. He grabbed the plate and scooped all the eggs into his mouth. With

nothing left to fight **over**, the crisis **had** been averted.

“Hmph!” The two women glared at **each** other before turning away in opposite directions, still refusing to give

in to each other.

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*As expected of Dustin—only he would've thought of such a great **idea!**" Maximus was in awe of Dustin's ability to avert such a deadly crisis: he **wanted** to drop to his knees and worship the ground Dustin walked on. He was amazing! Perhaps this was what a true pro was like.

Dustin was the first to break the silence after finishing the eggs. "Dahlia, did you come here for something?"

"Do I have to have a purpose for coming here?" Dahlia still looked miffed.

"Uh, no." Dustin looked a little **awkward**.

"I came because we're having guests; you need to meet them with me. In fact, you might make some money from this. I don't want people saying you're leeching off me." Dahlia **gave** Natasha a pointed look as she spoke.

"What's wrong with him leeching off someone? Others may not even have the chance to do **so!**" Natasha didn't

bat an eye.

Before long, the women started squabbling again.

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"Ms. Nicholson, did you come here because you wanted something from me?" Dustin asked when he saw how tense the atmosphere was.

"What, do I have to have a reason for coming here?" Dahlia glared at him.

"I didn't mean that." He looked awkward.

“Whatever. Let’s get down to business—you know Dr. Rowan Cross, right? I want to ask him to examine someone.” Dahlia stopped beating around the bush.

“Examine someone?” Dustin sized her up, then checked her pulse. Confused, he said, “Aside from being a little out of whack, you’re fine. You just need to control your emotions and diet.”

your period

“You’re the one who’s out of whack!” Dahlia glared at him again, her face turning red. “I didn’t say I was the one who needed an examination—it’s for a relative of mine who suddenly fainted yesterday. She’s been complaining of a headache, but the hospital said she’s fine. She wanted Dr. Cross to examine them just to be

sure.”

“I see.” Dustin nodded. “There’s no need to bother Dr. Cross for something as simple as that—I’m more than enough.”

“You?” Dahlia eyed him doubtfully. “Can you handle it?”

“My medical center’s been around for a number of years now. Wouldn’t it have closed down long ago if I didn’t have a few tricks up my sleeve?” Dustin said confidently.

Dahlia **was** speechless. She’d never seen any patients in the dingy medical center; how was it different from being closed down?

“We can forget about it if you don’t trust me.” Dustin shrugged.

“Who said anything about me not trusting you? You’ll do!” Dahlia said decisively. “I’ll be frank—this relative of mine is a pretty big deal, so if you can cure her, it could be your ticket to success. You won’t have to leech off anyone anymore when that happens.” As she spoke, she gave Natasha a pointed look.

“What’s wrong with leeching off someone?” Natasha puffed **out** her chest. “At least my darling is capable of leeching off someone—others may not be able to do so even if they wanted to!”

Dahlia snorted. “No upstanding man would want to be at a woman’s beck and call. Think about how humiliating that’d be!”

“What good is a man for if not to serve a woman? He can’t fool around with himself, can he?” Natasha rolled

her eyes.

“Why, you-

Dahlia was exasperated. How could this woman be so crude? She wasn’t ladylike in the slightest!

“Alright, that’s enough. We should focus on whatever’s ailing your relative. Let’s head to the hospital.” Dustin quickly interjected when he saw the two women were about to start quarreling again. He **dragged Dahlia out**

of the medical center.

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“Darling, be back soon, okay? I’ll be waiting for **you!**” Natasha called, smiling seductively and sending him an air kiss. At the same time, she undid another button on her shirt to reveal **more** of her cleavage. Dustin stared at her.

“Hmph!” Dahlia stomped on his foot and gave him a warning look. He smiled awkwardly **and** retracted his gaze. “Get in the car!” She stuffed him into the car before speeding off.

“Do you think you stand a chance against me, you flat-chested preteen?” Natasha smiled victoriously as she looked down at her voluptuous chest. It was enough to put any woman to shame, and none of her future children would ever go hungry.

Half an hour later, in one of the wards at East Swinton Hospital.

“My head hurts! I feel like it’s gonna split in half!” Jane lay in a hospital bed and clutched her head, occasionally smacking it to alleviate the pain.

“Mom, hold on for a little longer. Dr. Cross will be here soon.” Dakota kept comforting her. Nobody knew what had happened—Jane had suddenly passed out yesterday and kept complaining about a heada

che when she'd come to. They'd done all the examinations possible, but the results showed nothing was wrong with her.

"I shouldn't have come to this accursed place. We've had problem after problem since arriving. First, someone crashed into our car. Then, I got slapped for no reason at all. Now, I'm having a terrible headache. What have I done to deserve this?" Jane looked positively miserable.

"We'll head home once you're okay; we're never coming to this dump again!" Dakota **said**. Then, she turned to Florence, who stood at the ward's entrance, and screeched, "What's taking so long? When is Dr. Cross coming? Tell him to hurry!"

"Of course, of course." Florence didn't dare delay. She hurried out of the ward, took out her phone, and was about to dial a number when she saw two people approaching her—Dahlia and Dustin. "Dahlia, you're finally here!" Her face lit up as she hurried toward them. "Your aunt's headache **is** getting worse, and the doctors here are too useless to do anything about it. Dr. Cross is our only hope now! Where is he?" She looked around but didn't see him.

Dahlia shook her head. "He's busy with something else and can't be here."

"What? What are we gonna do, then? Florence was taken aback. Had they waited for nothing?"

"Dustin has some medical expertise. How about we have him give it a shot?"

"Him?" Florence frowned. "Have **you** lost your mind? How can this good-for-nothing possibly know anything about treating a patient? Who's gonna bear the **responsibility** if anything goes wrong?"

"He cured Granddad when he was poisoned, remember? I have faith in him," Dahlia said firmly. She'd

misunderstood Dustin one **time** too many; this time, she chose to trust him unconditionally.

"Stop this nonsense! Your grandlather **only** made it through because of Dr. Cross' Hexanavir, it had nothing to do with this man!" Florence scowled, looking contemptuous.

“Do you have a better idea, then?” Dahlia asked.

“Well, I- Florence had no words.

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“Since we’re out of ideas, why don’t we let Dustin try? We can think of something else if it doesn’t work.” Dahlia’s tone became domineering.

“Rhys, you’d better watch what you’re doing. Don’t you dare try to pass just about anything off as a cure!” Florence warned. The two people in the ward were her cash cows. If anything were to go wrong, she’d be in big trouble.

“Let’s see how the patient’s doing.” Dustin didn’t want to waste his breath on her.

“Hmph! Come with me!” Florence led Dustin and Dahlia into the ward. Once she stepped in, her arrogance faded, replaced with a fawning smile.

“Florence, what the hell took you so long? Where is Dr. Cross?” Dakota asked impatiently.

“I’m here!” Florence said sycophantically, gesturing to the people behind her. “Behold the doctor we’ve brought!

“Huh?” Dakota and Jane looked up, then exclaimed in unison. “It’s you?”

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“It’s you!” **Dakota** was momentarily taken aback **when** she recognized Dustin. Similarly, he looked **at** her funny with a hint of astonishment. Never had he expected that the two b*tches were the relatives that Dahlia had

mentioned to him. What a small world!

“Oh, did you know **each** other?” Dahlia’s quizzical gaze traveled between the two.

“Not only are **we** acquainted,” Dakota **hissed** through clenched teeth, “He’s also the guy who beat **us up** yesterday!”

“What?” Everyone **was** surprised to learn that.

“Um, Dakota, did you get the wrong person?” Florence questioned cautiously.

“No! How could I? I’d recognize him even if he turned into ashes! I also suspect my mom’s gotten a headache from his slap!” Dakota seemed merciless.

“Right! I must **have** fallen sick because of that slap! Get someone to arrest him!” Jane was bellowing in bed. She had been unable to put yesterday’s events behind her, and she was extremely furious upon meeting her

enemy again.

“Dustin, what’s the matter? Why did you hit them?” Dahlia was baffled to learn that he had a grudge against

Jane and Dakota when she introduced him to her **Glenstead** relatives.

“They deserved it, Dustin replied bluntly. “They reversed and **crashed** into an other car, almost killing the victim. But they acted unreasonably like two bullies. I slapped them across their faces because I couldn’t

stand them anymore.”

“You rascal! Do you know who they are? How dare you hit them?” Florence **was** incensed to learn that Dustin had laid a finger on her two Goddesses of Fortune. She took it as a personal affront as well.

“Don’t waste your time talking to him! Call the police now!” Dakota seethed resentfully.

“No, wait!” Dahlia jumped out to stop her. “This might be a huge misunderstanding. There’s no need to **make** this a bigger issue than it is. Why **don’t** we have Dustin work on Aunt Jane’s illness to make up for his

mistake?”

“Hmph! Nobody needs his help!” Jane spat on the ground. “Just look at his behavior. What if he makes things worse? Will anyone take the responsibility?”

“That works. I have no intention to cure you either,” Dustin said in an unperturbed manner. “Oh, by the way, do not forget what I told you before—headaches on the first day, coughing up blood on the second day, and paralysis on the third day. You’ll suffer a sudden death on the fourth day. Since **today is** the second day, it will not take long before you start coughing up **blood**. By that time, you’ll have to leave your fate in the hands of God.”

“Y—y— you’re a jinx! Quit the nonsense! As Jane trembled in anger, her headache worsened as well.

“See? **Did** you hear him? How dare he curse my mom! This is an order—get him arrested! If you don’t. I’ll hold you accountable! Dakota started ordering people around. Florence’s face fell, and she yelled at Dustin,” Dustin Rhys! Apologize to them now! If you don’t, I will not go easy on you!”

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“Apologize to them? They don’t deserve it.” Dustin chortled. “If **anything**, they should be apologizing to me. If they do that, I might consider saving the mother.”

“Bullshit! Who do you think you are? You aren’t qualified to treat my mom!”

“Yeah! With our status, we can hire **any** skilled doctors we want! We don’t need you showing off here!”

Jane and Dakota were being stubborn. In their eyes, an ordinary man like Dustin had no business attending to

their medical needs.

“Hah! **Sure**, keep being stubborn, I do hope you don’t have to beg me in the end.” Dustin chuckled with a shake of his head.

“Beg you? What a joke!” Jane sneered. “Look, even if I am suffering from a horrible headache or in so much pain to the point of jumping off a building. I still wouldn’t give in to you!”

“Okay. We shall see.” Without further ado, Dustin took **leave**. Dahlia frowned at his exit, but after a moment of hesitation, she ran after him.

After they left, James brought in an old man dressed in a cloak and dashed into the bedroom. “Mom! The skilled doctor you asked for is here!”

“The skilled doctor? Where is he?” Florence asked in a hurry.

James jumped aside and presented the old man in a cloak, introducing him, “This is Dr. Fenton Reyes from Bloomington Medical Center in Stonia. He’s a veteran in his field and had ancestors who were royal

physicians! No doubt, his skills are legendary!”

“Royal physicians?”

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Florence, Jane, and Dakota were delighted by the doctor’s presence. They could tell that he came from an

impressive background just from how James described him. Jane and Dakota believed they deserved the best. such as seeing a skilled doctor like Fenton Reyes.

“James. Dr. Reyes is a legend in Stonia. How did you get him to show up?” Florence asked curiously.

James smiled. “Well, it wasn’t me. It was Mr. Langford who arranged for Dr. Reyes to see Aunt Jane.”

“Mr. Langford?” Florence’s eyes lit up upon hearing the name.

Luis Langford was an aristocrat from Stonia who wielded great wealth and influence. He was also well-connected in the military and the government. More importantly, the Langford family was a close friend of the Nicholson family of Glenstead, Moreover, the Glenstead Nicholsons were greatly interested in an arranged marriage between Luis and Dahlia. In other words, if Dahlia was willing, she could marry into

the wealthy Langford family in no time, elevating the entire family to greater heights!

“That’s very thoughtful of Mr. Langford! He immediately asked for a skilled doctor to see my mom after hearing about her sickness. This way, Dr. Reyes!” Dakota led the old man to Jane’s bed.

He asked, “Where are you hurting?”

“I have a headache! My head feels like it’s splitting in half!” Jane scrunched up her face. She seemed feeble and lifeless.

“I’ll take a look.” The old man carefully placed his stethoscope on Jane. A few moments later, he replied, “There doesn’t seem to be an issue. I assume you are just sleep-deprived and stressed out.” With that, he took out a medicine bottle and poured three white pills. “Take one pill a **day** for three days, and you’ll be fine.”

*Awesome! Thank you, Dr. Reyes.” Jane was beyond joyful. Florence took the chance to suck up to the doctor, “You’re indeed the legendary Dr. Reyes! You managed to cure an illness that has gotten many doctors in a bind!

“Hmph! That Rhys guy was fear-mongering when he said my mom would cough up blood! He’s talking crap. A fake like him should be dealt with!” Dakota **said** unhappily.”

“Right! When I’m recovered, I will get him!” Jane swallowed a pill. However, her headache only worsened after that, to the point where she was in greater pain and drenched in cold sweat.

As she was about to question the doctor, she coughed violently, her face red from the exertion.

“Mom! What happened? Are you okay?” **Dakota** asked her with concern. Soon, Jane opened her mouth and coughed up a mouthful of blood that splattered across her face.

“What was that?”

Everyone in the room was shocked by Jane’s declining condition. They exchanged confused glances with each other.

A frantic Dakota hurriedly called for the **doctor**. “Dr. Reyes, what’s wrong? Why did she cough up blood?”

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“That’s odd. I’ll take another look.” The old man furrowed his brow and went a head with the checkup. Not **long**

after, his expression became grim as he sighed. “I am sorry. Your mother has a terminal **illness**. She’s in the late stage. I’m afraid she doesn’t have much time left.”

“Huh? A terminal illness?” The people in the room were stunned. Didn’t Dr. Reyes just say that Jane would be fine? Why did he suddenly change his diagnosis?

“I am not knowledgeable enough to help you with this. I shall take my leave now.” The old man hung his head in shame. Then, he shook his head and stood up to leave. The others stared at him agape and panicked soon

after.

“Headaches on the first day, coughing up blood on the second day, and paralysis on the third **day**. Was that guy right?” Jane mumbled to herself and suddenly broke into a scream. “Quick! Get Dustin Rhys back here!

Now!”

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Dahlia caught up with Dustin at the hospital entrance and pulled on his arm. “Hey! Stop! You’re walking too fast. I almost couldn’t catch up!”

“I’m really sorry. I can’t handle those relatives of yours. You should get some other doctor to deal with them.” Dustin remarked coolly. He was averse to the two difficult women and refused to engage with them.

“Did I force you to cure Aunt Jane? Why are you being sensitive?” She rolled her eyes at him.

“Well, I thought

“What? Did you think I’m an unreasonable woman who’d force you to grovel at them?” she scoffed.

“No, I didn’t.” He flashed an embarrassed smile at her, feeling rather uneasy at her newfound considerate personality.

“Alright. I know they’re in the wrong. Just stay away from them in the future.” She dispensed a kind reminder. “They’re from a wealthy and powerful family in Glenstead. Even Natasha Harmon couldn’t protect you if you get into trouble with them.”

“Is that so? They sound quite remarkable, then.” He smiled carelessly.

“They’re beyond remarkable! The three powerful families in Glenstead are steeped in history, dating back to a few centuries ago. They are well-connected in the military, government, **and** business field—living up to their reputation!” She tucked a strand of hair behind her ear. “Well, I had planned to bring you along and suck up to them. I didn’t know you got in to a fight with them. What can I say, except that you’ve missed the opportunity to get rich!”

“Oh, no thanks. I don’t need that opportunity.” He shrugged.

“Hmph! **Seems** like you don’t appreciate my help at all!” She rolled her eyes at him once more, but a little

flirtatious this time.

“Hey! Dustin Rhys! Stop!” Dakota emerged out of nowhere, drenched in sweat. “My mom coughed up blood just now! I’m telling you to get back there and check on her!” To catch up to Dustin, she opted to use the stairs

instead of the elevator, which explained her current breathless state.

“Oh, I recall that someone has vowed not to seek my help even if she has to jump from a building in pain! Why did she take back her word?” he mocked.

“Quit the nonsense! Do what I tell you to!” She glared at him. “I will write off the slap if you cure her, and I’ll grant you a chance to forge a connection with **us**.”

In her eyes, the chance to suck up to her family was a **rare** opportunity for a worthless man like Dustin Rhys.

“Well, sorry. I don’t care for that opportunity.” He looked unbothered.

“Dustin Rhys! Think carefully. Not everyone gets a chance like **this**! You should feel honored that I granted you the chance!” Dakota tossed her head. A spoiled princess **from** a young age, she was accustomed to acting arrogant and **getting** showered with compliments everywhere she went.

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“No. That is too great of an honor,” he turned her down without hesitation.

“You’d better not think too highly of yourself! I wouldn’t **have** stopped you if you weren’t a half-decent doctor.

Don’t be delusional!” She frowned at him.

“If so, please leave. I shall not see you out,” he **said** with a shrug.

“You-” She choked on anger at Dustin’s stubbornness. She would have gotten him torn apart if they were in

Glenstead. "Dustin Rhys, what will it take for you to help us? Give us an offer if money is what you want!"

Dakota hissed.

"Want me to save your mom? I can do that on the condition that both of you apologize to me. I'll also need handwritten apology letters!" he suggested with a calm expression.

"An apology? Dream on!" His words fanned her anger. "Who do you think you are? You have no right to ask us for an apology!" The Nicholsons were aristocratic and different from the lowly peasant class that Dustin Rhys belonged to. There was no way for the aristocratic Dakota to give in to his demand!

"If you refuse, let's drop this matter. Please get a better doctor for your mom." He did not care at all.

"You don't have to scare us! With our connections, we can hire any skilled doctor we need! I am offering you a chance to redeem yourself, but if you don't appreciate it, don't blame me for making you pay!"

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"Once my Mom is cured, we'll hash out our past and present grievances together!" Dakota said in a sharp tone, her eyes ferocious.

"Knock yourself out." Dustin shrugged nonchalantly.

"You" Dakota choked out. She was grinding her teeth so hard that the **grinding** was audible, but she couldn't do anything **anyway**.

While they were both in a standoff, a sudden uproar broke out near the hospital entrance. They raised their heads to find a fully armed motorcade bulldozing their way **over**.

The motorcade was from the military, and it was a huge spectacle. All the guards sitting on top were armed and radiating murderous energy. Everywhere they passed, people and cars parted to make way for them.

“That’s strange. What is the military doing? Could they be here to arrest some outlaw?” Dahlia looked around in confusion.

Dakota also looked perplexed.

At that moment, the commander ordered, “Hurry, surround them now!”

The guards got down from the motorcade and instantly encircled Dustin and the two women. Seeing the muzzle of the guns lined up next to each other gave them chills.

“Huh?” Dahlia was startled, and her face paled. She had been ready to watch the show. Never in a million years did she expect that these guards would be encircling them instead.

“Don’t panic. This has nothing to do with you. They’re here for me.” Dustin swept his gaze **over** the guards. He already had a plan in mind.

“They’re here to arrest you? Why?” Dahlia asked, flabbergasted.

She couldn’t understand what kind of crime the man in front of her had committed that could incite the military’s arrival.

“It’s just a trivial matter. It’s nothing.” Dustin smiled mildly.

“A trivial matter?” Dahlia frowned.

The military was here for him, and he still called it a trivial matter?

“Dustin, you committed the heinous crime of murder in broad **daylight!** We have been ordered to arrest **you** and

bring you to justice! If you resist, you will be killed!” the commander said with a cool face..

The murderous vibe he was exuding scared the wits out of Dahlia. “Commander, is there some kind of misunderstanding?” she asked tentatively.

“Unrelated persons are to make way at once! Otherwise, you will be charged with the same **crimes!**” the **commander** said mercilessly.

“Don’t worry, I’ll be fine. You should go home first.” Dustin placed a **hand** on Dahlia’s shoulder and **smiled**

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gently.

“I —” Dahlia said hesitantly.

How could this huge spectacle be nothing?

But she couldn't help in any way right **now**.

“Rhys, I bet you never thought this day would come!” At that moment, Dakota suddenly laughed, taking pleasure in his misfortune. “You must have committed a huge crime to have sparked the military into coming here. Now, I'll give you another chance. If you cure my mother's **illness** and then apologize to me, I'll agree to

save you.”

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“I don't need it.” Dustin said, rejecting Dakota outright.

“You don't need it?” When Dakota heard his answer, she was stunned. She **never** thought that even at this moment of life and death, Dustin would still dare to reject her. Did he really not want to live anymore?

“Dustin, don't make decisions based on your emotions!” Dahlia tugged on his sleeve, trying to talk some sense into him. “I don't care what crime you committed, but your life is important. The Nicholson family has connections in the military: only she can save you now!”

“She can't save me, and I don't need her saving.” Dustin shook his head. Judging from the license plates and flags, this troop was from the Balerno Military. The people in Glanstead couldn't do anything. Not to mention, Edwin had to pull strings to send this huge troop after him. He wouldn't let Dustin get away that easily.

“Hmph! You’re already on death’s door, yet you’re still so stubborn!” Dakota jutted her chin out derisively. “It seems like you still haven’t grasped the severity of the problem. I dare guarantee that without the help of the Nicholsons, you’ll be rotting in there for life!”

“Dustin, I’m begging you, alright? Agree to her terms!” Dahlia urged anxiously.

An average citizen couldn’t fight an officer. The high-ranking officers in the military could easily squash a civilian. With just one word, they could have them buried six feet under.

“You don’t have to worry about me. I’m just going in to have a cup of tea. I believe I’ll be out in no time, so you should just go home.” Dustin said with a small smile.

The military had come all the way here, so of course, he had to show them some respect.

“Enough yapping! Take him away!” The commander had obviously run out of patience and ordered his men to cuff Dustin and push him into the car.

Then, with a troop of guards in tow, they made a grand exit. The entire process had been so simple and straight to the point. No one had been dragging their feet.

Dahlia was extremely anxious, but she couldn’t do anything to help. With her network, she couldn’t even reach the high-ranking officials in the military, much less **get** them to save someone. As if she thought of something, she turned to Dakota and begged, “Dakota, you have a wide network. Can you help Dustin and break him out?”

“I’ve already given him a chance, but he wouldn’t accept my kind gesture. It’s none of my business!” Dakota

said huffily.

“Even if you don’t care about Dustin, you have to think about your mother,” Dahlia said, changing the subject.

“Well...” Dakota frowned. She didn’t care whether Dustin **lived** or died, but her mother was now suffering from a terminal **illness**, just like Dustin had **said**. If he kicked the bucket, then wouldn’t her mother be at high risk?

“If I save **him**, are you sure he’ll treat my mother?” Dakota asked doubtfully.

“I promise that he definitely will! Dahlia said with a **serious** face.

“Alright, I’ll trust **you** this time!” Dakota nodded. Then, she **took** out her phone and began to contact some

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people.

A few of the Nicholson family members were working in the military. To her, this small favor was clearly not an

issue at all.

At that moment, Natasha was lying down on the lounge chair in Peaceful Medical Center, sipping her tea

slowly like a dignified owner of a medical center.

“Natasha, something happened!” Ruth barged into the room in a panic.

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“What’s the matter?” Natasha said, slightly stunned.

“I just received word that Dustin has been arrested by the military!” In a no-nonsense manner, Ruth quickly gave a simple explanation of what happened.

After Natasha heard the whole story, her face instantly grew solemn. “Using the military to arrest him? It seems like the one behind this comes from a decent background.”

“Natasha, do you think the Hummers did this?” Ruth asked, frowning slightly. “Yesterday, Dustin went on a killing spree at the Hummers and even crippled Edwin’s son. The Hummers definitely won’t let this go easily.”

“It definitely has something to do with them. However, just Edwin’s network alone is clearly not enough to invoke the power of the military. I’m guessing the Grant family must have played a hand in this,” Natasha said thoughtfully.

Jade was Joshua’s fiancé. Considering their relationship, there was no way the Grant family would sit around and do nothing. As one of the Tremendous Three, the Grant family had immense power over the Belarno Military. Taking care of someone with no backing would be far too easy.

Although she already knew that Dustin would be in trouble, she didn’t expect it to be so soon.

“Natasha, what do we do now?” Ruth **asked** hesitantly.

“Go and find out where Dustin is being locked up. Leave the rest to me.” As soon as Natasha finished

speaking, she turned around and went out the door.

She knew that the battle was starting. This time, she was going to fight the Hummers to the death!

Meanwhile, at the Hummer Villa, Joshua lay on the bed, his face ashen. His arms were wrapped in thick bandages, and he looked listless.

Next to him sat an old man that was only skin and bones. He was completely focused on administering

treatment, droplets of sweat beading on his forehead. Edwin and Tina watched silently from the door, not daring to make a noise for fear of disturbing him.

The old man in front of him was none other than the miracle doctor, Dr. Rowan Cross!

After a long time, Rowan finally stood. Edwin couldn’t stop himself from speaking up. “Dr. Cross, how is my

son?”

“Mr. Hummer, I have reattached your son’s arms. It’s just that from today onward, he won’t be able to lift heavy things anymore.” Rowan dabbed the sweat on his forehead.

“What about his internal injuries? Can his injured core recover?” Edwin pressed. Whether or not he could restore his cultivation was the most important part.

It concerned his son’s future.

“The core is not like the arms; restoring it would be very difficult. Nevertheless, I can continue to research any

ancient methods that could work,” **Rowan** said, not making any promises.

“Then please, Dr. Cross, do everything that you can. Once it’s done, our family will reward you handsomely!” Edwin said gratefully. As long as there was a glimmer of hope left, they couldn’t give up so easily.

“Hmph, it’s all that damn Dustin’s fault! How could he hurt my brother so badly? I’m going to rip him to shreds! * Tina grumbled fiercely.

“Wait a minute

Rowan paused. “Did you just say Dustin hurt your brother?”

“That’s right! It was that animal!” Tina nodded heavily.

When Rowan heard that, his face darkened, and he said coldly, “Based on my observation, your brother cannot be treated. He’ll just be a cripple for the rest of his life. You should hope for the best. Farewell!”

With that, he left with his medical kit.

Both father and daughter looked at each other, unable to understand what had just gone down.

What the f*ck just happened?

He’d been very pleasant earlier, so why did **his** demeanor change in a blink of an eye?

Were all miracle doctors this moody?

As Rowan walked out of the Hummer Villa, he didn't forget to turn around and spit on the ground, cursing."

How

dare you ask me to treat your family after you wronged my savior? Eat shit!"

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Chapter 275

At the drill ground of a military base. Dustin had been chained to a pillar by several thick chains made of darksteel, which was extremely malleable yet also durable. The blazing sun shone down on him, and he was surrounded by a troop of armed forces. They scrutinized his every action warily.

Dustin didn't seem bothered by it. He merely allowed himself to remain chained, looking poker-faced. His calmness surprised the soldiers—any ordinary person would've peed their pants long ago. It seemed there was something special about him.

"So, you're Dustin Rhys?" At this moment, a man in a deputy general's uniform walked over with a troop of soldiers behind him. He had a beer belly and a round face.

"Don't tell me you captured me without even knowing who I am," Dustin said coolly.

"Cut the crap! Answer the general's question!" one of the military officers roared.

"Fine. Yes, I'm Dustin Rhys."

"Good, good. The man nodded. "Since we didn't get the wrong guy, let's start by giving him 50 military whips. It'll also act as a deterrent to others like him."

The military officers with him subconsciously winced at his words. Military whips weren't the same as normal whips—an ordinary person would faint from three to five military whips; ten were enough to make one feel like one had a foot in the grave. If one were fortunate enough to survive 20 whips, they'd probably have to spend the rest of their life in a wheelchair. As for 50 whips. No one had survived it thus far. It looked like he was out for Dustin's life!

“Hold on,” Dustin suddenly said. “You’re a whip me without asking a single question?”

general, aren’t you? Don’t you think it’s a little against protocol to

The round–

faced man gave him an arrogant look. “My words are the only protocol to follow here–

I’m the one who calls the shots over your life and death, you peasant. You don’t even have the right to say no.”

“I suppose that means you’re gonna abuse your power.” Dustin narrowed his eyes.

“So what if I am? I have hundreds of guns aimed at you. Do you think you stand a chance against them?” The round–faced man scoffed.

“Quality over quantity. Having that many guns doesn’t actually mean anything.” Dustin shook his head.

The round–faced man sneered. “Putting up a brave front, are we? You’ll regret this when you’re on the brink of death! Whip **him!**” He waved **a** hand.

Before long, a burly man walked over with a steel whip in hand. Salt water dripped from it—it would make the wounds burn even more.

“I’ll ask **you** one last time before you do anything else—who sent you here?” Dustin asked.

“I did!” Someone walked out from behind the round–faced man and lowered her hood. It was Jade. “I bet you didn’t expect to end up in my hands, Rhys!” She sneered, “You were so obnoxious last night, but so what? You’re nothing but my prisoner now!”

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“What happened last night was between me and the Hummer family. I’d advise you to stay out of it,” Dustin

said coolly.

Jade snorted. “Joshua’s my fiancé: I want nothing **more** than to skin you alive for crippling him!”

“Joshua deserved what he got. You shouldn’t do anything to jeopardize yourself.”

Jade laughed derisively. “I don’t think you understand your predicament. Your life and death are in my hands- how dare you threaten me!”

“Believe what you may. I just hope you don’t regret this.” Dustin didn’t want to waste his breath.

“Keep this up. I’d like to see whether you’ll still be this arrogant when you’re bruised and battered!” Jade looked at him like he was already dead to her.

“Alright, that’s enough talking. Jade, don’t waste your breath on him. Let’s just sit and watch the **show**.” The round-faced man waved a hand. Soon, some military officers brought a table and two chairs over. The round-faced man gestured for them to be placed in the shade. Then, he and Jade sat down. “Well, what are you waiting for? Whip him with all you’ve got!”

With that, the burly man got to work and started whipping.

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Each of the burly man's whips landed with a loud crack; they could be heard from miles away. Jade laughed derisively at the sound and exclaimed, "He's doing a **great** job!" Dustin had been so obnoxious the night before, **crashing** the Hummer Villa and slaughtering their men. She had to make him pay for it!

"Jade, you must've been exaggerating when you said this brat was hard to deal with." The round-faced man

snorted. "Look, he's nothing more than a prisoner with his life in my hands."

"He's an extremely powerful martial artist, just so you know. There were several people at the Hummer Villa

last night, but none stood a chance against him." Jade was still shaken from the previous night's events.

"Ha. No matter how powerful he is, he's only a martial artist. Do **you** think he'll be able to withstand my troops?" The round-faced man looked contemptuous. "Over the years, the military's captured plenty of martial artists renowned for their prowess. Still, haven't they ultimately yielded to the military's authority?"

"I suppose you're **right**." Jade nodded. The martial world **was** separate from the government, but it wasn't an

organized entity. How could it go up against the authorities?

As they spoke, the burly man continued to whip Dustin. It cracked loudly, but Dustin didn't bat an eye. Instead, the whip shattered from the force. "What the hell?" The burly man was dumbfounded. The steel whip had been specially forged and tested against blades and flames to ensure it was basically unbreakable. Why had it shattered after being used to whip someone? Could Dustin possibly be forged from some precious metal?

The burly man scrutinized Dustin, but it only added to his confusion. He'd already whipped Dustin **at** least a dozen times; any ordinary human would already be mutilated, but Dustin looked perfectly fine. His clothes were in tatters, but t

here wasn't the slightest sign of an injury. It was as if he hadn't even been whipped.

"What the f*ck?" The burly man broke into a cold sweat. He'd done this for years, but this **was** his first time being in **this** situation.

"What's going on? Why has the whipping stopped?" The round-faced man finally stopped chit-chatting and

noticed something was wrong.

"S-sir the whip broke." The burly man gulped.

"Get another one, then! Don't stop until you're done with the 50 whips!" the round-faced man berated.

"Yes, sir!" The burly man didn't dare delay. He had someone bring him another steel whip before whipping Dustin again as if his life depended on it. After a while, the second whip shattered, just like the first had.

"What in the "The burly man couldn't believe his eyes. Shattering one whip could be described as a coincidence; shattering two **was** an ominous sign. He was starting to think there was something about Dustin that made him impossible to whip.

"Why have you stopped again? Go on!" the round-faced man urged impatiently.

"Sir, the whip broke again." The burly man looked like he was in a dilemma.

"**What?** How f*cking useless can you be? I'll do it myself!" the round-faced **man** spat. He ordered a soldier to bring him another steel whip before **s** **torming** over to Dustin. He started whipping him without the slightest hesitation, but he'd only swung the whip a few times when it shattered.

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At this moment, Dustin, who'd been lying there with his eyes shut, opened his eyes and asked, "Are **you** done?"

If you are, can I get something to eat? I'm feeling **a** little hungry."

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“What?” The round-faced man stared at Dustin, who was cool **as a** cucumber, in shock. He knew very well how

much the steel whip could withstand and how much pain it could cause. Not even the strongest of men could

take more than ten whips in one go, yet Dustin looked perfectly fine after enduring more than that. In fact, he’d

made three whips shatter. What the hell was going on? “Brat, what sort of sorcery do you have going on?” **he**

snarled.

“Look, cut the crap and do what you need to.” Dustin yawned. His nonchalant expression made the round-faced man’s

blood boil.

“Fucking hell. I’d like to see you survive this!” The round-faced man swiped his subordinate’s sword and

swung it at Dustin. There were two loud clangs as the blade came into contact with Dustin’s body twice; he

was fine, but the blade became chipped.

“Is that is that an Adamantine Shield?” Jade’s eyes widened. As a member of the martial world, she

immediately realized what **was** up. The fact that Dustin could make himself impermeable to weapons proved

that he’d learned the art of defense. However, it would take a huge toll on one’s internal energy. Most martial

artists wouldn't be able to keep it up for long. "Regular weapons won't do anything to him. We have to bring in

a pro." Jade said.

"Hmph! I'll admit this brat isn't your run-of-the-mill martial artist; it's no wonder you guys had problems dealing with him. It's too bad he's up against me, though!" The round-faced man narrowed his eyes.

"Do you have any way of dealing with him?" Jade asked tentatively.

"We soldiers are only good at taking down enemy forces; torture devices aren't our forte. It doesn't matter,

though. I know someone in the Ministry of Penalties that's an expert in this. Once he's here, this brat will beg

for death!" The round-faced man bared his teeth in a savage grin.

"Oh? And who is this expert?" Jade's eyes lit up.

"One of the Ministry of Penalties' two most powerful executioners, Bloodbeast!"

"Wait, you know him?" Jade gasped. She wasn't a member of the authorities but had still heard of Bloodbeast.

Rumor had it that he murdered people without blinking an eye **and** loved drinking human blood. Throughout

his career with the Ministry of Penalties, hundreds, if not thousands, of people had died at his hands. Each and

every one of them had died horrible deaths after being subject to inhumane torture: anyone who found

themselves in his hands truly wished for death. That was why most criminals chose to take their lives before

landing in Bloodbeast's hands—at least their deaths would be swift **and** painless.

“Torturing others is Bloodbeast’s favorite pastime, and he’s taken a particular liking for tormenting powerful martial artists because of how hard they are to kill. Someone like this brat is right up his alley!” The round-

faced man’s eyes **gleamed** menacingly.

“This brat won’t stand a chance **against** Bloodbeast, no matter how impermeable he is! Provided you can **get** Bloodbeast to agree to this, of course.” Jade sneered. She **wasn’t asking** for much—all she wanted **was** for

Dustin to be subject to the most inhumane torture possible.

“I’ll contact him right now.” The round-faced man pulled out his phone and started punching in a number.

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“Enjoy your final moments of peace, Rhys! Once Bloodbeast is here, you’ll be done for!” Jade looked at Dustin contemptuously. He’d talked about karma biting one in the ass, hadn’t he? She wanted him to have a taste of his own medicine!

Dustin couldn’t even be bothered to spare a glance. He shut his eyes, taking the chance to rest them.

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“Jade, it’s far too hot, standing in the sun. Let’s go sit in the shade. The round-faced man led Jade over to the

table after hanging up.

After a moment. Dustin suddenly said. “Hey, I’m hungry. Is there anything to eat?”

“Hungry, are you? Someone get him some refreshments!” The round-faced man smirked. Soon, a soldier

placed some food and drinks by Dustin’s feet.

“How am I supposed to eat when I’m bound like this? Can you loosen them?” Dustin asked coolly.

The round-faced man burst into derisive laughter. “Giving you some sustenance is the extent of my generosity; it’s not my problem if you can’t reach it. Since you’re so powerful, why don’t you try breaking free of the chains?”

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“Are those chains enough to keep him bound? He’s a lot more powerful than he seems. What if he really breaks free?” Jade asked.

“Don’t worry. Our chains are all forged from darksteel and are designed to withstand any force. Not even an

elephant would be able to break free, let alone a human. Now that he’s bound, he won’t be able to get away

from them without the key!” the round-faced man said confidently. He’d seen his fair share of powerful martial artists; none of them had successfully broken free from the darksteel chains.

“Well, that’s good to know.” Jade sighed in relief. However, the words were barely out of her mouth when she heard the sound of the chains breaking. She whipped around to look at Dustin—he’d only stretched, but the chains already lay at his feet in pieces.

“What the f*ck?” The round-faced man was so shocked that he dropped his pastry. Jade also looked dumbfounded. What happened to the chains being made of darksteel and able to withstand any force? How

could Dustin **have** snapped them so easily? The round-faced man quickly returned to his senses and

commanded, “Hurry up and circle him!”

At his command, the armed soldiers dashed over and surrounded Dustin. He looked unruffled, though. “Relax, I

just want to eat.” He plopped onto the floor and started eating the food placed there.

The round-faced man gaped at him. What the hell was this brat capable of? How could he be so relaxed when

so many guns were aimed at him?

When Dustin was done eating, he was chained and bound again. This time, however, double the number of chains were used—he resembled a taco by the time they were done with him. Even so, the round-faced man didn’t let his guard down. He had his men keep an eye on Dustin at all times. If Dustin were to make any false moves, he would immediately be shot.

After a long time, a military-use Jeep entered the military base and stopped at the drill ground. A skinny, middle-aged man got out leisurely. Despite his thin stature, his **aura** gave one the chills, and his eyes made

one’s hair stand on end.

Jade’s mind went blank when she met his eyes. She felt like she’d caught the eye of a savage beast who would pounce on her at any moment. A trace of fear bubbled up from the depths of her heart.

“Mr. Bloodbeast!” The round-faced man hurried forward with a bright smile when he saw him. “Forgive me for not giving you a proper welcome. It’s a pleasure to see you here.”

“Let’s cut to the chase, General Jenkins. I’ve been bored lately, and it’s time to spice things up. Where’s the tough cookie you mentioned?” Bloodbeast didn’t beat around the bush.

“Right here! He’s the one bound to the pillar.” The round-faced man pointed at Dustin.

Bloodbeast's gaze traveled in the direction he pointed. He squinted at Dustin and said, "Odd. He seems rather familiar."

"Oh? Small world, isn't it? The fact that he's familiar to you means you two were destined to meet. I only hope you'll show him a good time, Mr. **Bloodbeast.**" The round-faced man smiled menacingly.

1/2

Bloodbeast chuckled. "Why, of course. It's my pleasure, and I'll only be doing what I love. I hope he doesn't disappoint." He pulled out a canvas bag and poured its contents out.

There were various delicate-looking instruments of torture. They were shaped oddly; most people would live out their lives without laying eyes on them. Only members of the Ministry of Penalties would know what these instruments meant—the more delicate they were, the more horrific the results they produced.

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Chapter 279

"Huh?"

General Jenkins and Jade were stunned as they watched Bloodbeast suddenly drop to his knees. They looked

at each other, taken aback.

What was he doing?

He was perfectly fine just a moment ago, so why was he kneeling on the floor now?

Was he saying a prayer before he tortured him?

Compared to the others' surprised expressions, the skinny man appeared terrified, his face drenched in cold

sweat.

As a student of the Executioner, he couldn't possibly be oblivious to the true meaning of the kirin tattoo.

In the entire world, the black kirin tattoo was one of a kind. Not to mention, it had already become a symbol of power!

No wonder that person looked familiar. No wonder he dared to call the Executioner by his real name.

It turned out that this person was the Kirin of the Rhys family, who almost incited chaos that could have devastated an entire nation ten years ago!

Shit! What kind of sins had he committed?

He'd actually run into a harbinger of doom of this magnitude!

No! While the shitstorm hadn't hit, he had to escape as soon as possible!

"Mr. Bloodbeast, what's the matter? Are you hurt somewhere?"

Watching the skinny man's knees buckle, General Jenkins immediately rushed over and tried to help him up.

"Fuck, it's all your fault!" Bloodbeast flew into a rage. He raised his hand and delivered a harsh slap across

General Jenkins' face.

General Jenkins staggered backward, nearly losing his balance. "Mr. Bloodbeast, why. Why did you hit me?" He cupped his stinging face, unable to **process** what had just happened.

"Why did I hit you? You should be grateful I didn't slaughter you! What did I ever do to you? If you're so f*cking suicidal, you don't have to drag me down with you!" The skinny man kicked General Jenkins to the ground. Then, he grabbed his bag and fled.

He even dropped his torture **tools** but didn't dare turn around to pick them up, acting as if he'd run into a ghost.

“Huh?” General Jenkins was once again dazed. Just what had scared Bloodbeast—the infamous ruthless killer—into fleeing for his life?

“How did things turn out this **way**?” Jade’s eyes widened in disbelief. She had initially thought that Bloodbeast could help her get her revenge. In the **end**, even before he’d used his torture **tools**, he’d run **away** for some reason.

Chapter 279

What was going on?

“Punk, what the hell did you do? How did you manage to make Bloodbeast **spare** you?!” General Jenkins’ gaze shifted to Dustin, glaring fiercely.

He’d been a distance **away** earlier, so he couldn’t hear their conversation.

“You have me tied up: what could I have possibly done?” Dustin asked.

Since Bloodbeast was Albert’s student, it was **no** surprise that he had recognized the kirin tattoo on his back.

“Hmph, **that** had better be the case!” General Jenkins glowered. Then, he turned to Jade and whispered, “Jade, this bastard seems to know the dark arts. Are you sure he’s a nobody?”

The way Bloodbeast had left was too strange; he couldn’t help but feel suspicious.

I’ve already looked into him. He’s just a small fry who **was** once someone’s live-in son-in-law. Now, **he’s** nothing but a parasite, leeching off the Harmon family. We don’t need to be afraid of him,” Jade said with certainty.

With the Grant family’s influence, **looking** into Dustin had been a piece of cake. Hence, she was very sure that Dustin didn’t come from a powerful background.

“Well that’s rather strange,” General Jenkins said, looking thoughtful.

“Don’t tell me you’re scared?” Jade frowned. “Considering your status, don’t tell me you can’t take care of that pipsqueak?”

“Don’t be ridiculous. As if I’m scared of him!”

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Chapter 280

General Jenkins puffed out his chest and declared arrogantly, “I am none other than the Deputy General of the White Tiger Army, under the command of Chief General Spanner. No matter who that bastard may be, I can

take him down easily. Just wait and see!”

As soon as he finished speaking, his phone ringtone began blasting.

The first phone call came in. “Hello, General Jenkins. This is Hunter Anderson speaking. You’ve captured someone you shouldn’t have. You should let him go immediately. Maybe you can still save yourself.”

“Who the f*ck do you think you are? How dare you order me around? Fuck off!” General Jenkins replied.

promptly ending the call.

“Seems like someone called to beg for Dustin’s life.” Jade said sarcastically. She’d long predicted something like it would happen.

“Hmph, they think they can get him out of my hands? It’s not going to be that easy!” General Jenkins pursed his lips. With the backing of the Grant family, only a handful of people in the entire Southern province could

scare him.

At that moment, the second phone call came in. “General Jenkins, I’m calling on behalf of the Harmon family. One of my associates was captured by your subordinate. I believe there must have been some kind of misunderstanding. I kindly request that you release him, General.”

“That’s not going to happen! Dustin’s crimes are unforgivable. I’ve already turned him over to the Ministry of

Penalties. No matter who comes to beg for his life, it’s useless!”

However, things didn’t end there.

After the second call, the third one soon came, followed by the fourth, then the fifth. They just wouldn’t **stop**.

“Hello. General Jenkins, this is Roderick Brooks —”

“General Jenkins, I’m calling on behalf of the Glenstead Nicholson family

“Jenkins, I have a favor to ask

Calls started pouring in one after another. Not only were they increasing in numbers, but they were also

becoming more pressing.

At first, General Jenkins had been greatly irritated, but by the end, even military officers of the same rank **as** him were calling him **to plead** for mercy. Although he wasn’t scared, it was still rather troublesome.

Eventually, he turned his phone off. He couldn’t be bothered any longer.

“Punk, I didn’t think **you** had such a **network**. I underestimated you.” He slowly raised his head to reveal a cold

smile. “Unfortunately, your efforts are in **vain**— I can hold them **off** all **on** my own!”

“Oh, really? Then I’m looking forward to seeing you do that.” **Dustin** smiled lightly.

“Hmph. And I **want** to see what kind of tricks **you** have up your sleeve!” General Jenkins said disdainfully.

Just as he spoke, an officer suddenly hurried over. “General, the Murray family is here!”

“The Murray family? Who is it?” General Jenkins raised an eyebrow in surprise.

“He introduced himself as Adjutant General Damon. He said he wishes to speak with you,” the officer replied.

“Adjutant General Damon? What’s he doing here?” General Jenkins’ face grew solemn. He clearly looked a little apprehensive.

Others might not know it, but he knew for a fact that Adjutant General Damon served as Christopher’s personal guard.

And who was Christopher?

He was the second-in-command general of the current generation!

He **was** the backbone of the Murray family!

Even though Christopher had been discharged, he still held a great influence within the army.

He wasn’t exaggerating when he said he would even treat Christopher’s dog with the utmost respect..

After a few seconds of silence, General Jenkins decided to go outside and welcome Adjutant General Damon. Come, let’s go take a look.”

When he—along with his men—went to the entrance of the base, he saw a casually-dressed middle-aged man in glasses standing there quietly. The elegant man looked like any average guy, but hidden behind his glasses were eyes as sharp as an eagle’s.

“Why, if it isn’t Adjutant General Damon? What brings you here? General Jenkins said, stepping forward with a grin. He was just about to offer some small talk when Adjutant General Damon raised his hand and slapped him to the floor.

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The moment Adjutant General Damon saw General Jenkins, without uttering a **single** word, he delivered him a resounding slap.

General Jenkins was left dazed, taking quite some time to recover from the impact. He'd welcomed Adjutant General Damon with a smile, but the man f*cking responded with a slap instead.

That was crossing the line!

"Adjutant General Damon, what is the meaning of this?!" General Jenkins' face darkened, his gaze turning hostile. Even if he was Christopher's adjutant general, it didn't mean he **had** a free pass to humiliate him. After all, Chief General Spanner **was** backing him.

In terms of rank, he held an even higher position than Christopher!

"General Jenkins, that slap **was** a lesson for you," Adjutant General Damon said with a cool expression. "You should not have captured Mr. Rhys. Release him now, or you'll have to bear the consequences!"

"Are you threatening me?" General Jenkins snorted. "Damon, you're nothing but an old general's dog. What right do you have to order me around?!"

"Indeed, I cannot, but the general can. If you don't want trouble, do as I say," Adjutant General Damon said expressionlessly.

"Hmph, don't use the general's name to scare me!" General Jenkins said furiously. "The person I captured has committed a heinous crime, and the evidence is beyond any reasonable doubt. You can't just ask for him to be released!"

If Adjutant General Damon had spoken in a kinder manner, perhaps he might have released Dustin out of

respect for Christopher.

But he'd f*cking come up to him and **slap** him. No one would be alright with that.

*General Jenkins, don't say I didn't warn you. If you choose to remain obstinate, then no one can save you!" Adjutant General Damon warned.

"You **think** I'm scared?" General Jenkins said, glaring at him. "To tell you the truth, I am Chief **General**

Spanner's subordinate. If **you** want to lay a hand on him, you'd have to ask for his permission!"

"It seems like you really won't release him?" Adjutant General Damon frowned

"No! Even if God asked, I wouldn't release him!" General Jenkins bellowed.

"Fine! I hope you won't regret it!" Without another word, he got into his car and left, leaving General Jenkins to choke on the exhaust.

"Damn it, that dog! How dare he act all high and mighty in front of **me**?" General Jenkins spat on the floor, lifting his hand to caress his stinging cheek.

Fuck, he was really unlucky today!

First, Bloodbeast had slapped him, and now Adjutant General Damon. Not to mention, it **was** all under strange

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circumstances.

"What's the matter?" Jade walked over.

"Don't ask. A crazy dog from the Murray family came to ask me to release Dustin," General Jenkins said

annoyedly.

"No way. Could that punk have ties to the Murray family?" Jade frowned.

“Who f*cking cares? The Grant family is also one of the Tremendous Three, just like the Murray family. Why should we be afraid of them?” General Jenkins said, irritated.

“You **have** a point.” Jade nodded.

As the two were speaking, an armed motorcade suddenly appeared on the far end of the road.

The Murray family flags decorated the motorcade. Dozens of military trucks were filled with people, blazing their way over. Soon after, they completely blocked off the entire entrance of the base. As the cars came to a stop, over three hundred armed soldiers hopped off. Their gazes were all fixed on **General Jenkins**.

Tension was palpable in the air, as it war was going to break out at any moment.

“Damon, what do you think you’re doing?!” When General Jenkins saw Adjutant General Damon in the lead, he almost blew his top. “How **dare** you bring so many people to crash my base? Are **you** trying to start a rebellion?”

“I am merely carrying out my general’s order to obtain your hostage. If you won’t give him to me, then I can only grab him from you,” Adjutant General Damon said indifferently.

“The audacity!” General Jenkins yelled, his eyes furious. “I am the subordinate of Chief General Spanner. Is the Murray family declaring war against him?!”

“I’m merely following orders. Anything else doesn’t concern me,” Adjutant General Damon said without beating

around the bush.

“It seems like there’s no more room for negotiation today, is there? Fine! If that’s the case, then let’s see who has bigger numbers!” General Jenkins roared at the top of his lungs.

In the next second, a large wave of soldiers surged out of the base.

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Chapter 282

General Jenkins' men started to face off against the Murray family's army. Instantly, the tension in the air gave way to murderous intent.

"Go in and save him!" Adjutant General Damon immediately ordered.

"No, you won't!" General Jenkins blocked the way with his body. He then pulled out a gun from his waist. Anyone who dares take a step forward will be shot!"

"You can try." Without a trace of fear, Adjutant General Damon stalked ahead.

"You're f*cking testing me!" General Jenkins gritted his teeth, fury filling his eyes.

Just as the two sides were in the midst of battle, several military helicopters suddenly materialized in the sky. Whizzing through the air, they finally stopped, hovering **above** everyone's heads.

that's Chief General

When General Jenkins took a look, a delighted expression crossed his face. "Hahaha Spanner's private helicopter! Damon, you're dead meat. Let's see what you can do with Chief General Spanner himself on the field!" He laughed in excitement.

Chief General Spanner was known for protecting his subordinates. Now that they were being invaded, he definitely wouldn't sit around and do nothing.

He could already imagine Adjutant General Damon getting the beating of his lifetime.

As the crowd parted, the helicopter began to descend slowly before **landing** firmly on the field. Then, the cabin door opened.

A handsome young man with a remarkable aura stepped off hastily with a few female officers in tow.

“Chief General Spanner, you came just at the right time!” The moment General Jenkins spotted the young man, he scampered over to welcome him, trying to suck up to him. He then reported, “These treacherous rascals are trying to cite a prison break at my base. I hope you’ll set things straight, Chief General Spanner! That’s right! He committed a heinous crime of tormenting the **people**! I was just about to torture him, too.” General Jenkins said, nodding profuse/

“Torture him?” Adam’s eye twitched, and a murderous look flashed in his eyes. “Where is he?”

“**He’s** tied up right there!” General Jenkins pointed in the other direction.

Adam shifted his gaze, and his **eyes** immediately widened.

Fuck, it really was him!

When he first heard Dustin Rhys’ name, he still had a glimmer of hope. After all, many people in the world share a name. What if it **was just** a coincidence?

Unfortunately, he still ran into Dustin. Moreover, it was in this fashion..

“Rhys, even Chief General Spanner is here! Let’s see whether you can live to see another day!” Hidden amongst the crowd, Jade couldn’t help but laugh at his misery.

1/2

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At first, when she saw how big the Murray family army was, she **was** a little worried. But now, everything would be fine because Chief General Spanner was here. Who would dare cross him?

“Chief General, this guy is built tough. I tried to torture him earlier but failed. No worries. Since you’re here, I’m **sure** you have a way to deal with people like this.” General Jenkins smiled flatteringly, completely unaware of the severity of the problem.

“Your name is Richard Jenkins, right?” Adam suddenly asked.

“That’s right! I am the deputy general of the White Tiger Army under your command. I didn’t think you’d remember me. Chief General!” General Jenkins’ face lit up with joy when he thought he was being acknowledged.

“Capture him, then strip him of his position and prosecute him.” Adam gestured with his hand, and immediately after, two female officers sprung into action, pressing General Jenkins to the floor.

“Chief General, what did you say?” General Jenkins looked confused. Everything was going so well, so why was he getting fired all of a sudden?

However, Adam didn’t bother to deal with him. He jogged over to Dustin and smiled apologetically, saying, “Buddy, sorry about my subordinate. He caused you so much trouble.”

The moment he said that, everyone fell silent.

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“B—buddy?!” Seeing Adam’s friendly expression, General Jenkins was stunned. His mind went blank.

The man in front of him was none other than the renowned God of War!

He was also the youngest chief general of Dragonmarsh!

He reported to no one, while thousands reported to him!

However, this all-powerful figure had actually called Dustin his buddy?

What the f*ck was going **on**?

“No, that’s impossible! How could that bastard know Chief General Spanner?!” Jade was thunderstruck. Her eyes were as wide **as** saucers, and her face was filled with disbelief. According to her investigation, Dustin was just an **irrelevant** small fry. How could he have a relationship with the famous God of War?

“Now that you mention it, we indeed haven’t seen each other in a long time.” Dustin regarded him up and down, then said happily, “I must say, you’re doing quite well for yourself, you rascal. I think I may need to start

relying on you for money soon.”

“Don’t joke like that!” Adam said with a strange expression. “My small place cannot house someone as great

as you.”

“Since we meet again today, then allow me to treat you to a cup of tea,” Dustin said with a small smile.

“Someone, come and free him!” Adam made another hand gesture.

“No need. I’ll do it myself.” Dustin stretched his back, and the sound of metal clinking against each other could

be heard. The thick chains on his body suddenly broke into pieces.

Everyone’s jaws dropped at the sight.

Those chains had been forged from darksteel and were said to be unbreakable, but he’d just broken them by f*cking stretching his back?

It was bewildering.

“Oh, right. How are you planning to take care of those two?” Dustin turned to look at General Jenkins and Jade.

“Of course, we’ll follow the procedure. For kidnapping and torture, no matter how you look at it, that’s got to be

at least a few decades, **no?**” Adam said indifferently.

“A few decades? When the two heard that, their faces paled from shock.

A lifetime only consisted of a few decades. Were they going to die in prison?

“No! You can’t lock us up!” Jade shook her head furiously. “The one **who’s** guilty is clearly Dustin. What right

do you have to lock us up?”

“What right do I have?” Adam smiled faintly. “Well, I have more power **than** you, Does this reason satisfy you?”

“Y—you’re blatantly **abusing your** power!” Jade **said** defiantly.

1/2

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“You’re right, I am,” Adam said bluntly. He was exactly like how General Jenkins described earlier.

“Y—you can try to lock me up! I am a member of the Grant family!” Jade said, refusing to give up.

“The Grant family?” Adam burst out laughing **as** he **tossed** her a phone. “I’ll give you a chance to ask the Grant family for help. I want to see who would dare come rescue you!”

When he said that, Jade was thunderstruck. She knew better than anyone that the Grant family wouldn’t cross

the God of War, Adam, for her.

“Why? Why did things turn out this way? Just who are you?” She stared straight at Dustin. Her eyes were filled with surprise, defiance, hatred, but mostly despair.

*“Since you’re going to die anyway, I’ll enlighten you,” Adam replied nonchalantly. “The young man you just kidnapped is Logan Rhys, the eldest son of the Rhys family and one of my closest friends!”

“Logan Rhys?!” When General Jenkins heard the name, he collapsed to the floor, overcome with despair.

Now, he finally understood. He finally understood why Bloodbeast had **fled** in fright, why all those influential figures called him to ask for his release, why General Murry had sent **his** army, and why Adam was so nervous.

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Chapter 284

The person he had arrested turned out to be the eldest son of the Rhys family, an existence that could shake

the military effortlessly.

“We we’re doomed

Blood had drained out of Jade’s face the moment she heard Dustin’s real name, feeling unbelievably sorry for herself. She shouldn’t have tried to avenge Joshua. There was no way a loser with broken arms **and** a shattered core was worth the lives of her entire family.

“Jade Grant, this is what you f*cking call a nobody?” General Jenkins spun around and shot Jade a vicious glare. “I never did anything to you, so why the hell are you dragging me into this mess?”

“1-“Jade

“-” Jade was about to burst into tears.

“How dare you trick me! You’re dead meat!” General Jenkins roared before leaping toward Jade with his mouth

wide open. Things became chaotic **as** he tore up the woman’s face with his teeth.

“Come on. Let’s go have a drink. Dustin Ignored them and left with Adam.

Meanwhile, inside the East Swinton Hospital **ward**, Dakota’s face hardened after finishing a call.

“So? Was there news about Dustin? Can he be saved?” Dahlia quickly asked.

“He can’t. The person who arrested him was General Jenkins from the Grant family. I tried calling the elders,

but they said he wasn't listening to their requests. Glenstead's military has no jurisdiction over Balerno."

Dakota shook her **head** helplessly.

"The Grant family?" Dahlia frowned. "But why? How did Dustin piss them off?"

"I dug around and heard that he committed a grave crime. Apparently, he barged into the Hummer family's home and began killing people. He even crippled Edwin Hummer's son, Joshua Hummer! Worse, Joshua's fiancée is Jade Grant, the daughter of Sir Robert Grant. There's no way the Grant family would let Dustin go

easily. He's doomed." Dakota shook her head sadly.

She didn't care if Dustin died, but she still **needed** him to heal her mother, and her mother would be in **grave** danger if Dustin died now. Dakota wondered if she still had enough time to seek out miracle doctors.

"Isn't there another way?" Dahlia was upset. "What if I beg the Grant family? I'll pay any amount, even if I go

bankrupt!"

"Nonsense, Dahlia!" Florence shrieked. "Why should you go so far for a man you divorced?"

"He's helped me too many times. I have to **save** him!" Dahlia **answered** firmly

.

"You"

"It's useless." Dakota shook her head. "The Grant family is one the strongest families in Balerno. They could

care less about your measly assets,"

1/2

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"Then what should we do? We can't just sit here and wait." Dahlia's brows furrowed deeper.

“Money is useless. We need to beg someone influential to negotiate with them.” Dakota suggested.

“Someone influential? Who?” Dahlia asked tentatively.

“The only one who can stand against the Grant family is Mr. Langford from St. Onia.” Dakota suggested. “Saving Dustin should be a piece of cake if you ask Mr. Langford for help.”

“Mr. Langford?” Dahlia was troubled. There was no reason for him to help a stranger like her.

“That’s right. Dahlia. The best way is to beg Mr. Langford for help. I managed to save his number during dinner last night. I’ll call him right now!” Florence drew out her phone eagerly and **dialed** a number.

While she was worried that her daughter might sacrifice all her wealth for Dustin, she also hoped to push Dahlia closer to Luis. During their meeting last night, Florence realized that Luis had feelings for Dahlia. At the same time, the Gleinstead Nicholsons were also hoping for the two to get married.

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Chapter 285

“Hello, is this Mr. Langford? Dahlia has something to say to you.” Florence shoved the phone to Dahlia as soon **as** the call got through.

“Dahlia? Let me know if you need any help. I’ll definitely get it done if I can,” a voice drawled.

“It’s me, Mr. Langford.” Dahlia responded stiffly. “I’ll get to the point. I have a friend who’s in trouble and **has** been arrested by the military. I hope you can help me save him.”

“Arrested by the military? Your friend must be into hot water,” Luis guessed arrogantly.

“I wouldn’t have turned to you if I had another choice.” Dahlia responded tiredly.

“What’s your friend’s name?”

“Dustin Rhys.”

“Alright. I’ll help you on one condition,”

“What is it?”

“Treat me to dinner tonight.” Luis responded frankly.

“Um — Dahlia stiffened, instantly understanding what he meant.

“You won’t refuse such a small request, would you?” Luis teased half-jokingly.

“Of course not.” Dahlia forced a smile. “It’s nothing compared to what you’re willing to help me with.”

“Great! It’s a date. See you later!”

Dahlia hung up after chatting for a while more.

“Well? Did he agree?” Florence inquired.

“He did, but I’ll have to have dinner with him tonight.” Dahlia **was** exasperated.

“That’s great! Hurry home and make yourself look good. Don’t **make** Mr. Langford wait.” Florence ushered

excitedly.

“Dahlia, **you** should make good use of this opportunity,” Dakota advised with a knowing look. “Glenstead is keen to see you and the Langfords take your relationship further through marriage. The Langfords initially had someone else in mind, but Mr. Langford wasn’t pleased with her. Instead, he chose you. This is your greatest

blessing. You better not waste this chance!”

Dahlia shook her head. “I’m not interested in marrying **into** a rich family.”

“Who else would you marry? A loser like Dustin? What’s wrong with **you**?” Dakota rolled her eyes. “You can have anything you want if you marry into the Langford family. Why would you choose to suffer in a tiny place like **this**?”

“Precisely! You’ve basically hit the jackpot. **You** should make good use of this chance. Our family **is depending**

on you to become rich!” Florence piped.

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Compared to Luis, men like Chris Nolan and Matt Laney were nothing. After all, the Langfords were the true aristocrats in Stonia. Their very existence stood at the peak of power.

Dahlia glanced at the eager eyes surrounding her and remained silent. She used to yearn for power as well but had finally **realized** it didn’t matter much to her.

Soon, night fell. A jeep slowly pulled into the entrance of Fairyharbor Restaurant. The doors opened, and Dustin and Adam emerged.

“Weren’t we going to have a drink? What are we doing here?” Adam muttered.

“The wine here isn’t too shabby. The wines are brewed in-house. You should try some.” Dustin replied.

“Really? I’ll have a taste, then.”

As the two men chatted, they walked into the restaurant and chose a place on the second floor. “Hey, buddy. Is it true that you got married?” Adam **quizzed** Dustin as soon as they sat down.

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“I was, but I’m already divorced,” Dustin answered straightforwardly.

“Aw, damn!” Adam grinned. “If that’s the case, my sister finally has a chance! I’ll be your brother-in-law soon.”

“Get lost!” Dustin rolled his eyes. “What kind of brother are you? Why would you throw your sister under the bus?”

“She threw herself in!” Adam retorted in exasperation. “You have no idea how much she bugged me after finding out that you were still alive. She would have flown back for you if the war hadn’t broken out at the border.”

“Has Scarlet been well?” Dustin suddenly asked.

“You’re still worried about her? That kid’s been practicing martial arts since young, and with her talent, she’s already a grandmaster. I can’t even win against her anymore. Who would dare to cross her?” Adam responded

nervously.

All his life, Adam has only ever been afraid of two people—Dustin, the person who’s been throwing punches **at** him since they were kids, and his sister Scarlet. He **always** lost his dignity when it came to them.

Dustin chuckled. “She is talented, so it’s natural that you can’t beat her.”

It’s been ten years. He never expected the little girl who used to follow him around everywhere to become

Stonia’s well-known Goddess of War.

“Won’t you just marry her? No one else can handle her!” Adam implored. The sooner his sister got married, the

sooner he’ll be free from being forced to be her sparring partner and ending up with bruises all over his body

every day.

“Nonsense!” Dustin kicked the other man. “Scarlet’s nothing more than a sister to me.”

“But she might not see you as her brother.” Adam shrugged. “I’m just going to put it out there. She probably won’t marry anyone but you, so you’ll have to take responsibility for her.”

“That’s enough. Shut up and drink!” Irritated, Dustin poured Adam a full glass of wine. “Drink it!”

Adam boldly downed the entire glass in response.

Chatting **away** while drinking, the two of them quickly began to feel tipsy.

“That reminds me, when are you going back?” Adam asked coldly.

“Why would I go back? Isn’t it quite nice here? All I need to worry about is making sure Gregory recovers nicely.

“Dustin responded indifferently.

“That’s true. Still, the Rhys family needs an heir.” Adam **sighed**.

“There’s still Austin.”

“That useless idiot? He only cares about his debauchorous pleasures. Who knows how many people will die if he takes your place.” Adam snapped disdainfully.

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“He isn’t that bad. The kid’s smart. Just give him some time, and he might outshine you.” Dustin said seriously.

“Are you serious? You’re pitting me against him?” Adam looked at him suspiciously.

“Many people have called me a loser in the past few years too.” Dustin smiled but didn’t elaborate further. With that woman around, his step-brother could never be mediocre.

“Holy shit! Look at that chick!” Adam lit up suddenly.

“Where?” Dustin followed Adam’s line of sight and spotted a Lamborghini at the restaurant entrance. A smartly dressed man emerged, and a gorgeous lady stepped out of the passenger side in a long black dress, as if she had just come out of a painting.

“Why is it her?” Dustin frowned, instantly sobering.

The beautiful woman was none other than Dahlia!

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Dustin never expected to run into Dahlia there. Worse, she was accompanied by another man, and it seemed like those two were on a date.

It irked **him** for some reason. He had just been captured by the military, his life in danger, but here Dahlia was, carefree and relaxed, as she went on a date with another man. It was clear that Dahlia didn’t give a damn about him, and it made him feel like a fool.

“Do you know that **lady**?” Adam quickly caught onto the change in mood and asked.

“Yeah. She’s my ex-wife.” Dustin answered bluntly.

“Your ex-wife?” Adam’s lips twitched. “Why don’t we go somewhere else?”

No one would be happy to see their ex-wife happily chatting away with another man,

“Forget it. I didn’t do anything wrong, so why should I be afraid?” Dustin lifted his glass to his lips and swallowed a mouthful of wine resentfully.

Just then, Dahlia and Luis arrived on the second floor, and the woman immediately spotted the two men. Dustin? What are you doing here?” she exclaimed excitedly.

“Why can’t I be here?” Dustin asked coldly.

“When did you get free? Why didn’t you tell me? Dahlia dashed toward him and asked joyfully.

“Does it matter if I tell you?” Dustin glanced at her stoically, stunning Dahlia with his attitude.

“What’s wrong? Did you get hurt? Should **we** go to the hospital?”

“I’m fine, Ms. Nicholson. Thank you for asking. You should focus on your date with your boyfriend instead of me,” Dustin answered.

“Boyfriend?” Dahlia looked at the man standing next to her and quickly explained. “You’re getting it wrong. Dustin. We’re just friends.”

“It’s unnecessary for you to explain yourself.” Dustin’s attitude was harsh.

Just friends? Did she think that he was a kid? Since when did normal friends of opposite genders arrive together in the same car for dinner?

“I’m telling you, you’re misunderstanding things, Dustin.” Dahlia gestured to the other man. “Let me introduce you to Mr. Luis Langford. He’s from Stonia, and he has a good relationship with the military. You got out so quickly thanks to him.”

“Is this the friend you were talking about, Dahlia? He’s fortunate to have someone like you helping him.” Luis suddenly spoke. Although the man was wearing a smile, the look he **was** giving Dustin **was** full of contempt.

“I don’t know who Mr. Langford is, nor do I care. He **has** nothing to do with me getting free anyway.” Dustin responded bluntly.

“Ha, aren’t you being too cocky?” Luis sniggered, “Do you really think you’d be here right now if I hadn’t made a

Chapter

call to the Balerno Military?”

“I have no idea **what** you did, but don’t think too highly of yourself. I don’t need your help.” **Dustin** retorted coolly.

“Dustin! How could you talk to him like this? Shouldn’t you be polite to the person who helped you?” Dahlia frowned. She knew that Dustin reacted that way because he **was** jealous, but he still shouldn’t offend Luis, who held a much higher status than him.

“When did I ever ask him for help? You guys did this willingly.” Dustin couldn’t care less.

“You-” Dahlia stomped her foot angrily and forced herself to take a deep breath to calm herself. “Stop making a fuss, Dustin.”

“What did I do? Was I interrupting your date? If that’s the case, I’ll **leave** you two alone right now.” Dustin got up to leave right away.

“Wait!” Dahlia instantly grabbed his arm. “What on earth is going through your **mind**? I told you that we’re just friends. Why won’t you believe me?”

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“Just friends, eh? Then you won’t mind going home with me right this instant!” Dustin snapped.

“But ...Dahlia frowned and glanced at Dustin and Luis, troubled. Although she didn’t have any feelings for Luis, the man **had** helped her, so it wouldn’t be right to turn her back on him now.

“What’s wrong? You don’t want to?” Dustin sneered. “Is this what you call an ordinary friend? How am I supposed to believe you?”

Dustin couldn't believe that Dahlia was still hesitating. It seemed that he was even less important than her ordinary friends, and here he thought that their relationship had been improving. It must have been his imagination.

"Forget it, Ms. Nicholson. You don't have to think about it so hard. We're nothing to each other now. Enjoy your meal.
I'll be taking my leave. Dustin shook his head and turned around.

"**Wait** for me." Grabbing two bottles, Adam hurried after Dustin. He didn't have any experience when it came to **love, so** he couldn't help Dustin.

After stepping out of the restaurant, Dustin remained motionless **as** he faced the cold wind, feeling frustrated. He was at a loss for how to deal with his emotions. He may have said it was fine, but his heart still **stung**

when he saw Dahlia with another man,

"Forget about her, buddy. There are lots of women everywhere else." Adam stepped forward and patted Dustin's shoulder. "With your skills, it won't be hard for you to get any woman you want. Why don't you consider my sister?"

"Hell **no!**" A feminine voice rang out from behind them.

The two men spun around to see a stunning woman heading toward them.

It was none other than Dahlia.

"Why did you come out?" Dustin was **surprised**. He didn't expect her to chase after him, assuming she would ignore him.

"You're such a petty man!" Dahlia huffed. "How could you run out when we've barely spoken!"

"Weren't you having dinner with your friend? What are you doing here?" Dustin pretended to be calm but was actually relieved.

"I'm here to enjoy the breeze, alright?" Dahlia rolled her eyes, secretly pleased to see Dustin jealous.

"Ugh, the stench **of love.**" Adam shook his **head**.

“**Shut** up!” Dahlia and Dustin shouted in unison.

“Aren’t you **worried** if you just **leave that man** alone?” Dustin asked.

“What else can I do? I’ll just have to get him a present as an apology.” Dahlia shrugged. She seemed to **have** finally opened her eyes.

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“You **haven’t** eaten, have you? Why don’t you join us?” Dustin offered.

Dahlia humphed. “At least you’re considerate.” She patted her belly, realizing she was hungry.

“Let’s go. **We’ll** bring you somewhere nice.” Dustin walked over to the car to open the door.

Just as she was about to get into the car, Dahlia’s eyes widened when she saw a truck loaded with dirt heading straight for them at top speed.

“Watch out!” She frantically shoved Dustin **away**.

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“Watch out!”

As the truck headed toward them, Dahlia’s immediate reaction was to push Dustin away, completely

disregarding her safety. Realizing that she had nowhere else to escape to, she instinctively shut her eyes

tightly. Right then, she came to a realization that it might not necessarily be a bad thing to die like this. At

least he would remember for the rest of **his** life.

As her eyes closed, a strong figure dashed forward and put itself in front of her. With an ear-splitting boom, a fist landed on the front of the truck, and metal bent under the force. The sudden opposing force upturned the entire truck, flipping it around, and the truck landed on the ground behind Dahlia with a crash, debris flying in **all** directions.

“Are you okay, Dahlia?” Dustin drew his hand back and quickly surveyed the woman for any injuries before letting out a breath of relief.

“What in the world happened?” Dahlia’s eyes were opened wide as she gaped at the empty space in front of her before turning around to look at the overturned truck, shocked. She couldn’t understand how the truck had made its way behind her, but she might faint if **she** found out it was thanks to Dustin’s list.

“Are you an idiot? Don’t you know how to run away when there’s danger? Why the hell would you think of me first?” Dustin snapped furiously. Fortunately, his reflexes were sharp, or she would have died on impact!

“At the spur of the moment, I couldn’t think much.” Dahlia was pale from fear.

“You better remember that your safety comes first from now on!” Dustin warned sternly. He would be plagued by guilt for the rest of his life if she died because of him.

“Bro, can’t you give me some attention **as** well?” Adam staggered to his feet grumpily.

“What the hell? Even if you’re saving someone, why would you throw the truck toward me? Is my life not important to you? What happened to bros before hos?” he thought.

“You’re alive anyway.” Dustin responded nonchalantly before turning **his** attention back to Dahlia. “It’s late. Let me send you home.”

He walked over to the road junction and flagged a cab to send her home. It was obvious that he had been the truck’s target, and he didn’t want to drag her into this mess.

At the entrance to the villa, Dahlia halted and spun **around** to ask, "Would **yo**u like to come in for a cup of tea?"

"It's fine. You should get some rest." Dustin politely refused as if he hadn't understood what she was trying to say.

"You idiot!" Dahlia humped, glaring at him before spinning around and going in to the house.

Dustin waited until the doors closed to **look** away, his eyes now cold and ruthless. "Adam, help me look **into** the truck."

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"On it. Give me three minutes." Adam whipped out his phone and made a call. In **less** than three minutes, the results came in. "Done. It turns out the Hummers put a bounty of up to ten billion dollars on your head. Most of the bounty killers should have their eyes on you by now. That truck was one of their attempts." He

summarized.

"The Hummers." Dustin narrowed his eyes, the air around him turning murderous. He hasn't settled the score

of being captured by the military. How dare they act up again!

"What's the plan? Do you want me to bring my team to their house and destroy their whole family?" Adam asked nonchalantly.

"It's fine. I'll take care of it." Dustin answered coolly. "If they're going out of their way to ensure my death, they

better not be surprised when I do the same!"

He spun around and disappeared into the darkness.

Back at the Hummer **Villa**.

"Josh, it's time for you to take your meds." Tina brought some medicine over to Joshua's bedside.

“I can’t be bothered to take them right now.” Joshua frowned in displeasure. “Jade hasn’t returned since

morning, and I can’t reach her phone. Do you think something happened to her?”

“Stop overthinking. Josh. She’s from the Grant family. What could happen?” Tina shook her head.

“T— then, do you think she’s disgusted that I’m crippled and wants to end it with me?” Joshua asked again.

Ever since his core was destroyed, he lost his pride, turning anxious **and** sensitive instead.

“Of course not!” Tina refuted him straight away. “I can tell that she really likes you. I bet she’s running all over the place for you. Didn’t she promise to avenge you before she left this morning? So, stop **worrying**.”

“I must be thinking too much.” Joshua sighed. As the fallen Chosen One, something inside him had changed tremendously.

“Josh, rest well, and don’t overthink this. Dad went to Millsburg to **ask** for medicine from Dr. Watkins. I’m **sure** all your **injuries** will be gone in no time with the panacea.” **Tina** reassured him.

“You’re right. After I recover, I’ll **rise** to the top once more!” Joshua swore through gritted teeth. “I’ll make sure

Rhys suffers like never **before!**”

Just then, the lights went out, **plunging** the room into darkness.

“What’s happening?” Joshua demanded **anxiously**.

“Calm **down**, Josh. The breaker must have tripped. Tina went over to the door and shouted, “Somebody **go** check the breaker.”

Silence was all she got in **response**, the entire villa terrifyingly silent.

“Hey! Are you guys **deal?**” Tina yelled again, but no one responded.

Joshua had a bad feeling **something** was going to happen. “Something’s wrong! Let’s get out of here!”

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He sprung up and prepared to **run** when a tall figure walked into his room with out a sound.

“Who the hell are you?” he shouted.

“The person who’s going to kill you.” The figure slowly lifted its **head**, and from the moonlight shining through

the window, Joshua finally had a clear look at the other person’s face.

“It’s you? W–w–weren’t you arrested? When did you get out?”

Joshua began to back up in terror. Just this morning, he’d received Tina’s message that the military had captured Custin. How did he get free in less than a day?

“Any last words?” Dustin asked coldly.

Tina threatened. “You better not mess around, Rhys! We have Boulderthorn and the Grants’ protection. If you

touch-”

Before she could finish her sentence. Dustin flicked his wrist, and a silver needle embedded itself into her forehead.

Tina twitched before tilting her head back and falling to the ground, dead.

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Chapter 290

“What?” Joshua stared at his sister’s body incredulously. He never thought that Dustin would be so ruthless,

killing without warning.

“Anything else you want to say?” Dustin calmly asked.

“D—
don’t kill me! Please don’t kill me!” Joshua fell to his knees, begging. “I was an idiot to offend you. Please forgive me. I swear I won’t go against you ever again!”

“You **had** your chance, but you didn’t appreciate it.” Dustin’s face **was** void of any sympathy.

“N—no. I do. I promise!
Please! I’m still young. I don’t want to die! Just let me **go**. I’ll do anything you want. I

swear!”

Joshua began ramming his forehead into the floor. He wasn’t able to win against Dustin when he was in peak condition, so why would he have a winning chance now? For Dustin, killing Joshua would be as easy as killing

an ant.

“I’m pretty sure that’s not what you said just now.” Dustin **sneered**. “Didn’t you say that you were going to

make me suffer like never before after you recovered?”

“N—no, I didn’t!” Joshua shook his head frantically. “I would never dare!”

“Where’s Edwin?” Dustin demanded, clearly having lost his patience. He had searched the entire villa, but there

was no sign of Edwin Hummer.

“I—
I don’t know! I heard that my dad went to Millsburg to get me medicine, but I have no idea where he is.”

Joshua cried.

“He’s in Millsburg, eh? Lucky bastard.” Dustin felt regretful that Edwin managed to get away.

“Are **you** looking for my dad? D— don’t worry, I’ll let you know as soon as he’s home! I’ll be your faithful hound from now on.” Joshua smiled weakly, grasping at **straws**.

Dustin sneered. “You’re willing to betray your father? You’re worse than an animal.” He slowly **raised** his hand.

holding a silver needle.

“No! You can’t kill me! My mentor is the master of Boulderthorn, and my fiancé e is the Grants’ third daughter. You’ll become their enemy if you kill me. People will keep coming for your head, and you’ll have to live in lear

for the rest of your life!” Joshua roared, going berserk, his eyes bloodshot.

“You should have thought about that when you kidnapped Natasha. As for the Grants and Boulderthorn, well, I

don’t care about them. So, you’ll definitely die today,” Dustin replied coldly.

With a flick of his finger, the silver needle lodged itself in the space between Joshua’s forehead.

“No!” Joshua wailed with his last breath, the sound resonating in all directions.

Early the next morning. Inside a mansion in Millsburg, Edwin woke up with a start from his nightmare, sweat blanketing his whole body. For some reason, his sleep had been restless, an ominous feeling constantly

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blanketing his whole **body**. For some **reason**, his sleep had been restless, an ominous feeling constantly

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hovering **over** him.

"Sir Hummer!" One of his bodyguards barged into his room, overjoyed. "We finally got our hands on Dr. Watkins

Substratumis. With this. Mr. Hummer will finally recover!"

"Excellent! Show me!" Edwin's face lit up, his worries forgotten.

"Here you go, sir!" The guard brought out a jade box and opened it, revealing a glistening sheer milky white pill that emitted a sweet, relaxing scent.

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“Well done. Well done, indeed!” Edwin laughed boisterously. “This Substratum is may be expensive, but it’s definitely worth the price!”

While he was still chortling away, another bodyguard rushed into the **room** anxiously. “Sir, something bad happened back home!” The guard fell to his knees, weeping.

“What?” Edwin frowned.

“We just received news from Swinton that Hummer Villa turned into a slaughterhouse last night. All of our fighters are dead, and Ms. Hummer and Mr. Hummer were both killed as well. The Hummer family is gone!”

These words struck Edwin like lightning, and the Substratumis in his hand crashed to the floor, shattering instantly.

“Son!” Edwin wailed mournfully, collapsing to the floor.

The devastated man stayed on the floor for what felt like ages. When he finally staggered to his feet, he seemed to have aged ten years, looking extremely haggard.

“Get ready. I want to head to Boulderthorn’s branch right this instant!” Edwin seethed menacingly. He no longer had anything to fear now that his children were dead. He only cared about avenging them, no matter the cost!

After an hour, in Boulderthorn’s branch’s meeting room.

“What? Joshua was killed?” A man in a green shirt shot up and roared. “Who the hell dares to touch someone from Boulderthorn?”

“It was Natasha Harmon and a man called Dustin Rhys!” Edwin growled.

The other man humphed. “How dare a family like them challenge us! They must **have** a death wish! Gather up our men. No matter what, we must avenge Joshua!”

“Yes, sir!”

The Boulderthorn disciples immediately left to carry out the man’s orders. Soon, the entire branch began to make a move.

Boulderthorn had hundreds of thousands of disciples throughout Balerno, and this particular branch has fostered the highest quantity of skilled martial artists. The reason for that was simple: their mentor was the guildmaster of Boulderthorn.

Boulderthorn has four branch leaders, eight guildmasters, and thirty–six second–in–commands. Besides the branch leaders, the guildmasters held the most power in the guild. With just one command, guildmasters could control thousands of disciples. **However**, each guildmaster had strong animosity against the other, so they were extremely protective of their disciples. So, whenever someone was in trouble, everyone would immediately chip in to help. And out of all Boulderthorn disciples, Joshua was the most talented and skilled, earning him the **head** guildmaster’s affection,

His sudden death shocked the entire guild, and if Boulderthorn didn’t avenge him, their reputation would be sullied, particularly for this branch.

Edwin felt some sense of relief when he saw the effort the guild disciples were putting in. Without saying another word, he got back to his car and headed towards the Grants home.

No matter who was responsible for Jade’s disappearance, he **was** sure to place the blame on Dustin, and, knowing the Grants, Dustin wasn’t going to get away with this easily. With Boulderthorn and the Grants working together, even the Harmon family, one of the wealthiest families around, wouldn’t last long, and when the time came, the Harmon family would surely make Natasha take responsibility alone.

As for Dustin, he **was** nothing but a sitting duck for the Boulderthorn disciples.

“My dear son, I will avenge you soon,” Edwin swore solemnly.

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Meanwhile, in Park Place, Swiston.

“What? Joshua Hummer is dead, and his entire family was massacred? They even burned Hummer Villa down to the ground?” Jessica, who had been relaxing a second ago, sobered when she heard her guard’s report.

The Hummer family was well known for being the top family in Swinton. While it couldn’t win against the Harmon family, it was still a force to be reckoned with, especially with Boulderthorn’s support. So who could be powerful enough to destroy that family?

“Do you know who did it?” Jessica pushed.

“The fire burned almost everything. It’ll be difficult to trace the source.” The guard shook his head.

“We’ll be in trouble if we can’t find the culprit!” Jessica frowned, pondering. Under normal circumstances, she’d be over the moon to learn that the Hummer family was gone. However, most people now knew that the Hummer family and her daughter had something against each other, so Natasha would naturally become the prime suspect. What Jessica feared the most was that should Boulderthorn start digging into this matter, things would get much more complicated.

“What’s wrong?” Just then, Natasha walked into the room wearing silk pajamas.

“Joshua Hummer is dead, and the entire Hummer family was destroyed while Edwin Hummer is still missing!” Jessica summarized everything she knew.

“I already knew that. Nothing to be surprised of.” Natasha stretched lazily.

“Huh? When did you find out?” Jessica **asked**, astonished.

“Dustin called me last night,” Natasha responded calmly.

“Last night?” **Jessica** froze before understanding dawned. “Are you saying that he’s the one who did it?”

“Yep.” Natasha nodded.

“Is he crazy? How could he kill Joshua Hummer? Doesn’t he know that Joshua’s mentor is Clement Lincoln? Isn’t he worried that Boulderthorn would retaliate?” Jessica snapped.

“The Hummer family and I are already enemies, so I don’t think Dustin did anything wrong.” Natasha countered.

The truth was she’d already been prepared to fight against them after hearing that the military had arrested Dustin. Still, it was a good thing he returned safely.

“He did nothing wrong?” Jessica frowned. “Natasha, do you have any idea what you’re saying? Even your father has to be careful around Lincoln! Dustin won’t be the only one to die if Lincoln wants revenge. You’ll be dragged down too!”

Boulderthorn was one of the strongest guilds in Balerno. The Harmon family wouldn’t be able to stand up against them, much less the **guildmaster**, who had the power to control over ten **thousand** men.

To put things into perspective, without military aid, no one would be able to stop these martial artists.

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“Boulderthorn may be powerful, but they are not above the law. They won’t be able to do **as** they please. Besides, did you really think that the Hummer family was going to simply let us go if Dustin hadn’t killed Joshua? Since nothing can stop us from being enemies, the next best option would be to **make** the first move!” Natasha explained calmly, having thought about it earlier.

“I don’t care. Dustin is in big trouble this time. If you don’t want to drag our family into this mess, you better cut all ties with him right now!” Jessica warned.

“That’s your plan? Cutting ties with him?” Natasha snorted. “You shouldn’t **for get** that Dustin offended the Hummer family for me. Are you telling me to turn my back on him right now?”

“Why not?” Jessica responded scornfully. “Everyone has their value. Once the y’re no longer of use, they should be discarded. You should always focus on t he bigger picture.”

“How could you say something like that? You haven’t changed, have you? Yo u’re still so disgusting!” Natasha sneered before spinning around to leave.

“You” Jessica fumed.

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Was it wrong for a mother to worry about her daughter’s safety? So why could n’t Natasha understand her?

“Istrid!” Jessica called out.

A voluptuous woman immediately hurried into the room. “Yes, Madam?”

“Send an anonymous letter to Clement Lincoln to let him know everything Dus tin has done.” Jessica

instructed.

“Huh?” Isfrid was stunned. “A—are **you** sure, Madam?”

Dustin had been severely injured just to save Natasha, yet Jessica was telling her to betray him. That was

crossing the line.

“Shut up and do as I say! Natasha will only be safe if we sacrifice Dustin. Hurr y up!” Jessica ordered coldly.

“Yes. Madam.” Istrid could only nod. Although she felt sorry for Dustin, as the Harmon family’s shadow guard, she had no choice but to obey Jessica.

Meanwhile, a red BMW suddenly pulled up **at** the door of Peaceful Medical Center. The car door flung open. and Dakota Nicholson rushed into the building frenziedly.

“I know you’re here, Rhys! Come out!” she yelled.

“Which uneducated brat is it?” Dustin emerged from the kitchen. He looked up and gave her a knowing look. So it’s you. What can I do for you?”

“Cut the crap! My mother’s sick. Follow me to the hospital and help her!” Dakota ordered rudely. She woke up this morning to find that her mother was paralyzed, unable to feel anything below her shoulders, and could

only move her neck.

Although Dakota was shocked, she was forced to admit that everything happened just as Dustin had said it would. Her mother had fainted the first day, coughed up blood on the second, and became paralyzed on the third, just like he said.

So, if her mother couldn’t receive treatment in time, she would die tomorrow.

“What does your mother falling sick have to do with me?” Dustin shrugged, not at all surprised.

“She wouldn’t be sick if you hadn’t slapped her,” Dakota replied arrogantly.

“Wow, to become terminally ill from a slap. Your mother sure is something else.” Dustin chuckled, shaking his

head.

“Stop messing around. I’m giving you a chance to redeem yourself. Come with me to the hospital to save my

mother **right** now!” Dakota ordered.

“Sorry, but I don’t give a damn.” Dustin refused bluntly.

“What?” Dakota frowned. “How dare you refuse! Do you have **any** idea what the consequences will be?”

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“Nope.” Dustin shook his head.

Dakota humped, displeased. “That means you’ll offend the Glenstead Nichols ons. If I can pull you out of jail, I can certainly put you back in.”

“It sounds like I have you to thank for my freedom?” Dustin asked, amused.

“Do you think I would have saved you if Dahlia didn’t keep begging me?” Dakota humped. “You should be grateful. Since I saved you, it’s time for you to repay the **favor**. I’m giving **you** a chance to save my mother!”

“I have no idea where you found the confidence to **say** all that.” Dustin snorted and shook his head. “If that’s the attitude you’re going to carry, I’m afraid I can’t help you. Please leave.”

Dakota was supposed to ask for a favor, yet she acted arrogantly. It was **as** if she expected him to be grateful. that she was telling him to save someone. Who did she think she **was**?

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“You shameless bastard!” Dustin’s repeated refusal angered Dakota, the proud daughter of a wealthy family. Usually, people would be tripping over their feet trying to flatter her, yet here Dustin was, ignoring her.

“Who’s the shameless one?” Dustin raised an eyebrow. “Have you been **eating** so much junk food that you

fried your brain? This is Balerno, not Glenstead, so don’t give me that attitude!”

“You-

” Dakota was so angry she gritted her teeth, but she couldn’t do anything else since she desperately needed him to save her mother. She would have already struck him if her mother’s life wasn’t at stake.

“What do you want, Rhys?” Dakota took a deep breath, trying to keep her anger at bay.

“I won’t make things difficult for you, for Dahlia’s sake, Dustin answered. “I can save her, but first, I want you

to stop that haughty attitude of yours and give me a sincere apology. Next, I want you to write a letter of

apology.”

“Never!” Dakota balked. “How could I, the daughter of the Glenstead Nicholsons, apologize to someone like you? Absolutely not.”

“Then forget about it. I’m not the one suffering anyway.” Dustin responded lazily. “But don’t say I didn’t **warn**

you. Your mother will die tomorrow if she doesn’t receive treatment in time.”

“You-

” Dakota choked, her face dark. Although she didn’t like hearing that, it was still the truth. If her mother didn’t receive help in time, she would be dead by the next morning.

“Please **leave** if you aren’t happy with my conditions.” Dustin waved her away.

“I—I’ll do it!” Dakota eventually gave in. Biting her lip, she stammered. ‘I—I’m sorry. I was wrong.’”

“Are you talking to the air? Speak up!” Dustin ordered.

“I’m sorry! I was wrong!” Dakota shouted, her face red. That was her first time apologizing to someone, and it was utterly humiliating.

“Fine. I’ll forgive you because of Dahlia, but you better remember not to be so arrogant from now on. Not everyone is **as** kind as me,” Dustin reminded her.

Dakota’s face darkened, and her palms ached from how hard she clenched her fists. She forced out a smile and asked, “You’ll save my mom **now**, right?”

“What about the apology letter?” Dustin asked instead.

“I’ll write it!” Dakota gritted her teeth and began writing as soon as she got some pen and paper. Soon, a long letter was completed.

“As expected of an aristocratic family’s lady. Your writing is perfect.” Dustin nodded, pleased. He stored the letter away and pulled out a bottle of pills. “Here. One pill a day, and she’ll be as good as new after a month.”

“Just this? Are you serious?” Dakota accepted the bottle and studied it suspiciously. “Are you **messing** with me, Rhys? My mom can be saved with just a few pills?”

“What else were you expecting? Was I supposed to open her up instead?” Dustin questioned back.

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“Alright. I’ll believe you this once. Your medicine better work, or I’m coming for you!” Giving Dustin a vicious glare, Dakota turned to leave.

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“Hold on.”

“What now?” Dakota halted and spun around, impatient.

“You haven’t paid yet. This medicine is precious. You can just pay me ten million, Dustin casually told her.

“What? A bottle like this costs ten million dollars? You might as well rob a bank!” Dakota fumed.

“This is obviously easier than robbing a **bank**. You can always give it back if you find it too expensive.” Dustin reached out to grab the bottle back.

“You’re shameless!” Dakota gritted her teeth and wrote up a ten-million-dollar check before leaving angrily. She’d made up her mind to make Dustin pay after her mother recovered.

After half an hour, she reached the hospital. As soon as she returned to the ward, she saw a group of doctors gathered there, shaking their heads and sighing. Her mother, Jane, was lying on the hospital bed, unable to move.

“You’re back, Dakota!” Florence rushed forward and asked, “How did it go? Does he have the solution? If

there’s no other method, we’ll have to seek out Dr. Cross.”

“He gave me a bottle of pills and told me Mom would be fine after taking them for a month.” Dakota pulled out the bottle and poured out an ordinary-looking black pill the size of a peanut that emitted a musty odor.

“This thing can heal her?” Florence gaped in dismay. Instead of the panacea she had been expecting, all she saw was a booger.

“That’s what he said.” Dakota nodded her head.

“Ms. Nicholson,” a bald doctor suddenly spoke. “Your mother’s life is in danger. The best choice right now would be to perform a craniotomy surgery, not listen to some voodoo doctor.”

“You can’t even figure out what’s wrong with her, yet you want to perform a craniotomy? How’s that different from murder?” Dakota snapped.

The doctors had previously told her that her mother might be paralyzed **due** to the tumor in her brain. However, the CT scan results came back clean, so how could she blindly believe their assumptions?

“All surgeries come with risks, but at least our professional team is more reliable than the doctor you found!”

the bald doctor promised.

“I have to try **no** matter what!” Dakota’s tone was firm.

“What an idiot.” The bald doctor shook his head and looked at Dakota like she was a moron. “Why would the world need doctors if medicine can cure everything?”

“Exactly! I’ll take a shit while doing a **handstand** if it works!” another doctor voiced.

Ignoring them, Dakota grabbed the pill and put it into her mother’s mouth. The pill melted instantly, and a gush of **energy** spread through Jane’s limbs.

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A few seconds later, Jane began to cough, her face flushed.

“What the hell is this? It tastes atrocious!” Jane sputtered and sat up to gargle using the cup of water beside

her.

“You can move again, Mom?” Dakota froze, then she lit up in excitement.

“Huh?” Jane halted, swallowing the water she had just gargled, before springing up happily. “Oh my! I can

move again!”

“Who said they’d take a shit while doing a handstand? Step forward right now!” Dakota glared at the doctors..

rendering them speechless.

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The doctors looked at each other in shock after seeing how lively Jane was. They couldn't believe that such a small pill had cured what a group of medical professionals had been unable to. It was incredible!

Was that black pill a panacea or something?

Getting over his shock, the bald doctor tentatively asked, "Ms. Nicholson, may I know what pill that is? Could we study it?"

"Yeah, right. Fuck off!" Dakota immediately kicked him, making the man groan in **pain**.

Knowing he had lost, he quickly led the other doctors out of the room in disappointment.

"Who knew a small pill like this could be so powerful?" Florence was in awe. Despite its looks and smell, its effects were evident.

"It may have cost ten million dollars, but it was worth it!" Dakota exclaimed happily.

"What? Ten million?" The other two women instantly sprung up.

"Are you joking. Dakota? A bottle like this costs ten million dollars? Florence asked, wide-eyed.

"Yeah! Were you tricked? How could this ordinary-looking medicine cost so much?" Jane demanded, pained. The richer someone was, the stingier they were.

"Forget it. As long as it could save you, the price isn't that important." Dakota wasn't too angry about it.

"What do you mean forget about it?" Jane fumed. "I still haven't gotten even with that brat for slapping me. How dare he con us out of ten million dollars! I have to get that money back!" She immediately tried to get out of bed, but her agitated state, combined with her weak body, made her knees go weak, and she immediately collapsed back on the bed.

"Mom, we can think about the money later. Your health is way more important," Dakota said worriedly.

"Don't worry, Jane. I'll get the money back for you." Florence volunteered, not letting the opportunity to prove herself escape.

"Alright, then. I'll leave this to you." Jane agreed without hesitation. She couldn't be happier that someone was volunteering to run errands for her.

"Mom, **bad** news!" Just then, Dahlia barged into the room anxiously.

"What's wrong?" Florence **was** puzzled since she rarely saw her daughter so panicked.

"It's James." Dahlia **panted** before continuing.

"I just received news that he got drunk last night and

accidentally **ran** his car into someone, killing that person. He's already been arrested!"

"He killed someone?" Florence **was** stunned. "How is that possible? He **never** drives after drinking. How could this have happened?"

"I don't know the specifics either.

He's being held in police custody. Let's go now." Dahlia urged.

"Right! Let's go!" Florence quickly followed Dahlia out of the room.

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Dahlia was the one who drove, and moments later, they arrived at the investigation bureau. After **a** simple

registration, the two women entered the meeting room and saw a roughed-up James.

"Mom! Sis! You're finally here!" James burst out crying the moment he saw them.

"You asshole! How **dare** you drink and drive!" Dahlia walked forward and slapped him across the face.

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"Enough. Stop fighting. Let us know what happened first." Florence said worriedly.

"I'm not sure what happened either." James sobbed. "I blacked out after drinking with my friends. By the time I

woke up, I was already in the car, and there was wreckage everywhere. I **was** so scared I ran away immediately, but I got caught the same night."

"You did a hit-and-run? Do you know how severe this crime is? You won't be getting out without a decade or

two of jail time!" Dahlia spat.

"What?" James immediately paled. "I'm still young. I don't want to go to jail. Please save me!"

"You have to pay the price for your mistakes. How can you think that you'll be safe after killing someone?"

Dahlia sighed. Although she loved her brother dearly, she could do nothing about his crime.

"Sis, Mom, help me! I swear I'll never do this again! I've learned my lesson, I swear!" James swore frantically, unable to stand the thought of living out his life in prison.

“Calm down, James. I’ll call you aunt right now. With the Glenstead Nicholson’s help and some money, we

should be able to get your out.” Florence quickly drew out her **phone** and called Jane. “Hello? Jane? James is in danger. He ran his car into somebody and killed them. Could you make a few calls to get him out?”

“It’s not that I don’t want to help you, Florence, but Dahlia ran away from her date last night, so our family is very unhappy. They’ve given the order that unless Dahlia marries Mr. Longford, our family will not be providing any assistance,” Jane responded calmly.

“What?” Florence stiffened and turned to look at Dahlia questioningly.

“I’ll never marry him!” Dahlia immediately refused.

“Then forget about it. Deal with James on your own.” Jane hung up.

“Just agree, Dahlia. What’s wrong with marrying Mr. Langford? He’s powerful and rich, and he comes from an aristocratic family. As long as you marry him, we can save your brother and live comfortably for the rest of our

lives.” Florence urged.

“Mom, I don’t like him!” Dahlia frowned.

“You’ll fall in love with him after some time. Would you rather see your brother being sent to prison?” Florence

wailed.

“That’s right, Sis. Just marry Mr. Langford, or I’m doomed!” James sobbed.

“Did the two of you ever think of my future?” Dahlia was troubled.

“You’ll have a wonderful life if you marry Mr. Langford, and our family will become powerful too, What’s not to like about that? Besides, I’m your brother. Do **you** want to see me rot away in jail?” James roared, his **eyes**

bloodshot.

“Let me think about it. T— there must be another **way**.” Dahlia shut her eyes helplessly.

“What’s there to think about? We’re running out of time.” James shouted frantically.

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“He’s right. Won’t you please help him? I’m begging you!” Florence cried and fell to her knees.

“What are you doing, Mom? Get up!” Dahlia paled and tried to help Florence stand.

“I won’t get up until you agree!” Florence declared.

At the sight of her mother’s firm attitude and her brother’s terrified expression, Dahlia stood rooted dumbly, **at** a loss. She never thought that things would turn out this way. The happiness she’d been praying for was just

a few steps ahead, so why was God treating her this way? Didn’t she deserve happiness?

“Fine. I’ll do it ...” Dahlia shut her eyes, tears spilling down her cheeks.

She had given in..

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“Fine. I’ll do it...”

Within an exclusive club, Luis couldn’t help grinning when he heard the other voice from the phone. “Great. See you tonight. You better not stand me up again.”

With that, he hung up. The young men and women surrounding him immediately gave him a thumbs-up after learning what had happened.

“Never thought a tiny trick like this could get that chick to obey you, Ms. Langford. You’re incredible!” a blond man praised.

Luis chuckled evilly. “She would never have agreed if I hadn’t sent her brother in. Besides, how could I let a chick like her slip through my fingers like that?”

None of the women he set his sights on have ever gotten away from him. All it took was some time and some tricks. Dahlia may look like an innocent woman, but as long as he used her friends and family as bait, she would surely bite.

“I’m curious, Mr. Langford. Why would you marry her? You could have just had fun without getting married. This doesn’t seem like something you’d do.” The blond man observed.

“Excellent question.” Luis paused to light a cigar. “Truthfully, what I want is the Glenstead Nicholsons’ support. Marriage between our families has been set, and Dahlia will soon carry out her family’s orders. Through her, I will take over the Nicholsons’ power completely!”

His words caused a stir among the crowd, and they immediately began singing his praises.

“As expected of Mr. Langford, he thinks so far ahead. How impressive!”

“He has brains and brawn. He’s amazing!”

“Once I take over the Nicholsons, I will become the head of the Langfords!” Luis declared confidently.

Competition between him and his brothers was fierce, **as** everyone wanted to become the head of the family. To win against them, he must have enough strength and power.

“Then let us wish you a happy marriage in advance!” The blond man led the group to offer Luis a toast. Soon, laughter resonated through the room.

8 pm at Hillview Restaurant.

Dustin had arrived earlier than the agreed time. He had chosen the most luxurious room they had to cater to him and Dahlia, which didn’t matter much to him since this **was** one of his businesses, and he didn’t have to

pay.

“Sir, our chef prepared these dishes specially for **you**. Please let us know what you think.” The manager, carrying a menu, began to introduce each dish to Dustin.

“No need for all this. You can arrange it as you see fit. Just make sure to get us the chef’s signature dish,”

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Dustin instructed.

“Of course, sir.” The manager nodded and waved his hand to those outside the room.

A group of waiters immediately began setting up the place with flowers, wine, candles, and more, making the room look romantic and warm. They had even hired a guitarist and three dancers to perform. Soon, everything was ready.

“Sir, I took the liberty to arrange some performers. I hope you don’t mind.” the manager said with a smile.

“This looks quite grand. You must have put in a lot of effort.” Dustin was surprised.

“I can always tell them to leave if you don’t wish them to be here.” The manager lowered his head.

“It’s fine. It’s quite nice. Thank you.” Dustin smiled.

Dahlia would like this, wouldn’t she?

“It’s my pleasure to serve you, sir. May I know when Ms. Nicholson will be arriving so I can prepare things?” the manager asked tentatively.

“She should be here soon.” Dustin glanced at the time. It was already past eight..

Dahlia always kept her promise and was never late. Did something happen?

Puzzled, Dustin pulled out his phone to call her.

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Dahlia didn't pick up the first two times. It wasn't until his third attempt that the call got through.

"Hey, Dahlia. Didn't you tell me to treat you to dinner? Why aren't you here yet?" Dustin asked.

"About that I'm sorry, but something came up. I might not be able to leave any time soon." Dahlia's voice sounded strange.

"It's alright. Work is more important. Take your time. I won't bother you." Dustin answered understandingly despite the tinge of regret.

Dahlia hummed. "I'll treat you another day."

"Sure." Dustin smiled. He was just about to hang up when he heard a familiar voice.

"Dahlia, who are you calling? Hurry up. You've got to drink with me--"

With a beep, the call ended.

"Sir, when is Ms. Nicholson arriving?" the manager asked.

"She has something to deal with, so she can't come. You can put everything away. I'm sorry, everyone." Dustin smiled politely and got up to leave.

Everyone exchanged confused glances. Why had the carefully planned dinner gone to waste?

Meanwhile, inside a Barkarole Hotel room.

"Mr. Langford, I can't drink anymore. Let's stop here tonight." Dahlia waved her hands frantically as another

glass of wine came towards her.

Her face was flushed, and she was light-headed, her body weak.

"It was quite hard to get your brother out of that mess. You can't be that ungrateful, can you?" Luis held up his

glass unhappily.

"Just drink it, Dahlia. It's just one glass." Florence, who was sitting beside them, urged.

They were **here** because they wanted to save James, so they had to make sure they pleased Luis.

"But – Dahlia hesitated, troubled. **Knowing** her limits, **she** was sure she'd collapse if she **drank** anymore.

"I won't force you anymore, Dahlia. This is the last **glass**." Luis pushed the glass towards her once more.

"See, **Dahlia?** It's the last glass. You shouldn't embarrass him." Florence pressed softly.

"Alright, I'll drink it." Taking a deep breath, Dahlia lifted the glass to her lips and downed the entire thing. As soon as the liquid settled, she felt herself getting dizzier. Her body swayed, and she almost tripped.

With quick reflexes, Florence grabbed Dahlia to keep her still. "Mr. Langford, Dahlia is drunk. Why don't I send

her home."

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"It's fine. I've already booked a presidential suite for the two of you. She can just rest here." Luis said with a smile.

"Won't that be too much trouble?" Florence questioned tentatively.

"Of course not. We'll be a family soon. You should go and rest." Luis drew out a room card and passed it to Florence.

"Thank you, Mr. Langford." Florence nodded and helped Dahlia out of the room.

"Let's see how you're going to escape tonight." Luis cackled, seeing Dahlia's retreating figure. He lifted his glass and took a big gulp before following behind the two women.

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Inside the presidential suite, Florence helped Dahlia onto the bed and took off the younger woman's shoes. She then went to grab a basin of warm water to wipe Dahlia down.

"Mom, I feel horrible. I want some water." Dahlia lay on the bed weakly, feeling parched.

"Water won't work. I'll get you some milk. Wait here." Florence made up an excuse and quickly left the room, bumping into Luis straight away.

"How's Dahlia doing. Mrs. Nicholson?"

"She's fine. Nothing a night's sleep won't fix. Florence smiled.

"Where are you heading, Mrs. Nicholson?" Luis asked again.

"To get Dahlia some milk to ease her stomach ache."

"I see..." Luis smiled knowingly. "No one sells milk nearby, so I'm afraid you'll have to search further. You might have to come back later too."

"Are you sure? I'm pretty sure I saw a grocery store downstairs." Florence smiled awkwardly.

"Are you questioning me?" Luis' smile slowly disappeared, an animalistic, cruel expression taking over.

"Of course not. Got it. I'll come back later." Florence promised hurriedly, smiling apologetically.

"Good." Luis' smile returned, and he watched the woman leave. As soon as she was gone, he opened the room door and let himself in.

"How did you get the milk so quickly, Mom?" Dahlia asked weakly from the bed.

"Your mother isn't coming back anytime soon, so I'll be taking care of you," Luis responded.

"Mr. Langford? What are you doing here?" Dahlia's face tightened. "How did you get in? Where's my mom?"

"She went to get you some milk, of course," Luis answered, beginning to take his clothes off.

"What do you think you're doing. Mr. Langford?" Dahlia began to panic.

"What do you think is supposed to happen when a man and a woman are left alone in a room?" He sneered, removing his tie, eyes full of lust.

"Don't mess with me, Mr. Langford. I'm not that kind of person!" Dahlia shouted.

"We'll be engaged in a few days and getting married **soon**, so what does it matter? Luis jeered. "I promise you Infinite luxury if you **please** me tonight."

"No! You're not touching me until we're married!" Dahlia **stood** her ground.

"That'll take too long. You're going to sate me right now!" He lunged forward and began yanking **at** her clothes like a beast.

"Go away!" Struggling with all her might, Dahlia planted a firm kick at Luis' groin, and the man immediately

doubled, groaning. "Are you alright, Mr. Langford?" Dahlia was startled. Things would be bad if she caused him permanent injury down there.

"You b*tch!" Furious, Luis slapped Dahlia across the face, making her stagger and fall to the floor. "No woman has ever rejected me, much **less** kicked me. How dare you!" Luis exploded.

"I'm sorry. Mr. Langford. I didn't do that on purpose." Dahlia shook her head.

"Shut the f*ck up! If you don't want something to happen to your brother, you better kneel and beg for forgiveness!"

"You're crossing the line, Mr. Langford!" Dahlia snapped.

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If Luis was going to rape her, she'd rather die than suffer and be humiliated that way.

"So what? How dare a secondhand good like you act innocent. Take off your clothes right now!" Luis shouted.

"No!" Gritting her teeth, Dahlia ignored her weak body and staggered to the door.

"Do you think you can escape?" With a sneer, the man ran after her.

Just as Dahlia was about to reach the lift, he sped up and made a lunge for her, dragging her to the floor. He immediately began to tug at her clothes.

Just then, the lift doors opened with a ding. The two of them lifted their heads and froze when they saw Dustin emerging from the lift with a dark face.

"What are you two doing?" Dustin seethed, a murderous air surrounding him. He realized that something was wrong when he heard Dahlia's earlier reply, so he quickly told someone to track her car, and this was the first thing he saw.

"So, it's you." Luis leisurely pulled himself to his feet and lifted his pants, grinning tauntingly. "Are you here to peek at me and my girlfriend making love?"

"Girlfriend?" Dustin frowned and stared at Dahlia. "What is going on?"

"I-it's not what you think it is." Dahlia frantically shook her head, but she didn't know how to explain this to him.

"Why are you hiding this from him, Dahlia? Weren't you drinking with me so that we could do this? Since he's caught us, we might as well let him know." Luis smiled.

“Dahlia Nicholson! Is this what you meant when you said you were meeting a client?” Dustin’s face had contorted with rage. He thought that she was in trouble, but it turned out that she was on a date.

“I ...” Dahlia was at a loss for what to say. It was true that she had lied to him, but it was only because she didn’t want him to misunderstand. However, things had still turned out this way. “Nothing to say?” Dustin sneered at himself. “So, you’ve been lying to me this entire time?”

“N-no. I didn’t mean to.” Dahlia’s eyes were red.

“Then what?” Dustin’s expression contorted with agony. “You promised to have dinner with me, yet you abandoned me to visit someone else in a hotel room. Are you still going to tell me you weren’t lying to me?”

“I’m sorry, Dustin. I’m sorry! I didn’t do it on purpose. I didn’t think things would turn out this way.” “Right. You didn’t expect me to ruin your fun, or you could’ve continued treating me like a fool.” Dustin shook his head and sneered. “I was an idiot to think that you changed and even tried to accept you. It took me so long to realize that you’ve been toying with me this entire time I don’t get it. What did I ever do to you? Why would you do something like this to get even with me? Why won’t you let me go even though we’re divorced? Was it fun toying with my emotions? Will you never stop until you’ve completely humiliated me?”

“Listen to me, Dustin. I really like you. I never wanted to hurt you. Please believe me!” Dahlia sobbed.

“You like me? Then what about him?” Dustin pointed at Luis. “I saw everything just now. Did you think that I’m blind?”

“N-no. That was a misunderstanding.” Dahlia bit her lip

“A misunderstanding? Are you telling me that he was about to rape you?” Dustin’s face darkened instantly. “If you say yes, I’ll make sure to get rid of him!”

Hearing that, Dahlia immediately fell silent. She wanted to admit everything, but she couldn’t. Luis was not someone she could cross, and definitely not someone Dustin could cross. Things would become disastrous should Dustin try to harm Luis. After all, the Stonia Langfords were not someone they could win against.

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“Why aren’t you saying anything? Do you agree with what I said?” Dustin’s final glimmer of hope disappeared along with Dahlia’s silence. He’d given her a chance to explain herself, but she didn’t give him the answer he wanted.

“I’m sorry. I have my reasons.” Dahlia felt her heart bleeding, and breathing became difficult.

“Reasons?” Dustin sneered. “What could make you sell your body? What could stop you from explaining things to me?”

“I’m sorry... I’m sorry...” Dahlia sobbed, anguished.

“Don’t apologize to me. We’re already divorced, so I have no right to control anything you do, and you didn’t betray me.” Dustin’s face gradually turned hard. “However, please don’t ever bother me again. I’m still human. I can’t keep being hurt by you. So, won’t you please let me go?”

“I ...” Dahlia didn’t know what to say.

Perhaps the best thing for her to do now was to completely cut ties with him since she had no choice but to yield to Luis for her brother, her family, and Dustin. Still, she’d already made up her mind. The day of her union with Luis would be the day she died.

“Alright. That’s enough. You’ve said everything you needed to say.” Luis grinned tauntingly. “Wait for me in the room, Dahlia. We’ll have some fun later.”

Dahlia didn’t move. However, Dustin’s breathing began to quicken.

“What are you waiting for? A show?” Luis gave Dustin a disdainful look over. “Though I must admit. You’ve got good taste in women. Her smooth, supple skin sure is lovely! I’ll have lots of fun later. Well, you can watch from the side if you don’t mind.” Luis chuckled, grinning wickedly.

“You’re dead meat!” Enraged, Dustin planted his foot into Luis’ abdomen and, with a bang, the latter crashed into the wall, passing out on the spot

“Are you crazy, Dustin? Do you have any idea what you’ve done?” Dahlia immediately paled. Luis was an aristocrat in Stonia. Offending someone like him was like asking for someone to kill

you.

“What? Are you worried about him?” Dustin sniggered. “For you to fall for a pervert like him, I can’t help wondering if there’s something wrong with your eyes.

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“That has nothing to do with you. Get out! I never want to see you again!” Dahlia bit her lip, trying to control her emotions. Injuring Luis was no small matter. Dustin would be in trouble if Luis’ bodyguards were to arrive now.

“Are you finally showing your true colors? Have you decided to stop pretending?” Dustin chuckled coolly

“So what? I don’t mind letting you know I’m not just dating him. We’re engaged, and our wedding is in three days!” Dahlia revealed the shocking news.

“What? Engaged?” Dustin’s expression immediately darkened. “What’s wrong with you? How could you marry someone like him?”

“Who I marry is none of your business! And you’re right. I was toying with your feelings, but so what? You were the one who was stupid enough to listen to me. Why don’t you look in the f*cking mirror? Do you think a broke loser like you can stand beside me? Luis is different. With his family background and power, I’ll live a luxurious life once I marry him! Compared to him, you’re nothing! There you go. This is the truth you wanted! Are you happy now!” Dahlia roared.

“You’re shameless!” Unable to stop himself, Dustin slapped her, and clear marks appeared on her face instantly.

Dustin was shocked. Never once in their three years of marriage had he ever struck her, so he never expected himself to lose control of his emotions. Still, anger quickly took over his dismay.

She deserved it!

“I was an idiot to believe you. Please don’t ever appear before me ever again!” Dustin spat before leaving.

“Dus-” Dahlia reached out a hand to stop him but managed to stop herself. She knew that this was the end for them. However, this was still a good ending.

So, why? Why did her heart ache so much?

Her chest was throbbing so much she couldn’t breathe.

“Dahlia! What happened?” Just then, Florence had arrived. When she spotted Luis unconscious on the floor, she paled. “Did you do this?”

“Mom, Dustin dropped by just now. He knows everything now. We’re never getting back together.” Dahlia wailed, throwing herself into her mother’s embrace.

“Shh... Mom’s here.” Florence patted her daughter’s back. “Your status has changed. Dustin isn’t good enough for you anymore.

“B-but I love him! I really want to be with him! Why is God doing this to me? I don’t want to accept this!” Dahlia wailed tormentedly.

“Life isn’t always smooth sailing, Dahlia. You should look on the bright side instead. I’m sure you’ll be happier in the future.” Florence sighed.

“Mom, do you know how much it hurt when I said those hurtful things to him? It was like a knife was twisting inside me! I wanted to tell him the truth and that I loved him, but I couldn’t. I’m worried he might get arrested again. Mom, it hurts. It hurts so much!” Dahlia howled, thumping her heart furiously like it would make her feel better.

While she was weeping, her vision suddenly turned black, and she lost consciousness.

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Even after returning to the medical center, Dustin still felt restless after the heavy blow Dahlia had given him. He never thought that she was the kind of person who would toy with his

emotions for revenge.

They could have ended their relationship on a good note, yet she decided to make them enemies. Dustin just couldn't understand why. No matter how hard he thought back, he was sure he had never once done anything bad to her.

"Dustin, are you in trouble?" Maximus emerged from the living room and asked. "Let me know if you need my help."

The past few days of treatment have healed his core. He might not be as strong as before, but he was satisfied with just this.

"Won't you drink with me?" Dustin fumbled around the cabinets for two bottles of wine. With Gregory around, there was never a shortage of alcohol.

"Sure." Maximus sat down without a second thought.

The two men began to drink, but no one spoke, so the tension in the air increased.

After a few glasses, Dustin eventually spoke. "How's your injury?"

"It's healing great. I'll be fine in another two days." Maximus was filled with gratitude. "It's all thanks to your skills. I'd be doomed if it weren't for you."

"You can stop being so formal. It sounds weird. Just talk to me casually." Dustin topped up their glasses.

"I-I can't do that. I'll just keep talking like this." Maximus grinned sheepishly.

"Do it your way." Dustin tipped his head back and downed his glass.

"Did you run into relationship problems?" Maximus asked, finishing his glass as well.

"How did you know?" Dustin raised an eyebrow.

"It's easy to realize once you're in the same boat." Maximus smiled sadly. What could be worse than someone's fiancée sleeping with their mentor?

“That’s true.” Dustin calmed slightly when he thought of the things the other man had gone through, and he began spilling everything to Maximus, everything since he needed someone to confide in.

“Say, did I marry the wrong person to end up this way?” Dustin smiled sadly.

“I have a different opinion, Dustin.” Maximus paused. “Did you ever think that Ms. Nicholson had no choice?”

“Couldn’t she have told me why?” Dustin shook his head.

She probably would if she could.” Maximus sighed, “You were married to her for three years. You should know her best. Do you think she’s that kind of person?”

Dustin stilled for a second before recovering. “Everyone can change. Just because she wasn’t

before doesn’t mean she won’t be in the future. No one can truly tell what’s going through a woman’s mind.”

“Take it easy, Dustin. Time will prove everything.” Maximus consoled him.

“Let’s stop talking about this. Let’s drink!” Dustin pulled out another two bottles of wine, fully intending to enjoy himself that night.

Just then, a black car pulled up at the entrance, and a man in a suit trudged into the building. “Who is Dustin Rhys?”

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The man’s arrogant gaze swept the room.

“I’m Dustin. May I know why you’re here?” Dustin glanced at the man before continuing to drink.

“I’m a messenger of Boulderthorn’s Royal Valor. We want to challenge you to a duel. You killed Joshua Hummer, our seventh disciple, so something has to

be done. My senior will be visiting Swinton to challenge you to a duel to the death!" the man declared haughtily, throwing them a piece of paper.

As a well-known guild, they had to do things publicly, including exacting revenge. They were also going to use this opportunity to show off their power.

"You can take that back. I'm not interested." Dustin refused without even looking at the paper. "Are you scared?" The other man sneered. "Weren't you brave when you killed Joshua? Why are you shying away after hearing that my senior is your opponent?"

"As if. I don't even know who your senior is," Dustin replied calmly.

"I'll tell you right now. His name is Tatum Thunders, and his name can be found on The Heavenly Immortals. He's also one of the eight geniuses of Boulderthorn. His nickname is Fanatic Blade!" The man humphed proudly.

"The Fanatic Blade, Tatum Thunders?" Maximus exclaimed, his expression paled.

As a Boulderthorn disciple himself, he has heard of Tatum before.

Boulderthorn has eight subsidiary guilds-Royal Valor, Quickshields, Forsakenstriders, Shadowfall, Thundersong, Frostlanders, Boneguard, and Killingbane.

Each guild had its respective principal disciple, who were expert martial artists ranking only below the guildmaster. In terms of power and strength, they were even stronger than the second-in-commands of Boulderthorn, and Tatum happened to be the principal disciple of Royal Valor.

Only in his early thirties, the genius has already made his way onto the Heavenly Immortals.

"Fanatic Blade? Never heard of him. He better stay away if he doesn't want to die." Dustin couldn't care less.

"Arrogant fool!" The man humphed. "No one has ever dared to refuse our challenge, you brat. If you refuse to accept the duel, everyone around you will suffer, not just you, so you better think this through."

"Are you threatening me?" Dustin narrowed his eyes dangerously.

“That’s right! We’ll be waiting for you at Mount Halgue in two days’ time. You’d better be prepared for the consequences if you don’t show up. And don’t even think about running away. We’re watching you. Rather than hiding like a mouse, why don’t you die honorably in a fight instead? At least your pride will be intact, and no innocent people will be hurt. Well, you should think carefully before making your decision. Goodbye.” With that, the man spun around and left.

The man wasn’t worried that Dustin might not accept their challenge since no one had ever gotten away from Boulderthorn.

“We’re in trouble now, Dustin!” Maximus’ expression was grave. “Tatum is no ordinary fighter. He’s a legendary figure who already achieved divinity five years ago. He’s leagues above Joshua Hummer!”

“Really? He sounds strong,” Dustin responded calmly.

“I think you should bring your loved ones and run as far as you can right now, or you’re doomed!” Maximus warned

“Run?” Dustin smiled softly. “He isn’t enough to scare me.”

“Do you have another plan?” Maximus asked curiously.

“There’s always a solution to a problem. Since they’re challenging me first, I should give them a response too.” Dustin smiled coldly.

His mood was already terrible, but now that Tatum was stupid enough to poke an angry bear, Dustin might as well use that man to relieve some anger.

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Chapter 305

Time flew by, and two days passed. News about Tatum challenging Dustin to a duel had spread far and wide, and all the martial artists who caught wind of the challenge came in droves to watch the duel

The challenger was the principal disciple of Royal Valor, Fanatic Blade of the Heavenly Immortals -Tatum Thunders, while the challengee was Dustin Rhys, a dark horse.

Eager to watch their challenge, many people woke up before dawn to get to Mount Halue, so now, people crowded at the foot of the mountain

“I didn’t know there would be this many people.” Thanking that this was just an ordinary duel, Dustin was surprised by the size of the crowd

“That’s just how Boulderthorn is Anytime a famous disciple challenges someone to a duel, their guild makes sure to promote themselves and show off their strength. It’s an unspoken rule among guilds Maximus was used to the sight

“Really?” Dustin smiled. “In that case, wouldn’t they be embarrassed if they lose?”

“Lose?” The corner of Maximus’ lips twitched This was Tatum Thunders they were talking about. Even among his peers in Boulderthorn, the man rarely had any opponents, so how could he lose? The only reason the guild would make such a bigtuss about this was because they were certain they would win Therefore, they invited multiple witnesses, including the disciples of other guilds, to show off their power

“Dustin, it’s not too late to turn back right now. Are you sure you want to do it?” Maximus asked tentatively.

“Why would we turn back when we’re already halfway there? Let’s go. I want to meet that guy.” Dustin stretched and began to climb the stairs.

Halfway up the mountain, they suddenly heard a fierce battle going on.

Dustin turned and saw a group of people fighting in the dense forest next to the path. More accurately, a bunch of burly men were attacking an old man simultaneously. Despite his white. hair and frail body, the old man was surprisingly agile, his strikes catching his opponents by surprise, so the group of men was having a hard time fighting him.

A young girl stood behind the elderly man

“How dare they attack an old man! I’ll go help them” Maximus rushed forward righteously. Dustin shook his head and followed suit.

“Hey! What are you guys doing?” The young girl immediately stopped them as they approached. The old man is in danger. I’ll help him!” Maximus told her.

It's fine. Those vermin won't be able to hurt my grandpa," the girl refused.

"He's your grandfather?" Maximus was surprised. "Aren't you worried he might get hurt?"

The little girl immediately humphed proudly "My grandfather's Ralph Dunn, the leader of the Steel Legion! There's no way those vermin are a match for him just watch!"

Hearing that, Maximus stood back and watched the battle silently.

After exchanging a few more blows, Ralph finally put in more effort and began raining down strikes from his palms on the men. Unable to withstand the attack, the men soon became severely injured and threw up blood.

"Damn it! He's a beast! Retreat!" the leader hollered, and everyone else immediately rushed after him, not wanting to stay another second.

"Humph! How dare those losers dare to take advantage of me with their pathetic skills!"

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The old man patted the dust off his body in a poised manner.

"That was a wonderful fight!" The young girl excitedly clapped after Ralph won. She turned to Dustin and Maximus. "See? Isn't my grandpa amazing?"

"Abby, did you see my palm strikes just now? Those are our guild's signature moves. You'll amaze the world when you finally learn it," Ralph said loudly.

"I'll work hard to meet your expectations, Grandpa Abby nodded fervently.

"Oh, and they are?" Ralph turned his attention to Dustin and Maximus.

"They're passersby who were being nosy, but I stopped them in time. With their abilities, they'll only be a bother," Abby explained.

"I see." Ralph gave them a look over. "Treacherous bandits and ferocious beasts always roam this mountain. You two shouldn't run around carelessly.

"Thanks for the advice. We'll make a move since you're safe." Dustin thanked them and spun around to leave.

"Hold on!" Abby suddenly called out. "You're here to watch the fight between Tatum and, er, Dustin, right?"

"Yes. Are you guys here for that too?" Dustin asked

"Of course!" Abby lifted her head proudly. "To tell you the truth, Boulderthorn invited many witnesses for today's duel. My grandpa's one of them!"

"Witnesses?" Dustin was amused. "Is that really necessary?"

"Of course it is!" Abby rolled her eyes. "I can tell that you're clueless. Well, any fight between famous martial artists always needs witnesses to ensure the competition's fairness."

"I see." Dustin nodded. It was true that he had no idea about deathmatch rules.

"Both of you young men seem like fine people with strong bodies. I'll give you a chance to become Steel Legion disciples," Ralph suddenly said.

"Disciples?" Dustin was caught off guard.

"You two should thank your lucky stars. Being my grandpa's disciple is a dream many people have. What are you waiting for? Hurry up and thank him!" Abby ordered arrogantly.

"Sorry, but no thanks," Dustin refused, shaking his head.

"What?" Abby immediately turned angry. "Hey, you should be grateful that Grandpa's willing to take you in."

"Young man, you won't come across this opportunity twice. You should think about it carefully!" Ralph stood proudly with his hands behind his back. "It's an honor to be my disciple. All I have to do is teach you a few moves, and you'll become famous."

Dustin couldn't help but find their confidence amusing. To think that someone who hasn't reached divinity yet was trying to take him in as a disciple. Had the requirements for becoming

mentors fallen so low?

"Thank you for your offer, but I'm not interested." Dustin shook his head once more.

"Insolent fool!" Abby humphed before turning to Maximus. "What about you?"

"I'm not interested either." He shrugged.

"You'll regret your decision one day!" Abby fumed.

Her grandfather, the leader of Steel Legion, a well-known martial expert, was gracious enough to offer to take them in, yet they foolishly refused.

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"Forget it I was just repaying your kindness earlier Since you don't want to, forget it." Ralph shook his head pretentiously, giving them a you'll regret-it-one-day look

Dustin and Maximus exchanged amused glances silently

"Let's go. Since we've run into each other, I might as well escort you two up in case there's danger again." Ralph said, walking ahead with his hands clasped behind his back.

"You guys are lucky to be able to walk with my grandpa!" With a humph, Abby glared at them and hurried after Ralph.

Dustin smiled and followed behind them without protest. After all, there was only one way up the mountain

Moving at a brisk pace, the group soon made it to the top At the center of the hilltop was a platform, which was where Dustin and Tatum's fight was

supposed to take place. Many people had already gathered around the platform, most of them martial artists, making things much livelier

“Mr. Dunn? Nice to meet you.

“I’ve heard so much about you, Mr. Dunn It’s an honor to meet you”

As soon as Ralph appeared, many people came unto greet him. It was clear to see that the Steel Legion was quite famous

“Do you know how powerful my grandpa is now?” Abby goaded. “I bet you regret your decision now Ha, but it’s too late!”

Dustin pretended not to hear her, while Maximus ignored her by turning his head away.

“I heard you’re the witness for today’s match, Mr. Dunn Who do you think will win?” someone asked

“Isn’t it obvious? Fanatic Blade, of course!” Abby chimed in “Tatum is the principal disciple of Royal Valor and someone on the Heavenly Immortals. He’s never lost a fight before.”

“It’s true that he’s strong, but I heard that Dustin Rhys is not someone to underestimate either. Even Joshua Hummer, who had just reached divinity, lost to him,” another person responded. “Why would you compare Tatum to Joshua?” Abby humphed. “One hasn’t even fully reached divinity yet, while the other already did that five years ago. With Tatum’s skills today, how hard can it be for him to defeat a country bumpkin?”

“She’s right. No matter how I look at it, Tatum has a higher winning chance,” Ralph opined, and everyone instantly nodded in agreement.

Ralph was a revered senior martial artist and the witness for today’s duel, so naturally, everyone believed him.

Glancing at the people around him, Dustin shook his head with a smile.

“What are you laughing at? Did Grandpa say anything wrong?” Abby demanded, annoyed.

“Aren’t you guys being too hasty? The battle hasn’t even begun yet.” Dustin smiled.

“Why? Do you think that Dustin might win?” Abby pursed her lips.

“We’ll only know once the batter starts,” Dustin answered.

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Abby humphed. “Stop pretending when you don’t know anything ” She rolled her eyes. “We’ll

know who’s better soon enough!”

“Even if Dustin doesn’t win against Tatum, he’s still a rare genius, so we should still respect him,” the man from earlier said.

“You’re right. Just getting Tatum to challenge him to a duel is a feat of its own. Otherwise, Boulderthorn wouldn’t have wasted so much energy on this.”

“I heard that he’s only around twenty. It’s extremely rare to see someone that age reach divinity. He’s practically a genius!”

“Even if he doesn’t win against Tatum, it will be an honorable defeat.”

Everyone began to chip in their opinions. Although they were sure Dustin would lose to Tatum, they still acknowledged the former’s talents and skills

“I heard that Dustin doesn’t have a quild and is self-taught He’s bound to shine if he enters Ironshade!” one said

Another chuckled. “Ironshade only has around a hundred disciples. A talent like him would be

wasted there”

Someone else agreed, “In terms of size and growth, Highfield is definitely better. I’m sure Dustin. wouldn’t refuse my offer.”

“Hey, are you guys forgetting about Steel Legion?” Abby shouted unhappily. “My guild is obviously the best If Dustin actually wants to pick a guild, he’d clearly choose us!”

Dustin was puzzled. He couldn't figure out where Abby got her confidence from. How could she be so sure when she didn't even know who he was yet? Worse, Ralph seemed to think the same, judging from his smug expression.

Just as they were talking, a group of Boulderthorn disciples approached them. Leading them were Brody and Oliver Williams.

"My, my. If it isn't Max." Brody sneered when he spotted Maximus. "What's a useless man like you doing here?"

"That's none of your business" Maximus retorted coldly.

"We're peers, Max. Even though you've lost all your powers, I won't push you away. For Caitlyn's sake, I can help you return to being my father's disciple if you beg me." Brody sniggered, wrapping an arm around the delicate woman beside him.

Maximus' face immediately darkened when he saw who it was. Caitlyn Lawler, his fiancée!

Previously, she had been with his mentor, yet here she was, in Brody's embrace.

"Oh, right. I forgot to tell you that Caitlyn has agreed to marry me. She's mine from now on. I hope you don't mind." Brody mocked.

"What? Maximus' eyes widened, his hands clenched into fists. "Is that true, Caitlyn?"

"Don't blame me, Max. I'm just a weak woman. I need someone to protect me. Now that you've lost all your powers, I can only rely on Brody," Caitlyn answered frankly.

"Why? WHY?" Maximus' eyes had turned bloodshot. "You said you'd wait for me, and we'd be together forever, so why would you marry him?"

"Are

you an idiot, Max?" Caitlyn rolled her eyes. "You don't think that I truly like you, do you? What I like is power. Power to control others. I only agreed to marry you back then because you were the most talented disciple of us all. Look at you now. Besides getting kicked out, you've also lost all your powers.

Without any power, what makes you think that you're worthy of being with me? Was I supposed to suffer with you? Don't be foolish!"

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"Brody!" The crowd jumped in shock and anger when Brody was sent flying by Maximus' punch. Never had they imagined Maximus to wield such power after his core was destroyed.

"H-how dare you hit me?" Brody said spitefully, pressing against his chest, which was throbbing with excruciating pain. The audacity of someone excommunicated, a good-for-nothing to lay a finger on him!

"So what? You should thank the heavens that I didn't take your life." Maximus went up and took the hand of the lady in white. He soothed her affectionately, "Caitlyn, don't you worry. I won't let anyone bully you when I'm around. I'll protect you even if I have to risk my life!"

"M-Max, what are you doing?" Her expression fell as she slowly stumbled away from him.

"Caitlyn, I know you've been through a lot. I'll be good to you. Let's run away, shall we? We can leave Balerno for a place where no one knows us. How does that sound?" He looked at her with anticipation. Although he was no match for Luther, he could elope to a place far from danger and trouble with his lover.

"Max, are you crazy? I'm Luther's woman now." Caitlyn frowned at his words.

"I know you were forced into it. You don't like him at all, do you? Just give me a nod, and I'll immediately take you with me!" His gentle gaze caressed her face.

"No, I won't!" She gave her an adamant shake of the head.

"Caitlyn, are you in a difficult situation? Fret not. I will do my best to get you out of any trouble!" Maximus was earnest.

“Let go of me!” She shook off his grip and scolded him, “Max, do you still not get it? I have never loved you at all! Don’t be delusional!”

That caught him by surprise, and his eyes widened in disbelief. “W-what did you say?”

“Max, at this point, I’ll just tell you the truth.” She inhaled deeply and explained without much emotion, “I had only agreed to the engagement because of your status. I need someone to protect me as a defenseless woman in the martial arts field. You were my best choice back then.”

“That’s... That’s impossible! You told me you loved me and you’d marry me! Were you lying to me all along when you made those eternal vows?” A hint of resentment and rage crept into his reddened eyes.

“Max, you’re cute.” She shook her head with a scoff. “Haven’t you realized I was only into you because of your influence and potential? You were Maximus Kane, a fighter with great prowess and the most remarkable disciple of our generation. That was why I took a liking to you. But look at you now. You have been excommunicated and even had your powers destroyed by Luther. You’re no different than a pauper, so why do you think you’re a match for me? Did you really believe I’d put up with a life of suffering with you? Dream on!”

That was a huge blow for Maximus, whose face was grim when he heard her cruel confession. He did not expect those remarks from his lover, not even in his wildest dreams. At first, he thought Caitlyn was forced to be with Luther, but it turned out that she willingly went along with it. At the

end of the day, he made a joke out of himself. All his life, he had been focused on achieving excellence in swordsmanship and lived a life free of other desires. The only time he fell for a woman, he ended up in such misery. What a joke!

He slumped on the floor in a daze. In that instance, he seemed to have lost his faith and hope, turning into an empty shell of himself. Faith was the main reason he could rejuvenate his core in record time. And he held on fast to the faith that he would rescue Caitlyn. Now that he had lost it, he appeared disoriented and helpless.

“Fuck you! How dare you punch me? I’ll slash you!” Brody cackled when he saw the soulless Maximus and swung his sword at the man.

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The sword clanked as it moved. Right when it was about to cut Maximus' neck, a hand reached out and caught it.

"Hm?" Brody lifted his gaze, and his eyes immediately shook in fear. "I-it's you!" He had been too focused on Maximus to notice the legend standing behind the man.

"Is it worth grieving over a woman who doesn't deserve it?" Dustin ignored Brody and stared straight at Maximus "If what you want is death, I can grant your wish. I shall forget ever having saved a useless thing as you. But, if you have any bit of ego left in you, as a man, you should stand up straight. You don't look a bit like a swordsman right now, even though you once said you wanted to be the best swordsman in the world! Wake up!" Then, he gave Maximus a hard slap, sending the latter trembling from the impact. He seemed to have slapped some sense into Maximus, whose eyes had a new sparkle in them.

He noticed Brody's mean and murderous look, and he took in the look of disgust in Caitlyn's eyes. Finally, he flashed a rueful smile. "Dustin, you're right. I shouldn't grieve and wail over a woman who doesn't love me. Thank you for that."

Then, he slowly rose from the ground. He had a determined look after he let go of his obsession. His depression and misery had gone, while the internal energy stirred and whirred in the core with signs of a breakthrough.

"Hm?" Dustin raised a brow with surprise. His sharp instinct told him that Maximus would achieve divinity soon!

"What happened?" A few men showed up at that moment, with a middle-aged, clean-shaven man in the lead. The leader seemed harmless and friendly, but his eyes betrayed a wicked quality. The man was, in fact, the second-in-command of Boulderthorn-Luther Williams.

"Dad! You came at the right time!" Brody's eyes lit up, and he immediately complained to his father. "I met Maximus just now, and he punched me

because he was jealous! I'm badly injured- his punch messed up my blood circulation and energy."

"Oh?" The man squinted and turned his attention to Maximus. "It's you, the traitor. Why? Did you not learn a lesson from before? Do I have to take your life?"

"And you must be Mr. Williams." Dustin examined the man and remarked, "You're well-dressed, but too bad you're just a filthy animal within."

"What did you just say?" Luther scrunched up his face, a murderous look in his eyes.

"No, that's wrong. I'd be too kind to compare you to an animal. A man who sullies the fiancée of his -mentee is worse than an animal." Dustin did not hold back.

"You jerk! Where did you come from? The audacity to talk to me in that manner!" Luther's eyes gleamed with evilness. He was never reckless in his moves. Even before a killing, he'd need to look into the background of his victim to avoid future troubles.

Dad! This is Dustin Rhys! He's ruined our plans many times!" Oliver, who was standing behind his father, finally spoke. He and his sibling, Brody, had been defeated by Dustin multiple times.

"Oh, that was you?" Luther smirked. "I'm amazed by your courage, especially when you are soon to be a dying man."

"It's too early to come to a conclusion about that." Dustin smiled calmly and stared at Maximus. "Maximus, this is a good chance to take your revenge. Get into the ring and fight this sub-animal being. Beat him and free yourself from your demons!"

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“Beat me?” Luther was first taken aback by the outrageous idea, followed by a series of explosive laughter. The other Boulderthorn disciples joined in and laughed at Dustin and Maximus as though the two were fools. Maximus might have been a formidable mentor for many of the disciples, but he was nowhere close to Luther’s level.

“Oh, you little jerk. Do you even know what you’re talking about?” Scowling, Luther challenged them, “I was the one who taught everything to that traitor. Even at his peak, he was no match for me! Are you asking him to fight me with a destroyed core after he’s lost all his prowess? And does he have the guts to do so?”

“Right! A trash like him doesn’t deserve the honor of fighting Dad!” Oliver, Brody, and the other disciples scorned at the same time.

Unfazed, Dustin challenged back, “We’ll know after the battle. The most important question is- are you brave enough to take on the challenge?”

“I have nothing to be scared of.” Luther sneered. “If that little traitor loves flirting with death, I shall rid him from my guild today!”

With that, he walked right up to the stone platform. Since the actual battle hadn’t started, he didn’t mind warming up the scene.

“Dustin, he was the one who taught me everything I can’t defeat him,” Maximus admitted with a serious expression.

Dustin assured him with a faint smile, “Don’t worry. If I said you could, you will. Didn’t he keep the three moves a secret from you? I will teach you those moves and throw in some hacks.”

“Do you practice the Illusory Sword Technique as well?” Maximus looked astonished.

“Well, just a bit. So, are you learning?” Dustin smiled again. He had researched and practiced many branches of martial arts from a young age and was particularly good at sword fighting. The Illusory Sword Technique

was one of the variations of a core technique, and with a glance, he could spot any flaws in the moves.

“Yes!” Maximus nodded gravely. The only way for him to rid his internal demons was to defeat Luther Williams, just like Dustin had advised.

“Cool. I’ll teach you now.” Dustin snapped a branch from a tree nearby and started his instructions. Maximus watched on intently, careful not to miss any detail.

“Hahaha! Dustin Rhys, are you kidding me? That’s some last-minute prep. Do you think it’s going –to work?” Brody mocked him.

Oliver chimed in, “Yeah. Do you think teaching him some sloppy moves will save him from a huge defeat? You’re delusional!”

Dustin ignored the heckling from the two guys and taught Maximus six moves in total. The first three moves were the ones that Luther kept from Maximus, and the final three moves were the solution to beat the first three.

T

The moves appeared simple on the surface, but it was difficult to pick them up because the

practitioner would have to be proficient with the technique and build on the foundation. Copying the moves would not work in the battle. Thankfully, Maximus was a genius and a fast learner. After three rounds of practice, he had mastered the essence of the moves.

“You got it?” Dustin came to a stop.

“Yes. Roughly.” Maximus gave him a firm nod.

“That’s good enough. You only need to use these moves well to beat him.” Dustin smiled coolly. Maximus’ capability was not far off from Luther’s, and the only reason leading to his previous defeat was due to Luther teaching him the flawed moves. Now that Maximus was introduced to the complete moves, coupled with the additional hacks, he was ready to take on Luther by himself.

“You there! Why are you dragging your feet? Come up now!” Luther urged Maximus to join him in the ring.

“Go. Vent all your frustrations, and don’t go easy on him.” Dustin patted Maximus on the shoulder. “Thanks, Dustin!” Maximus bowed at him and marched into the ring, carrying his sword on his back.

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“Bear witness for me-after I kicked this traitor out, he felt vindicated and returned to challenge. me. Since the official battle hasn’t kicked off, I shall do some warmups to entertain you all.”

Luther’s booming voice instantly attracted everyone’s attention. He was keen to set up a precedent to deter any future traitors and rebuild his reputation!

“Hey! Why is your friend up there in the ring?” Ralph, Abby, and the others came up to Dustin with curious and odd expressions.

“He’s getting some personal grudge out of the way” Dustin offered a curt answer.

“Personal grudge?” Abby was a little doubtful. “Do you know who that other guy on the platform is? He’s Mr. Williams from Boulderthorn! Well, of course, he’s not as great as Tatum, but he’s decent! He’s at the same level as Grandpa!”

“And?” Dustin was unimpressed

“How can your friend fight off Mr. Williams with his subpar skills? He’ll be crushed and humiliated!” Abby shook her head.

Ralph nodded. “That’s right. I’d advise you to talk your friend out of the ring. Even I might not be able to fight Mr. Williams, let alone that young man”

“There’s no talking him out of it. The two are destined to fight today. Their fates are in the hands of God,” Dustin answered.

“You should listen to the wisdom of your elders lest you suffer unnecessarily. You’ll see what I mean later.” Ralph clasped his hands behind his back in a manner that suggested he had seen it all, but Dustin merely smiled at the old man.

In the ring on the platform, Luther stared straight at Maximus with a smirk. "You chose the harder path, didn't you? If death is what you want, I shall grant your wish!"

"Bring it on!" Maximus was cold and fearless.

"Killing you is a piece of cake!" Luther slowly unsheathed the sword, and with a leap, he broke into a run toward his opponent. When he got near Maximus, the sword in his hand started trembling. In a second, the air was filled with illusions of the sword, confusing the eyes of the viewers and making it hard to discern reality from illusion.

"He used the Illusory Sword Technique! That was a surprise. He went ahead with the technique that launched his fame! Seems like he wants this over with."

"Poor dude! Mr. William's Illusory Sword Technique is ever-changing and hard to defend against. Not even I could block the moves."

The crowd murmured and commented.

"Hmph!" With a shake of the body, Maximus unsheathed his sword and held it in one hand. He repeated what Luther did and launched his attack with the same moves.

Soon, the two were in the heat of the battle. The swords and their illusions created a web of flashes. Sparks could be seen flying along with the clanking of metal.

"Hah! I taught you all your moves, and now you're trying to use them against me! How ridiculous. Now, it is time to give you a taste of the third move you have never mastered!" While speaking, Luther waved his hand to make his sword turn back. The sword was aimed at Maximus' abdomen. It was the move that Luther had used to destroy Maximus earlier. He was confident that Maximus could not defend against the move, even if it were his second time experiencing it.

They heard the sound of the blade ripping through flesh, and suddenly, the arrogant Luther froze up. When his sword was inches away from Maximus' abdomen, he finally realized that Maximus' sword had pierced through his arm, immobilizing his move.

“How is that possible?” Luther’s expression crumbled. He had never expected Maximus to defend against the attack and counterattack by hacking those moves. How could Maximus gain that insight within a mere few days?

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“Luther Williams, you have gotten slower in sword fighting,” Maximus casually commented.

“No! That’s impossible! How did you manage to strike me? It must have been dumb luck!” Feeling indignant, Luther turned around and launched his attacks again, even though he was injured. This time, he did not hold back and put in his 100%, evident from his frenzied and merciless attacks that were hard to dodge.

During the ninth move, he switched it up and aimed his blade at Maximus’ throat with the intent to kill. However, Maximus didn’t shun the attack and instead slashed Luther in the abdomen with greater speed and accuracy.

Luther stumbled backward, aghast. He would have been gutted had Maximus’ sword slashed upward. “What’s going on? Where did that punk learn the trick from?” He pressed against his bleeding abdomen in shock. He could not wrap his mind around how Maximus had recovered from the grave injury with significant improvements to his skills all within a few days.

“Luther Williams, it’s my turn to make a move now” Maximus didn’t give his mentor any room to breathe. He swung his sword and charged at his opponent.

Luther hurriedly collected himself and raised his sword in defense. At this point, he lost his confidence and was forced to put on a defensive play due to his injury. In contrast, Maximus was getting stronger by the second and demonstrated great sword-fighting skills, bringing Luther to his knees.

“This is a good chance!” At the twenty-sixth move, Luther suddenly gathered all his internal energy, huffing and puffing as he made his final move in a bid to turn the tables. Just when he was about to gain the upper hand, he found a

blade pressing against his neck. If he made the slightest move, he would be killed on the spot.

“Huh?” Baffled, he dropped the sword onto the floor. He still didn’t understand how the three flawed moves he intentionally taught Maximus had, in turn, contributed to his own downfall.

“Why? Why did it turn out this way?” The crowd gasped at the sight of Luther’s defeat. No one had expected to see the second-in-command lose to his mentee in record time. Throughout the battle, Luther seemed to be put at a disadvantage.

“I-impossible!”

“How could Maximus Kane beat Dad? I thought Dad was the one who taught him all the moves.” Brody, Oliver, and the other disciples were covered in cold sweat. They had been proud and confident in Luther’s victory, but they were surprised to witness Maximus’ prowess which sent Luther into a defensive position, and the way Maximus ended the battle with a decisive sword

move.

“Our last-minute prep works.” Dustin looked amused. Upon hearing the remark, Brody and his gang looked shaken to the core. Did Maximus win with the few moves that Dustin had taught him? That would have been frightening!

“W-who did you learn the moves from?” Luther sweated profusely as he pressed against his bleeding abdomen.

“That is not the point. The point is that I will do the same to you based on how you destroyed my core in the past.” While speaking, Maximus drew his sword again.

“Hold on!” Luther pleaded in panic, “Max, I am sorry for what happened earlier, but it was a careless mistake. Please give me another chance.

“A chance? Did you give me a chance when you decided to destroy my core?” Maximus looked

grim.

“Max, I know I’m in the wrong! Please have mercy on me-we shared years of relationship!” Then, Luther fell onto his knees. “I have a lot of enemies If you destroy my core and my skills, I will not survive a day. Please spare me!”

Maximus fell silent at the sight. Despite his urge to seek revenge, a voice in his heart held him back. After all, he had learned everything in sword fighting from Luther, even though Luther had done so with an ulterior motive. At the end of the day, Maximus owed his swordsmanship to Luther’s teachings. Even though Luther was a merciless bastard, Maximus decided to be the bigger man.

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“Don’t ever show up in front of me!” Maximus kicked Luther aside and proceeded to leave.

“Got it...” Luther put on a fake smile. When Maximus turned his back against Luther, the man had a gleam in his eyes as he picked up the sword on the floor and plunged it into Maximus’ body.

“Look out!” Dustin yelled, and Maximus jumped aside at the final moment. Although Maximus wasn’t critically wounded from the stabbing, the sword left a long, gaping wound that oozed blood

on his waist.

Luther was taken aback when he realized that his ambush failed. Then, he threw the sword away and frantically pleaded, “Max! I’m wrong! I’m definitely in the wrong! I was blinded for a moment just now. Please don’t take it to heart!”

“You stubborn old donkey!” Fuming, Maximus took out his sword and attempted to slash Luther, this time showing no mercy at all.

“Stop!” a thunderous roar sounded out of the blue Next, a majestic figure descended from the air and shielded Luther.

The man, in his thirties, gave off a powerful air, and his eyes twinkled with a sharp and aggressive look. He was as grand as a mountain when he stood in the ring. The man was the so-called "Fanatic Blade"-Tatum Thunders!

Tatum bellowed when he noticed that Maximus did not stop, "I told you to stop!" He lifted a hand, and the figure of a palm appeared from thin air, punching Maximus in the chest. Almost immediately, Maximus coughed up a mouthful of blood and was thrown out ten feet away. It was clear that he was no match for Tatum.

"Shit! It's Tatum Thunders!"

"He's the ace of Royal Valor indeed! With a punch, the ace, who's ranked as one of The Heavenly Immortals, has severely injured his opponent."

"Pretty good of that young man to beat Mr. Williams, Too bad he ran into Tatum Thunders!"

"Tatum lives up to the nickname of Fanatic Blade!"

The crowd murmured in shock at Tatum's presence. From the first move, he demonstrated the awe -striking capability of The Heavenly Immortals, something that The Hundred Immortals could only dream of.

"That's our Tatum! He's so cool!" Abby clapped furiously while gaping at the man on the platform with looks of adulation. It was her lifelong dream to be ranked as one of The Heavenly Immortals. Thus, her future partner must be one of them as well.

"Hmph! How dare you hurt your mentor in public! How terribly wicked of you to do so! There's no point keeping a piece of trash like you in the martial arts field. Today, I shall carry out God's will!" After giving his self-righteous speech, he hurled a punch at Maximus again with the intent to kill.

"Oh no, that guy's done for!" Everyone shook their heads sympathetically. Although Maximus was talented and capable, he wasn't at Tatum's level. Just when Maximus was close to meeting his fate, a figure hopped onto the platform and fended off the incoming punch.

The winds from the punch died down, replaced by puffs of smoke. Dustin cast an icy glare at Tatum. "Boulderthorn disciples are all the same-shameless."

“Who are you? How dare you stop me?” Tatum narrowed his eyes, looking hostile.

“I’m the Dustin Rhys that you wish to battle,” Dustin replied.

“What? Is that Dustin Rhys?” The crowd froze in shock. Abby and Ralph gaped at Dustin. They had

no idea that the martial art genius they kept discussing was right beside them all along.

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“Gosh, who is that kid? He’s quite something to challenge Tatum in public! Is he asking for death?”

“He is gutsy but not the sharpest tool in the shed.”

Dustin’s presence became the talk of the town. No one had expected any martial artist to have a showdown with Tatum at the last minute.

“Hey! Why did you go up there? Are you mad? Get down here now!” After a slight pause, Abby loudly called out to Dustin. In her eyes, he was nothing more than a clueless young man who did not know his place.

“What is that dude doing? Doesn’t he know that he’s up against one of The Heavenly Immortals, Tatum Thunders? He’ll die in Tatum’s hands!” Ralph shook his head forlornly and looked on as though he could predict Dustin’s demise. After all Ralph wasn’t strong enough to take on Tatum, and he did not expect a no-name as young as Dustin to succeed too.

“Hmph! That reckless thing! How dare he insult Tatum? He’ll meet his end!” Brody and the others started cackling with glee. Not only would Tatum tid Boulderthorn of traitors like Maximus, but he would also get Dustin, the thorn in the flesh, out of the way.

“You little jerk! Who are you, and how dare you stand in my way?” Tatum scrunched up his eyes with a menacing look. So far, no one had dared to stop him from taking the lives of his targets.

“Tatum! He’s Dustin Rhys! Slay him!” Brody suddenly yelled at the platform.

“What? Dustin Rhys?” There was an audible gasp from the audience, who had initially taken Dustin to be a show-off, only to realize that he was the martial art genius who had gained fame recently.

“How could that be? He’s Dustin Rhys!” Abby froze up and found it hard to believe that the dark horse she had been talking about was by her side all this time.

“Good gracious! I almost missed the hidden gem!” Ralph was similarly stupefied. If Dustin was capable of defeating Joshua Hummer and confident enough to go for a battle with Tatum Thunders, he must at least be a martial artist who had achieved divinity. Ralph, upon realizing that Dustin must be way more advanced than him in the practice, felt rather embarrassed for offering to take Dustin under his wing.

“Had I known he was Dustin Rhys, I would have gotten on his good side just now!”

“Damn right! We missed our shot!” Ralph’s martial art colleagues were full of regrets upon learning the truth. It was common knowledge that the existence of a martial arts genius would give any guild a major boost, and this was especially true for the relatively small guilds. They’d enter a golden age if they produced a martial arts genius.

“Oh, kid, you’re Dustin Rhys?” Tatum snickered. “You are digging your own grave! As payback for killing Joshua, you will not be spared today!”

Joshua Hummer said something along those lines as well. But he’s dead now,” Dustin commented without flinching.

“Hah! You’re a bold one! Tatum scrutinized him. “But you’re gravely wrong to compare Joshua

with me! People like you have no idea how scary an individual from The Heavenly Immortals could be!”

“Scary?” Dustin merely scoffed. “More like ludicrous. You thought you were something, but you’re just a frog in the well.”

“What did you just say?” Tatum’s expression hardened. He had never been looked down upon ever since he gained fame.

“I was being kind, describing you as a frog in the well. Turns out you’re just a worm in the apple- rotten and foul!” Dustin didn’t hold back at all, and his insult evoked a collective exclamation from the audience, who didn’t expect him to be so rude and fearless from the start. Everyone shuddered at the thought of provoking Tatum Thunders, as that would be inviting death.

“Oh, great! Look at you, the stubborn one, not knowing you’re close to death. You’ll pee your pants when you’re staring at death!” Tatum, now enraged, hurled a punch in the air that morphed into a translucent shadow.

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The impact of the punch barreled toward Dustin with the weight of a mountain. A martial artist who achieved divinity could easily decapitate the opponent ten feet away by releasing his or her internal energy.

“He’s indeed one of The Heavenly Immortals! That punch could easily crush a car!”

“That rash young man shouldn’t have provoked Tatum Thunders. Now, he’s cornered.” The martial artists watching from the crowd shuddered when they saw the shadows of Tatum’s punch. In their opinion, the punch was indefensible.

“Hah...” Dustin smiled and tapped his feet on the floor. He disappeared into thin air and dodged the punch with ease.

“You’re quick! But let’s see how many times you could dodge my punches!” Scoffing, Tatum launched three punches, each quicker and stronger than the previous ones. Dustin skipped around speedily but calmly and dodged all the attacks with his freakish skills.

“Fuck! He’s like a slippery eel!” Brody was quite frustrated at the sight. He badly wanted to witness Dustin crushed to death, but Dustin was too agile and swerved out of the way of Tatum’s punches.

Meanwhile, Ralph was clicking his tongue, amazed at the sight. "I did not expect him to show off such talent at his young age.

"So what? He's just pulling off tricks. If he's really talented, he wouldn't have dodged the attacks. At the end of the day, he could not beat Tatum!" Abby pouted unhappily. Even after learning about Dustin's identity, she still looked down on him. In her opinion, a true man should face the fight. Instead of hiding.

"Is this what 'Fanatic Blade' has to offer? That's nothing much." Dustin shook his head in disappointment, wondering if the standards of The Heavenly Immortals had decreased. A decade ago, only the best of the best was inducted into The Heavenly Immortals.

"You brat! Better not be arrogant!" Tatum's expression sank. "You think you can show off in front of me with a couple of tricks? I was warming up just now. And now, it's time to show you the skills gap between us!" Then, he tapped his feet on the floor and threw himself at Dustin. When he was close, he drew his hands in before throwing a heavy punch. Almost immediately, a gale started blowing, and the air was filled with shadows of the forceful punch hurtling toward Dustin.

"I-i-is that Tatum's signature move that launched him to fame? The Crushing Waves from the Poseidon Punches?"

"That's right. It's Crushing Waves, rumored to turn a punch into countless punches. There's no escape!"

"I guess Tatum must be furious, seeing how he served his signature move. That guy will be dead today.

The other martial artists stared at the punches in the air with horrified faces. Even from afar, they felt the force and tension that could easily rip them apart.

"Dustin Rhys! Time to die!" Brody chortled with malign and glee.

"That's a pity. He cannot escape his fate." Ralph let out a soft sigh filled with regret.

“Didn’t we tell him to stay low profile? He refused to listen and offended Tatum. No one can save him now!” Abby shook her head and braced herself for Dustin’s imminent death.

“These are just bells and whistles!” Dustin snickered and crushed the punches in the air with a slap, and the momentum of the counterattack hit Tatum hard in the face. Everyone heard an explosive sound. Tatum was seen flying and crashing flat onto the ground like a loose kite. The hall plunged into dead silence.

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An eerie silence hung over the scene. The spectators were wide-eyed at the sight of Tatum’s lifeless body on the ground. They struggled to make sense of the outcome, as it was totally out of their expectations.

They had assumed that Dustin would be defeated when Tatum used his signature attack. To their shock, Dustin sent Tatum flying with a slap. It was a sight that no one would have believed unless they saw it for themselves. They could not help but wonder about the reason behind the Fanatic Blade’s shameful loss. Was it a momentary slip-up, or was Dustin simply too powerful?

“Heavens! Did I see it wrong? Was Tatum... defeated?”

“A sight that was unseen and unheard of!”

After moments of utter silence, the audience exploded in a raucous chatter, punctuated by exclamations and expressions of shock, astonishment, confusion, and disbelief. No one had expected that the Fanatic Blade, one of the Heavenly Immortals, had been taken down by Dustin. “T-that’s impossible. How did that little rascal beat Tatum? He must have pulled off some fishy tricks!” Brody shook his head furiously, refusing to believe in the outcome. Meanwhile, Luther frowned grimly. “He’s really a freak.”

On the other hand, Abby and the others were too stunned beyond speech at the result. “This can’t be right! Is Tatum defeated?”

“Is that Dustin’s real capability? He’s really extraordinary!” Maximus looked on with admiration.. No one else could send the Fanatic Blade flying across the air.

“Aagh!” At that moment, Tatum suddenly let out a feral roar, and his body shot up from the ground. In stark contrast to his confidence and arrogance from before, he was transformed into a wild beast that was provoked.

“Oh! He woke up! He’s indeed one of the Heavenly Immortals-” Dustin was surprised by Tatum’s comeback. Even martial artists who achieved divinity would fall unconscious for half a day after Dustin’s slap.

“You jerk! You’re done for! I’ll tear you into pieces today!” Tatum bellowed, his eyes looking angry and crazed. As the ace of the Royal Valor and a formidable martial artist ranked as a Heavenly Immortal, he had never experienced this degree of humiliation. Imagine getting slapped and collapsing onto the ground in front of countless pairs of eyes!

“Someone get me my brass ring saber!” He turned around and yelled. Almost immediately, two men showed up carrying a weapon that was five feet long. It was heavy, thick, and wide, too difficult to be lifted by the average martial artist, not to mention waving it around.

“Great! Tatum is finally getting serious!” Brody had a look of joy on his face as he felt calmer. There was a reason Tatum received the nickname Fanatic Blade. Tatum had two signature techniques, the first being Poseidon Punches, which was good for offensive and defensive play, and it was unpredictable as well. His second technique was the Blade of Gale!

Rumors had it that once put in action, the Blade of Gale would render an area barren. In comparison to the punches, the Blade of Gale was more aggressive and ruthless, like a gust of

strong wind that blasted away all the leaves in its path, powerful and unstoppable!

“He should have used the blade from the start. A predator still needs to give it its all, even if it’s going after small prey.” Luther sighed in relief, knowing that having the blade made a world of

difference for Tatum.

“I almost forgot that Tatum is the best in his blade technique. Dustin is in trouble now.” Ralph narrowed his eyes and seemed pensive.

“Hmph! Tatum must have lost the round earlier because he was careless. Now that he’s getting serious, he can take down ten Dustin Rhys!” Abby tossed her head back as though she had regained her confidence again.

“Fuck! He agreed to a bare-handed fight, but he decided to get his blade all of a sudden. He’s shameless!”

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“You rarely see a decent man who’s from Boulderthorn. They’re all bullies.”

“That’s a pity. I wonder if Dustin could survive this

Some martial artists started worrying about Dustin’s fate. As the grassroots, they would rather Dustin win the battle. Given how conceited and bold they were, it would be great if someone could teach Boulderthorn a lesson. However, it was a tough feat to beat Tatum due to his killer technique -the Blade of Gale.

“You little rascal, I have to admit that you’re quite something. You’ve forced me to use the blade. Alas, this shall be the end of it. Dying under my blade today shall be an honor for you.” Tatum waved the brass ring saber with a sharp look in his eyes. He handled the heavy weapon weighing hundreds of pounds like it was a strand of straw, showing off the strength of his bicep.

“Just cut to the chase and come at me.” Dustin wiggled his fingers, a provocative gesture to get Tatum to start the fight.

“You’re asking for it!” The look in Tatum’s eyes hardened as he charged at Dustin with the saber in hand. The lengthy and cumbersome brass ring saber left a mark as it was dragged across the ground, leaving sparks flying from the friction.

“The Three Tornadoes!” When Tatum was close, he bellowed and started wielding the saber frenziedly. The shadows of the fast-moving saber formed the illusion of a web in the air as the weapon crushed toward Dustin’s head.

The audience struggled to breathe due to the horrific and stifling pressure from the impact.

“The Three Tornadoes technique is famous for a reason!”

“Even demons would get out of the way when it’s used. That rascal is going to die!” the martial artists exclaimed at the sight of the atrocious attack. Still, Dustin stood his ground without moving. He waited until the saber was about to split on his hand and reached out to grab the blade.

Amid an explosion, Dustin activated all his internal energy, crushing the web of blades in the air. The illusion of the blades scattered away in the wind. Meanwhile, Tatum’s saber was stuck in Dustin’s tight grip.

“How is that possible?” Tatum’s pupils wavered as he wore a terrified expression. He had never expected Dustin to grab the saber he slashed at full strength. He thought, “Who the f*ck is this monster?”

“Is that all you’ve got? That’s disappointing.” Dustin shook his head and added, “Since you have nothing more to show, I’ll end it here.” Then, he gave Tatum a kick in the abdomen.

“Ahhh-” Tatum yelled in excruciating pain as he was sent flying a good 30 feet away. When he landed on his knees, he started coughing up blood

Once again, the audience was left gaping at the scene. They had expected Tatum to regain the upper hand with the use of the saber, but he was badly defeated anyway. It left everyone wondering about Dustin’s background.

“H-how could you destroy my core?” Face flushed, Tatum was both appalled and enraged.

“You were trying to kill me. Why couldn’t I destroy your core?” Dustin replied coolly. “Bring a message to your mentor later-do not cause trouble for me. Else, I’d uproot the entirety of Royal Valor!”

The audience gasped and murmured at the daring threat, thinking that Dustin was crazy for threatening to ruin the Royal Valor.

“Fine! Just wait and see!” Tatum clenched his jaw and left the scene with his men, tails between their legs.

“How did that happen?” Abby was stunned by the sight of Tatum’s disgraced escape. She couldn’t believe that her idol had been defeated just like that at the hands of a man she looked down on. She thought, “God, are you playing a joke on me?”

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The audience was split in their reactions toward Dustin’s victory. Cheers exploded around Dustin, but some spectators seemed sour at the outcome.

“Fuck! Who’s that guy? How could Tatum lose to him?” a surly and fearful Brody hissed.

“Whoever he is, let’s get out of here before he notices us!” After the initial shock, Luther dared not stay a minute longer and planned his immediate escape.

“Stand still!” Dustin turned around and instantly spotted the few suspicious-looking men. “Luther Williams, did I tell you to leave?”

“Dustin Rhys, I’m the second-in-command at Boulderthorn. You’d better steer clear of me!” Luther warned him with a stern look. At the critical moment, he had no choice but to use the

Boulderthorn name as protection.

“The second-in-command? Hah...” Dustin scoffed and remarked, “Do you think I’d be scared of the second-in-command when I couldn’t care less about the guildmaster?”

“What do you want?” Luther’s expression sank.

“Give up your practice, and I’ll spare your life,” Dustin suggested calmly. He had to teach Luther a grave lesson for being a hypocrite who self-professed as a teacher and claimed the moral high ground.

“Dustin Rhys, that’s too much!” Luther’s face was scrunched up. If he gave up his practice, he would have no purpose and reason to exist in the martial arts field.

“Too much? Did you ever consider the consequences when you were f*cking around without conscience?” Dustin showed no respect for the old man.

“You” Luther gritted his teeth and tried to hold back his temper. “You shouldn’t burn your bridges. Aren’t you worried you’d become a common enemy of our field if you force me to the wall?”

“Courtesy is useless when confronting trash like you. If you aren’t doing it yourself, I will do it for you.” Dustin refused to engage in further conversation and bent his fingers to send a silver needle into Luther’s abdomen. Luther promptly yelped and collapsed onto the ground, grimacing.

“Maximus, I’m done destroying his core. I’ll leave his fate in your hands.” When it came to ending Luther, Dustin allowed Maximus to make the decision. After all, Maximus was the one who had a grudge against Luther.

“It’s fine. Since he’s basically paralyzed, I shall spare his life.” At first, Maximus lifted his sword, but he finally put it down after some thinking. He wasn’t doing so out of mercy. He knew very well that Luther had made countless enemies and would be a hot target after his core was destroyed. In the future, Luther’s life would be a living hell, and that was the best punishment for him.

“Consider yourselves lucky. Get lost now!” Dustin softly chided the Boulderthorn men. Upon hearing that, Luther and the rest immediately scampered away, leaving behind only the lady in white.

“Max Caitlyn went up to Maximus with a feeble look on her face. “I’m sorry, I said those cruel

words because I was under pressure. Please forgive me.”

At present, Maximus was stronger than Luther and had a bright future ahead of him. It was clear who she should suck up to.

“Forgive you?” Maximus snickered. “How dare you ask for forgiveness after what you’ve done?”

“Max, I know I’m in the wrong, but I had no choice. It’s hard for a weak woman like me to stand on my own feet in the martial arts field. Plus, Luther has gotten something on me. I couldn’t fight back. I am a victim too...” Her voice faltered and turned into a sob.

The way she cried softly would melt the heart of anyone watching, but Maximus said to her coldly, “Don’t put on a show in front of me. That’ll only disgust me.”

“Whether or not you believe in me, I do love you a lot. I’m willing to run away with you and live like nomads!” she pleaded, tears glistening in her eyes.

“Did you say you love me?” He sneered. “Would you have said that if my core was destroyed? Would you have apologized if I hadn’t defeated Luther Williams? You do not love me for who I am- you’re only after my power, my potential, and my social status!”

“I...”

“That’s enough. I do not want to hear any explanation. From now on, you and I shall go separate ways. There’s nothing left between us!” He wore a steely expression.

“Max, I know I don’t deserve you, but I’ll still pray for you. When you’re alone in the night, I hope you think of me, your mentee, and the beautiful memories we made in the past. I’ll leave now and never show up in front of you. I wish you a great career ahead...” With that, she left with tears in her eyes

He opened his mouth but said nothing. He felt both love and hatred for Caitlyn, and he knew very well that they could never get back together. Once bitten, twice shy!

“Let’s go. Time to drink.” After settling the trouble, Dustin and Maximus left in no time. The battle started abruptly and ended in a similar fashion. Through this incident, Dustin’s popularity skyrocketed, and he was known as a martial arts genius. Many believed that the martial arts field in Balerno would be shaken up with the arrival of Dustin Rhys after this battle.

“Mr. Dunn, if I recall correctly, Dustin Rhys came here with you, right? Does that mean you have laid claim to him?” a middle-aged martial artist from the crowd threw out a question.

“Well...” Ralph felt the eyes on him and forced a smile. “Since you found out about it, I shall not keep it a secret. To be honest with you, Dustin Rhys has become the principal disciple of the Steel Legion!”

His claim prompted a collective gasp.

“What? Has Dustin Rhys joined the Steel Legion?”

“My goodness! Mr. Dunn, you hit the jackpot!”

“Mr. Dunn, you hide your talents well. How did you manage to scout a genius like him? We’re envious!”

Congratulations, Mr. Dunn. Do remember me if you have anything good to share with the community.”

The martial artists started flattering Ralph and currying favor, especially the hot-blooded teens

who were itching to join.

“Mr. Dunn, do you still take in disciples? I want to join the Steel Legion!”

“Me too! Count me in!”

“The Steel Legion must have a solid foundation to nurture a genius like Dustin Rhys. I want in too!”

The young martial artists around them were a bubbling cacophony; each worried they’d be one step behind

“That is always open to consideration. The Steel Legion always welcomes upstanding men who fight for justice!” Ralph was beaming merrily at the enthusiastic response. He was taken aback by the effectiveness of name-dropping Dustin, which immediately garnered the interest of many young martial artists. If the trend continued, he believed the Steel Legion would prosper under his wise and courageous leadership!

“Uh...” Abby had a funny look on her face when she witnessed the crowd’s eagerness. Her grandpa’s brazenness came as a surprise—he wanted to associate the guild with Dustin, even though Dustin had clearly turned him down. She wondered, “Is this what they call the ‘real world’?”

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It was noon. At the clubhouse of the Hummer's residence, Edwin Hummer was struck on the head with a wine bottle. Blood trickled down his body, along with the merlot.

"Hummer! I was screwed because of you!" Tatum sat on the couch; his features contorted in anger. "Didn't you say that Dustin Rhys was a nobody? Why was he that powerful? Did you lie to me on purpose?"

At his mentor's request, Tatum had shown up to avenge Joshua Hummer. In the beginning, he thought he could show off his talent, but he was badly defeated in the end. Not only that, his core was destroyed. He had all the reason to be mad.

"Sir Thunders, in my records, Dustin Rhys did not come from a remarkable background. It wasn't wrong to describe him as a nobody. As for his actual abilities, I recall giving you a heads up, but you didn't take it seriously," Edwin murmured with his head hung low.

"Are you blaming me for being weak?" Tatum glowered at him. If he weren't hurt, he would have taught Edwin a lesson.

"In my opinion, it is unnecessary to issue a public challenge to men like Dustin Rhys. You can use whatever means to get him killed," Edwin further explained.

"Oh, are you f*cking teaching me how to get things done now? Tatum's expression darkened, his eyes gleaming with hostility.

"Of course not." Edwin lowered his head.

"I have no time for you!" Tatum looked irritated. "Didn't you get Substratumis from Dr. Linden Watkins? Give it to me now. I need it for my injuries"

Substratumis, the core restoration pill, was created to heal internal injuries. It was rather effective in restoring one's core. As long as the patient took it within 24 hours, they would stand a chance to regenerate their core. However, due to the preciousness of the ingredients, the Stoneray Valley only produced a few pills annually. Each batch of pills would be scooped up by members of various guilds upon hitting the market. Thankfully, Edwin had spent a fortune on one of those pills, just in time for Tatum to use it.

“Sir Thunders, I accidentally crushed the pill. So, I can’t help you. I’m sorry.” Edwin shook his head regrettably.

“You crushed the pill?” Tatum’s eyes narrowed, and he snickered. “Are you kidding me? Any sane person would take great care of that precious pill. How could you have crushed it? Your son’s dead anyway, so you can’t use it on him. Who else except for me will need your pill?”

“Sir Thunders, I am telling you the truth.” Edwin appeared serious.

“Oh, shut up! If you don’t hand me the restorative pill today, I’ll crush your legs!” Tatum threatened him spitefully.

Edwin stared at Tatum with his cold but bright eyes. “But, Sir Thunders, I wonder how you are going to do that, given that your core has been destroyed.”

“Hah! I might not have any bit of internal energy left, but killing a man like you is child’s play!”

Tatum was conceited.

“Is that so?” Edwin chuckled icily and brandished a gun from his back without warning. He pointed it at Tatum. “Can a man without internal energy defend himself from bullets?”

“Hmm?” Tatum’s expression hardened. “How dare you point a gun at me, you son of a b*tch. Do you know who I am? Put the gun down and cut your hands in front of me. If not, I’ll...”

Edwin suddenly pulled the trigger before Tatum could finish his sentence. Following a loud bang, the bullet shot Tatum in the forehead, leaving a splattered mess of blood on the wall.

Tatum grunted, his body trembling and his eyes wide-opened in disbelief. He’d never believe that Edwin would pull the trigger on him, and a fatal, point-blank shot at that.

Finally, Tatum’s body slumped heavily onto the floor, his eyes remaining open as he drew his last breath.

“Huh?” Fletcher Lawson, who had been standing by the side, appeared mortified at the scene. “S- Sir Hummer, what are you doing? Tatum Thunders is Sir Lincoln’s principal disciple. How are we going to explain this to Sir Lincoln?” He secretly thought Edwin had gone mad for having the guts to murder Tatum.

“Yeah, I killed him. Why do I need to explain that? Edwin took out a handkerchief and calmly wiped the spot of his head injury from the wine bottle attack.

“If Sir Lincoln learns about this, he will not let this slip!” Fletcher was panicking as he pictured the guildmaster of Boulderthorn, halfway to becoming a grandmaster. The man was powerful enough to massacre the entire Hummer Family!

“If we don’t tell, no one will know,” Edwin muttered emotionlessly.

“But Tatum died on our territory. How can we hide the fact?” Fletcher was drenched in cold sweat by now.

“You don’t have to panic. Just remember-none of us met Tatum Thunders today. He suffered a sudden death in his home after the battle with Dustin. We shall leave Boulderthorn to figure out the murderer, and we have no clue about it at all. Got it?” Edwin tilted his head, his eyes shimmering with a cold gaze.

“Sir Hummer, are you telling me to... shift the blame to Dustin Rhys?” It didn’t take Fletcher long to piece the puzzle.

“It was Dustin Rhys’ doing all along. When did we shift the blame to him?” Edwin questioned.

“Oh, right! It’s all Dustin Rhys’ fault!” Fletcher nodded furiously. At that point, he finally caught a glimpse of the depths of Edwin’s dark soul. Edwin had decided to kill a top ace like Tatum without blinking an eye. The mere thought of it was mind-numbing.

At the Boulderthorn branch in Millsburg, Clement Lincoln sat on the throne, his expression darkening when Tatum Thunders’ body was brought back. As the guildmaster of Boulderthorn who had extensive experience in the field, he never had anyone offending him in this manner. “Who was it? Who did this?” He gritted his teeth as his eyes bulged.

Sir Lincoln, it was Dustin Rhys!" Luther started fanning the flames. "Dustin Rhys pulled dirty

tricks in the battle and destroyed Tatum's core. Tatum was assassinated right after that!"

"Dustin Rhys! It's him again!" Clement banged his fists on the table out of rage, and the wooden table instantly cracked and split into pieces. First, it was Joshua Hummer. Now, it was Tatum. Clement had lost two beloved disciples, one of whom was his heir. It was tough not to feel anger and hatred at the culprit.

"Sir Lincoln, Dustin Rhys is sly and ruthless. He has a lot of tricks up his sleeve. If we don't get rid of him in time, he might be a pain in the ass in the future!" Luther added fuel to the fire.

"Send out my orders-The Royal Valor of Boulder thorn is looking to arrest Dustin Rhys!" Clement said with grief. "I'll use all necessary means and make any sacrifices to tear him into pieces!"

"Yes, sir!" His disciples bowed and took his orders The Royal Valor was shaken from the orders, and its aces were called back from all corners of the world for the quest. At that moment, Dustin Rhys was the most-wanted man on the Royal Valor's blacklist.

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In the evening, Dustin was focused on drug research at the Peaceful Medical Centre when a silver Bentley rolled to a stop at the entrance. The door opened, and Natasha, dressed in a bodycon silver dress, strutted out, her hips swaying alluringly as she walked. "Dear, I'm here..." She entered the medical center with a sweet smile and took Dustin by his arm. "Let's go! I'll bring you out to have a nice dinner tonight!"

"A nice dinner? Where to?" He was, curious, but she dragged him into her car without further

explanation.

"You'll know when we're there."

The car cruised at a steady speed down the streets. Forty minutes later, it parked in front of the entrance of a high-end recreational club. "Ms. Harmon, you're here! Please come with me," one of

the ushers led the way as the other ushers lined up and bowed to the guests.

They shuffled up to the restaurant on the second floor and made their way to a spacious private lounge, where a couple of young men and women had congregated. They were dressed to the nines and acted gracefully. One could tell that they were no ordinary folks.

"Natasha, you're finally here! I thought we'd be stood up again because you're too busy!" A woman in a crimson dress stood up to greet Natasha and Dustin. She was lovely and tall, and her bodycon long dress hugged her curves at the perfect places, showing off her voluptuous figure to everyone.

"Zoey, I will never stand you up. We don't get to meet up often as old schoolmates. We definitely need to catch up in this rare gathering." Natasha beamed at the woman named Zoey.

"Natasha, is this your boyfriend?" Zoey scanned Dustin from head to toe with curiosity. She decided that he was good-looking but dressed rather shabbily. He didn't look like he was from a wealthy family.

“That’s correct. I’ll introduce you to each other. This is my man, Dustin Rhys.” Smiling, Natasha introduced her friends to Dustin as well, “Dear, these are my schoolmates. This gorgeous woman here with big tits and a big ass is Zoey Forster. This is Lyla Benson, with short hair and dimples. Oh, and this is a mega star in Dragonmarsh, queen of entertainment-Adriana Lovett. These two guys are Zeke Perry and Gordon Flynn.”

“Hello, nice to meet you.” Dustin flashed them a dignified smile. One had to admit that birds of a feather do flock together. Natasha was attractive, and so were her friends. Adriana stood out especially, and she rivaled Natasha in terms of appearance. It was no surprise that she was crowned the queen of entertainment.

“Natasha, your boyfriend doesn’t look familiar. I wonder what he is working as,” the man named Zeke Perry inquired.

“Oh, my man is a doctor.” Natasha looked proud, but her friends were baffled. “He’s a doctor?” They thought it was ridiculous that Natasha, the precious daughter of the Harmon Family, was dating a doctor.

So, Natasha, is Mr. Rhys an alumnus of Harvard Medical School or Stanford Medicine?” Zeke pressed on. In their eyes, only the best could date Natasha.

“No.” Dustin shook his head. Zeke asked, “Oh! May I know which medical school you graduated from? And where are you practicing now?”

“I did not attend university. I’m now running a humble medical center,” Dustin did not shun the topic.

“A medical center? Are you kidding us?”

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Zeke’s jaw dropped to the floor. Not only was Dustin not an alumnus of a prestigious institution. but he also did not attend university Was he even a good match for Natasha?

“Natasha, what’s going on? You didn’t drag a random man here just to shut us up, did you?” Zoey was displeased, for she believed that a doctor from an ordinary medical center wasn’t worthy of

sharing a dinner table with their group

“Stop acting funny Dustin is an expert in medicine and martial arts You’ll know soon.” Natasha puffed her chest with a smile.

“Natasha, I’m sorry, but you’d be better off dating me if you were giving this doctor a chance,” Gordon finally spoke up half-jokingly He had once pursued Natasha but was turned down. Now that Natasha got her eyes on an ordinary doctor, he started to think he had a chance because he felt that he was way better than Dustin. After all, the Flynn family was one of the elites in Balerno.

“Right, Natasha, I think Gordon’s pretty decent He stayed single just to wait for you. Why don’t you. consider him?” Zoey winked at Natasha and started matchmaking

“Gordon? Nah, he’s not my type,” Natasha shot down the suggestion.

“Natasha, now, you’re being harsh Gordon graduated from a prestigious university He runs a company worth billions Isn’t he a stronger candidate than a doctor? Zoey analyzed

“Gordon’s life is none of my business My boyfriend is Dustin Please do not joke about this topic” Natasha frowned a little, clearly crossed. “Plus, if you are talking about an excellent candidate, Dustin is the best for me Even a hundred Gordons Ean’t beat a single Dustin Rhys ”

The expression on the faces of Natasha’s friends froze, none expected that remark from Natasha Haimon, and they wondered if Natasha, the Steel Lady, was just like the average woman blinded, by love

“Hmph’ I’m not a big shot, but I rake in billions annually. If this gentleman here is a hundred times better than I am, does that mean he is making hundreds of billions per year?” Gordon started acting funny. He was obviously unsatisfied with Natasha’s comparison.

“The money you earn doesn’t mean a thing Even if Dustin is dirt poor, I will still love him. Do you get it now?” Natasha schooled her friends coldly

“Hah! So, he’s a sugar baby Gordon snorted with disdain, and the other friends joined him to look down on Dustin.

“Gordon Flynn, watch your mouth! If you’re not hungry, perhaps you should see yourself out!” Natasha’s expression hardened.

“Alright, alright Natasha, we’re all old schoolmates here. They’re only pulling your leg. Just relax. Come here. Take a seat, everyone,” Zoey hurriedly played the mediator when she realized the situation was rapidly deteriorating.

Gordon didn’t say a word after that, but he shot a venomous look at Dustin.

After they took their seats, they started chatting and eating harmoniously. However, they gave Dustin the cold shoulder due to his low social status. Still, he was unconcerned by the treatment

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and enjoyed his drinks and food as though he wasn’t part of the group.

In the middle of the conversations, the door to the private lounge flung open. A middle-aged man. with a beer belly marched in with two bodyguards in tow. Adriana, who had been rather quiet, suddenly seemed frantic when she noticed the intruders.

“Ms. Lovett, why didn’t you pick up our calls? Do you think we couldn’t hunt you down if you hid in a small town?” The middle-aged man flashed a menacing grin.

“My contract with the company is annulled! Stop harassing me!” Adriana warned them.

The man scoffed. “Hah! Is that for you to decide? What do you take our boss for? The company invested money and effort to launch you to fame. Now that you’re established, you plan to go solo! You’re taking advantage of us, don’t you think?”

“I’ve paid you back the money I made over these years! What more do you want?” Her face fell.

“Hmph! That tiny amount of money isn’t worth a thing! Our boss is interested in you as a product. As long as you’re with the agency, you’ll bring in dough constantly. You must know that, don’t you?” The man chuckled.

“I will not go with you! Just give up!” Adriana appeared adamant, but the man snickered and said, ” That’s not for you to decide too. Guys, take her!”

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“Guys! Take her!” Under the man’s orders, the two bodyguards stepped forward, ready to act.

“Hold on!” Zeke stood up suddenly and hissed, “Adriana is my schoolmate. I don’t care who you are. You need to get the f*ck out right now, or I won’t go easy on you!”

“That’s right! The audacity to take her in our presence!” Gordon slammed the table with an imposing air. Adriana was a rising star, crowned the queen of entertainment, and she rivaled Natasha in the looks department. Of course, the guys would not give up on the opportunity to save the damsel in distress.

“Sir, this has nothing to do with you. Stay out of it” the middle-aged man warned the guys icily.

“Hmph! We see it as our business! Get out of here if you don’t want to die!” Zeke bellowed at them..

“Throw these jerks out!” the middle-aged man roared, and the two bodyguards went to work. Seeing that, Zeke and Gordon confidently took on one bodyguard each. Zeke’s style was more of a street gangster’s—he ruthlessly hit the bodyguard on the head with a beer bottle. Meanwhile, Gordon showed off his martial arts skills from his past practice, looking majestic in action. With their teamwork, they managed to take down the two bodyguards in no time.

“Who are you? And why did you poke your nose in others’ business?” The middle-aged man had a frosty look on his face.

“Listen up—I’m Zeke Perry, from the Perry family!”

“And I am Gordon Flynn. If you have any grudges, you should come at us instead of harassing a woman That’s cowardice.” The two men were beaming after showing off their heroism in front of the pretty ladies. It felt good.

“Okay! I have your faces in my mind! Just wait for it!” The middle-aged man shot them a deadly glare and left.

“Hmph! Run any slower, and I’ll break your leg!” Zeke waved his beer bottle wildly.

“Clowns! How dare they make a scene in front of us! Gordon seemed arrogant.

Zoey’s eyes sparkled with admiration. “I never knew you guys were that great at fighting! It was eye-opening!”

“Hah, that was nothing! Back in the day, Gordon and I took down ten guys in the bar!” Zeke proudly reminisced.

She beamed at him. “Is that so? That’s amazing!”

“Zeke, Gordon, thank you so much.” Adriana was grateful to them. She had gone to tiny Balerno from Stonia to run from the trouble, but they hunted her down anyway. She couldn’t picture the outcome if she were caught and dragged away.

“Adriana, we’re all schoolmates. Just relax when you’re with us. If you come across any trouble, just come to us, and we’ll take care of it for you!” Zeke thumped his chest and promised her.

Natasha was rather curious. “Adriana, who did you get into trouble with, to the point that you had to run all the way to Balerno from Stonia?”

“I got into trouble with the boss of the entertainment agency,” Adriana replied with a sigh. “When I was younger, I had a dream to be a star and signed a contract with an agency without much thinking. Since then, I’ve become their money tree They worked me all year long without off days. I didn’t mind working hard, but after I achieved some fame, the bosses started arranging for me to attend dinners and parties. I was made to entertain the government officials and business magnates.”

She added, "At first, they wanted me to drink at the parties. Later, they wanted me to sleep with some of the men. There was no way I'd agree with that, so I kept saying no. They tried a lot of methods on me, offering me money and threatening me. I couldn't take it anymore and paid a huge penalty to nullify the contract. But they still refuse to let me go!" She was close to tears at this point. The public only saw the attractive lifestyle of a star, not knowing that she had suffered a lot in this line of work. The queen of entertainment was nothing more than an empty title. The industry was more complicated than most people imagined it to be.

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Had it not been for her seniors' protection, Adriana believed she would have fallen into the abyss.

"How dare these bastards force you into such filthy deals? That's shameless!" Zeke was indignant after hearing her account.

"Hmph! They're just an entertainment agency. How dare they do that to you? Do they think they are above the law?" Gordon fumed and promised, "Adriana, do not worry. We will see this through. No matter who your boss is, we won't go easy on him!"

"That's right! We will surely avenge you!" the others chimed in, looking as though they were ready for a battle.

"Thank you." Tears of gratitude streamed down Adriana's face.

"By the way, Adriana, what's the name of your boss?" Natasha suddenly asked.

"I only know that Langford is his last name. I don't know anything else," Adriana answered.

"Langford?" The friends exchanged glances, and after connecting the dots, they appeared terrified. "That can't be it! Is he from the Langford family of Glenstead?"

The aristocrats of Stonia were at a different level than those from Balerno-the elites that established themselves in the royal city came from lineages that spanned centuries. Natasha and her friends believed they'd be in great trouble if the boss of the entertainment agency were truly from the Langford family of Glenstead.

"Adriana, what's the name of your agency?" Natasha cautiously prodded.

Adriana answered, "It's called Langford Productions

Everyone paled at the mention of the agency's name. Langford Productions was the entertainment agency under Langford Inc.! It was no surprise that the men from the agency would come for Adriana in Balerno all the way from Stonia-the Langford family was the mastermind behind it all.

"What's wrong?" Adriana quickly sensed that something was off. She had no clue about the man behind Langford Productions, but she was aware of the agency's huge influence.

"Adriana, you might have run into trouble. The boss of Langford Productions isn't your average millionaire." Natasha put on a grim expression.

Only Zoey looked unbothered. "Natasha, stop scaring her. We aren't afraid of the boss of a random entertainment agency when we have Zeke and Gordon backing us!"

Zeke and Gordon exchanged looks, intimidated because they knew the Langford family was untouchable.

"Friends, shall we head to the next place to have fun since we're done with dinner?" Zeke suddenly threw a suggestion out of fear that the Langfords might come after them.

Gordon agreed, "Right! It's quite boring here. Let's go to the bar!"

"Sure. No one objected to that, and they started gathering their stuff before leaving. At that moment, they heard a commotion at the door. Next, the middle-aged men who had left earlier barged into the place with reinforcements.

"Leave? Where are you leaving?"

“How dare you go against our boss? None of you shall leave here!”

“Get every single one of them. Circle them now!” Under the orders, a group of bodyguards closed in on Natasha and her friends. The ladies were scared when they saw the threatening scowl on the bodyguards’ faces.

“Sir, I am Zeke Perry. Please show us some mercy and call the guards off.” Zeke bit the bullet and handed the man a check. “Here’s a little token from me. Just think of it as compensation.”

“Call them off? How about no, you motherf*cker?” The middle-aged man was boiling in anger as he slapped Zeke across the face.

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The middle-aged man’s expression was unfriendly, I’m warning you. Don’t try to be a hero. Otherwise, I’ll break both your legs!”

“You can hit anyone but her.” Dustin stood in front of Natasha, his gaze calm.

“And if I do?” he sneered.

“Then I’ll cripple you,” Dustin smiled.

“You must be tired of living, bastard!” The middle-aged man finally erupted in anger. “Get him! I want him beaten mercilessly! I’ll take full responsibility if he dies!”

“Yes, sir!” On his command, the bodyguards stopped holding back, immediately brandishing their knives at Dustin.

Dustin slammed one hand on the table, and the knives on the table bounced up. With a wave of his sleeves, sharp whistles were heard. Appearing like hidden weapons, the knives shot straight into the bodyguards’ knees.

In a blink of an eye, the previously arrogant and intimidating group of bodyguards were taken down.

“What?” The middle-aged man’s expression shifted upon the scene laid out before him. He’d been around long enough to realize he’d encountered a skilled martial artist that day.

“Holy shit! This guy have skills?” Zoey was shocked She would have never thought that an ordinary doctor would have such impressive skills.

Even Zeke and Gordon were taken aback. They looked at each other with a bewildered look on their faces. Dustin must have had immense strength to be able to pierce a knife through the bodyguards’ knees. What was more astonishing was that he attacked with such accuracy that each bodyguard had the exact same injury.

“Huh?” Adriana was surprised, and her gaze betrayed a spark of interest.

“Who the hell are you, punk? How dare you poke your nose into the Langford family’s business?” The middle-aged man carried a dark expression.

“So what if you’re from the Langford family? I’m butting in since I can’t stand you harassing a woman,” Dustin replied dismissively.

“Just you wait and see, punk!” The man gritted his teeth and was about to leave when Dustin grabbed him by the collar and pulled back forcefully. With a resounding bang, the man crashed into the wall, spitting out a mouthful of blood.

“Did I say you can leave?” Dustin was calm.

“You... what do you want?” His body felt like it was about to fall apart as he clenched his jaw.

“You think you can act as if nothing happened and escape just like that? Think again. Get down on your knees and apologize to everyone here,” Dustin ordered coldly.

“Never!” he refused immediately.

“Oh?” Dustin raised his eyebrows and gave him a resounding slap. A few teeth fell out from the force.

“You dare hit me? I’m from the Langford family!” He was resentful.

“That slap is for the Langford family.” Without another word, Dustin landed two more slaps, leaving the man dazed and unable to steady himself.

Zeke’s expression changed as he watched the scene unfold before him.
“Dustin, you’re crazy! Stop this instant!”

Gordon added with a dark expression, “The Langford family is very powerful. You’re going to die for humiliating them in public. Even if you don’t value your life, don’t drag us down with you!”

“Aren’t you guys getting overly worked up for a mere servant of the Langford family?” Dustin shook his head.

“You-” Their expressions turned ugly as soon as Dustin said that.

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“Don’t worry. I started this. I’ll make sure not to pull you both down into this mess. Of course, if you’re scared, you could leave first. I didn’t see a thing,” Dustin said casually.

A few simple words had made them feel indignant, and their faces burned, especially from the looks the three women were giving them. It was humiliating to be looked down on by an ordinary doctor.

“You’re dead meat, punk! All of you are dead meat!” The middle-aged man got up from the floor with a disheveled appearance.

“Say that again? Who’s dead meat?” Dustin gave him another slap.

“You” Before he could speak, another heavy slap landed on his face. With a grunt, finally, he fainted from the attacks.

Zoey and the rest of them watched in shock. They couldn’t believe Dustin was merciless and dared attack with such force, even though he knew the other party was from the Langford family. He must really not value his life!

“Weakling.” Dustin dusted his hands, feeling unsatisfied.

“Dustin! Do you know what you’ve just done? Not even the Gods can save you for offending the Langford family,” Gordon admonished him sternly but also gloated at his misfortune. Even though he was surprised by Dustin’s martial skills, he knew his actions would only lead to his demise.

“Keep your judgment to yourselves. Just because you’re afraid of the Langfords doesn’t mean I am too.” Dustin shrugged.

“Hmph! You must not be aware of how scary they could be!” Zeke shook his head as if he was looking at an idiot.

The Langford family was Stonia’s most powerful and wealthy aristocratic family. Other than the Tremendous Three, no one else dared confront the Langfords directly in the whole of Balerno. With Dustin’s mere background as an ordinary doctor, he should have made sure he knew who he was going up against before attacking a Langford family servant.

“That’s enough. We shouldn’t stay here any longer. Let’s go.” Zoey’s gaze betrayed her nerves. After what happened, she understood how terrifying the Langfords could be.

Dustin suddenly said, “Ms. Harmon, you should go first. I have a few things left to do.”

Since he’d already made an enemy out of the Langfords, he might as well deal with the issue cleanly.

“What are you going to do?” Natasha stared blankly at him.

Nothing much, just going to finish up some unfinished business,” Dustin smiled.

“Hey! Are you crazy? Their men will be here soon You’ll be dead meat by then,” Zoey said with a frown.

“I know what I’m doing.” Dustin wasn’t bothered.

“Be careful Natasha gave him a long gaze before pulling Adriana out of the door. She knew that

her presence would cause him more trouble.

“Forget it. Suit yourself.” Zoey shook her head and left.

“Hmph! You should know better. You’ll find out soon enough how powerful the Langfords are.”

“Since you won’t listen to our advice, there’s no point in stopping you from being the dead meat you love to be.”

Zeke and Gordon followed behind them after throwing out those words.

All of them finally breathed a sigh of relief after leaving the restaurant.

“Guys, what should we do now?”

Standing near the entrance, Zoey said with uncertainty, “Adriana has been marked by the Langfords. If we don’t think of something, this won’t end well.”

“You’re right! Adriana is not strong enough to fight against those brutal swine.” Zeke was slightly worried.

“They’re not too unreasonable. Perhaps we could talk it out. I just so happen to be acquainted with Luis Langford. I’m sure there won’t be a problem as long as I can convince Mr. Langford.”

“Gordon, you know Mr. Langford? Why didn’t you say so earlier? I almost peed my pants just now.” Zeke was surprised.

“The last time I went to Stonia, I attended a party of his and got to know him there.” Gordon smiled. “That’s amazing! I can’t believe you know someone so powerful!”

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Zoey was ecstatic and chimed in, “Adriana, there’s hope! As long as Gordon convinces Mr. Langford, I’m sure you’ll be safe then.”

“That’s great. Thanks, Gordon!” As Adriana thanked him profusely, her cleavage came into full

view.

“It’s nothing. I’m just helping out a friend.” Gordon waved his hand like it was a minor issue.

“Alright, since we’ve resolved the matter, let’s go for a few more rounds of drinks,” Zeke said, calling up his driver and ushering them into his car

Just as they were about to depart, more than ten black SUVs screeched to a halt in front of the restaurant, surrounding it entirely. As the doors opened, a group of fighters with batons in hand got off and barged into the restaurant with a murderous look.

“Dang! Weren’t those the Langfords’ men?” Zeke’s eye twitched, and he was inexplicably nervous. He thought they were lucky to have left in time. If they had been slower by even two minutes, they probably wouldn’t have been able to escape then.

“Natasha, will your boyfriend be alright?” Adriana was worried. After all, Dustin had saved her earlier. She would feel bad if something happened to him.

“Don’t worry. He can handle it.” Natasha smiled faintly. She was aware of his abilities. Fighting a few ordinary fighters would be like a breeze to him.

“I don’t think so. He only has two fists. Even if he had skills, how would he survive against so many of them?” Gordon shook his head but was happy about Dustin’s predicament.

“That’s right! The Langfords have plenty of highly skilled martial artists. How would he take all of them on?” Zeke pursed his lips.

In their eyes, Dustin only liked seeking attention. As soon as he encountered Langfords’ skilled fighters, he’d end up dead.

Natasha didn’t bother explaining further since they didn’t believe her.

In the meantime, in the private room of the restaurant, Dustin was silently enjoying his food. He was eating with great enthusiasm when the door was kicked down. A large number of fighters barged in, surrounding him in no time.

The man who fainted earlier suddenly sprung up, his expression menacing. "Hey, punk! My backup is here. You're dead meat this time!"

It was evident that he had been playing dead.

"This is all of them? I thought you were bringing an army." Dustin shook his head, seemingly regretful.

"You're still talking back in the face of death? Kill him!" the middle-aged man bellowed.

Dozens of them brandished their weapons, prepared to attack, when suddenly, someone yelled at the door. "Hold it!"

Following the voice, a figure appeared. It was Dahlia who rushed in, clad in branded clothing

Dustin's brows furrowed at the sight of the woman Why did he keep running into her?

"I thought I was mistaken, but it really is you." She carried a complicated expression as she looked

at Dustin.

"So what if it's me? I've told you not to appear before me again," Dustin said coldly.

Dahlia frowned at his words, but she turned to the middle-aged man instead. "Mr. Atwood, what's going on here?"

"Mrs. Langford, this punk dared butt into our business. I'm about to give him a lesson. With your dignified status, I ask that you step aside lest you ruin your clothes." Mr. Atwood smiled apologetically.

"Mr. Atwood, this is a friend of mine. Can you let him go?" Dahlia responded.

"A friend?" he frowned slightly. Since he was slapped earlier, he was quite unwilling.

"Hmm? Do my words not carry weight? Do I need to get Luis here to talk to you?" Dahlia's expression turned cold.

“No, no. Please don’t misunderstand, Mrs. Langford Since he’s your friend, naturally, we won’t dare touch him.” Mr. Atwood smiled awkwardly and gave the signal, leaving with all the men present. “Mrs. Langford? How impressive.” Dustin sneered coldly, completely ungrateful.

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Chapter 329

Dahlia put on a calm front even though she felt hurt from the icy glare Dustin was giving her. “Dustin, I just didn’t want you to get into trouble. I didn’t do it so you can feel indebted to me,” she said nonchalantly.

“I don’t think what happens to me is any of your business.”

“I know you hate me. I know I’ve wronged you too. I’ll try my best to make it up to you in the future.

“Make it up to me?” Dustin scoffed, “Oh, Dahlia, you think too highly of yourself. Do you think I actually care?”

“Then what do you care about? Or perhaps, is there anything you need help on?” she asked tentatively.

“Sorry. I don’t need anything. I just need you to get far away from me,” Dustin responded.

“Do you hate me that much?” Dahlia frowned. She felt an inexplicable stabbing pain in her chest. “Yeah. You played me like a dog. Am I supposed to put on a pitiful dog act to please you?” Dustin mocked.

“I’m sorry...” Dahlia took in a deep breath, but, in the end, she could only lower her head.

“Forget it. Don’t show me that pitiful expression of yours. It’s repulsive.” Dustin’s words were harsh.

“I...” She was unable to continue. There were many times she wanted to tell him the truth but couldn’t. That was because she knew him well. Once he found out the truth, he would definitely make an enemy out of Luis. He would probably even try something foolish that might lead to his demise.

All Dahlia wished was for Dustin to live peacefully. Even if that meant carrying the burden of his hatred and being his enemy, she would gladly ensure it was so.

Out of the blue, she asked, "How are things with you and Natasha?"

"We're doing great. We've been talking about getting married," Dustin deliberately unnerved her. "Is that so? Congratulations." Dahlia forced a smile. "Natasha is a great woman. I can tell she likes you a lot. It's just that both of you have different social standings. You need to work harder to catch up to her."

"You don't have to worry about that," he responded coldly.

"You're right. Why am I butting into your relationship? Anyways, I wish both of you the best."

Dustin had never seen a smile that tender on her face. "What exactly are you trying to say?" His brows furrowed.

Nothing. I suddenly feel like having a drink. Will you drink a few glasses with me?"

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"No," Dustin refused right away. "I told you. I have nothing to do with you any longer. From now on, we shall be strangers. Please don't bother me again in the future. I don't wish to be played like a

fool a second time!" He turned around to leave.

"Wait-" Dahlia reached out and grabbed his arm instinctively.

"Get lost!" Looking annoyed, Dustin shrugged her off.

Dahlia stumbled and fell to the floor, her hand landing on broken pieces of glass. Blood dripped down, as the glass crystals dug into her palms. She frowned but never uttered a word. The pain could never compare to the heartache she was feeling.

"You "Seeing that she was hurt, Dustin extended his hand, about to help her up, when he froze midway. After thinking about everything that had happened, he decided to be merciless and

ignored her injury.

“Seems like you truly hate me. I guess it’s better that way...” Dahlia smiled and got up slowly. She continued, “I’m getting engaged to Luis tomorrow. After that, I’ll be leaving for Stonia and starting my life as Mrs. Langford. Today should be our final meeting. Thank you for taking care of me these past three years. I’ll never forget it. Humans are such weird creatures. We never appreciate things when we have them, only regretting it when we lose them.” With that, she exited the room.

Watching her departing figure, Dustin wanted to speak but didn’t know what to say.

Dahlia was about to exit the building when she suddenly stopped in her tracks. She had noticed a -familiar face. It was Natasha, pacing back and forth at the main entrance.

“You’re here too...” Dahlia gave a faint smile, “Congratulations, you won. Take care of Dustin for me. I wish both of you the best.” After she said that she brushed past Natasha.

“Huh?” Natasha frowned slightly in confusion. She wondered if Dahlia woke up on the wrong side of the bed today.

“Why did you come back?” Dustin walked out of the room.

Natasha rolled her eyes. “I was worried, of course. What if something happened to you?”

“They’re just a few weaklings. They can’t hurt me. He forced a smile.

Natasha picked up on his unusual behavior. “What’s wrong? Did something happen?”

“No. I just met Dahlia. She said she’s getting engaged tomorrow.” Dustin put on a calm front.

“Engaged? To whom?” Natasha was taken aback.

“Luis Langford.”

“Luis?” She frowned. “Is she crazy? Luis is famous for being a playboy, and his temper is erratic. Women involved with him don’t exactly get a fairytale ending.”

Dustin replied, “Everyone chases after different dreams. Luis is rich and powerful. There’s nothing wrong with her wanting to marry into a wealthy family.”

“There must be more to this. She doesn’t seem like someone who chases after material wealth,” Natasha responded solemnly. Even though they were rivals in love, she didn’t harbor any hate for her..

“I thought so too, but...” Dustin put on a self-deprecating smile, “People change. She has the right to chase after the things she wants.”

Hearing him, Natasha nodded, not saying anything more.

“Let’s go. I’ll send you home.” He forced another smile. He was in a good mood earlier, but meeting Dahlia had ruined his day. He even felt a knot in his heart.

After Dustin drove off with Natasha, Luis and a white-haired young man walked out slowly from the dark.

“Mr. Langford, it seems like there’s something going on between your fiancée and that Dustin guy. “The white-haired young man laughed teasingly.

“Hmph! He’s just an ant. He must have a death wish to have the guts to steal my woman.” Luis’ expression was dark.

“Mr. Langford, leave this matter to me. I’ll make sure he disappears from the face of the earth tonight!” The white-haired young man grinned.

As Luis’ right-hand man, he’d long been skillful at murdering people.

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Chapter 330

After sending Natasha home, Dustin returned to Peaceful Medical Center. At the same time, a black vehicle came to a quiet stop at a corner not far away.

As the doors opened, a few masked assassins clad in black outfits approached the building slowly, and they all had silenced guns in their hands. They were well-trained and worked well together as they surrounded the entire Peace Medical Center without saying a word, blocking all entrances.

“Forward-” The leader made a gesture, and the men to the left of him nodded. They were just about to break in when the doors opened with a creak. A warm, yellow light shone out from the

inside.

“Since you’re already here, there’s no need to sneak around. Please, come in.” They heard a cold, impassive voice from the inside.

The masked assassins’ expressions shifted slightly. Looking through the door slit, they saw Dustin leisurely sipping his liquor while seated on a chair. They even noticed a simple meal set out on the table. He appeared calm. There were no signs that he was alarmed by the impending disaster that awaited him.

“What? Do I need to invite you in personally?” Dustin spoke again.

The group looked at each other. Leaving only one man behind, the rest of the assassins walked in with their guns raised, finally exposing their cover. To prevent an ambush, a few of them even scouted the perimeter. It was only after they ensured it was safe that they let out a silent sigh of relief.

“How did you discover us?” Their leader was perplexed. After so many years in their line of work, it was the first time they’d met someone who remained exceptionally calm, even with a gun in their face.

“You’ve been following me for half an hour now. I might as well be blind if I didn’t notice.” Dustin smiled faintly and poured himself another drink.

He asked, “So, who sent you? The Hummers or the Langfords?”

“Does it matter? You’ll be dead anyway,” The leader responded coldly. Dustin’s sharp gaze was making him uncomfortable.

“If I’m dying, I should at least know who gave the orders, don’t you think?” Dustin looked up slowly.

“You want to know the truth? Go ask the devil himself!” The leader was tired of the nonsense and aimed his gun at Dustin, pulling the trigger. Having a conversation was frowned upon in their line of work.

Two muffled gunshots rang out. One bullet aimed straight for Dustin’s head, while the other went for his chest. Even God wouldn’t be able to save him from the two fatal shots.

Just when he thought Dustin was as good as gone, a shocking scene played out. Just an inch away from their final target, the two bullets came to a halt. They floated in mid-air, unable to

move.

“What?” The assassin was shocked. Two more muffled shots sounded, but the results were the

Hearing him, Natasha nodded, not saying anything more.

“Let’s go. I’ll send you home.” He forced another smile. He was in a good mood earlier, but meeting Dahlia had ruined his day. He even felt a knot in his heart.

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Chapter 331

“Don’t kill me! I’ll talk!” The leader of the assassins was scared out of his wits. He divulged every detail, not daring to leave any stone unturned. He revealed the person who hired him and even their whereabouts. He spilled everything.

Dustin nodded after he was done listening and dealt with the assassins, before leaving the building once again. While others often took their time seeking revenge, Dustin sought his revenge the very same day. Otherwise, he would lose sleep over it.

In the meantime, in the bathtub of a luxurious hotel, the white-haired young man, Wilson White, was speaking to Luis on the phone.

“Don’t worry, Mr. Langford, my men are skilled. They won’t leave a trace. From tomorrow onwards, you will never see that punk again.”

“That’ll be best. I don’t wish for any surprises tomorrow.”

“Of course, I assure you everything will go smoothly, and you’ll be bringing that beauty home without a hitch.” He grinned.

“Alright, that’s all. That woman won’t let me touch her. I need to get another woman to satisfy my desires.”

Wilson chuckled. “Then, I won’t disturb your fun.”

After a few more exchanges of words, he hung up. He then put on a robe and walked out of the bathroom. “Hey, beautiful, I’m coming!”

Wilson was smiling happily, prepared to make love to a beautiful model he met today. However, he froze as he entered the bedroom. The model was missing, there was only a man seated on the bed. That man was Dustin!

“H-how are you here?” Wilson’s expression changed. Didn’t he already send the assassins? Why was he still alive?

“Your men are dead. And it’s your turn now. Any last words?” He spoke lazily.

Wilson's eye twitched, and he screamed at Dustin, putting up a front, "I'm warning you, punk! You better not try anything. I'm with the Langford family!"

"I know. So what?" Dustin was stone-faced.

"If you dare touch me, not only you but all of your family and friends will be doomed!" Wilson threatened.

"It's always the same script. Can't you come up with something new?" Dustin reached out and grabbed him in a chokehold, lifting him by his neck.

"Ugh... Wilson couldn't breathe, and his face turned red. He shook in fear as he felt he was close to death's door.

"Don't! Don't kill me... I'll tell you a secret!" William panicked after seeing Dustin's murderous gaze and started begging for his life instead.

"Oh? What secret? Let's hear it." Dustin raised his eyebrow, intrigued.

"I don't think you know the real reason Dahlia is marrying Luis. It isn't for material wealth. She was forced!" Wilson released a bombshell.

Dustin's eyebrows knitted together. "Explain! What do you mean?"

William pointed at Dustin's fingers. Dustin loosened his grip slightly, Out of breath, William finally spoke, "To get Dahlia by his side, Luis set up a trap and painted James as a murderer. He not only threatened to send her brother to jail, but he also threatened to send you back to prison. She only gave in to the marriage because of you."

Dustin felt like he was struck by lightning with this revelation. He had misunderstood her. He'd thought she married into a wealthy family for power and wealth. But it turned out, she was only sacrificing herself for his safety.

At that moment, he felt a pang of regret. He regretted not getting the story straight, and he regretted slapping her.

"Dahlia, oh, Dahlia ... Why are you so foolish?" He clenched his jaw and left the place immediately.

Chapter 332

Dustin kept dialing and making calls while he drove. However, no matter how many times he dialed, Dahlia never answered. For some reason, Dustin was anxious. It felt as if something important was slowly slipping out of his grasp.

He stepped on the accelerator and headed straight for Nicholson Villa. Ever since they got divorced, he'd never set foot in that place again. But at that moment, he couldn't care less.

After he arrived, he rushed to the entrance, ringing the doorbell and pounding on the door persistently.

"How rude! Can't you knock gently?" Following the annoyed voice, the door opened.

"Dustin? What are you doing here?" Florence frowned, looking upset.

Dustin went straight to the point. "Where's Dahlia? I need to see her!"

"Hmph! What makes you think you can just barge in here to see her? Get lost!" Florence responded harshly. She was about to close the door as she spoke when the door was blocked by a foot.

With a solemn expression, Dustin said, "I know Dahlia is inside. I have something to tell her, please let her know."

"There is no need to do so. She doesn't want to see you."

Florence gave him a contemptuous look and continued, "Let me tell you. My daughter's engagement party with Mr. Langford is tomorrow. So, from tomorrow onward, she'll be known as Mrs. Langford. Someone like you will never match up to him. So, please stop disturbing my daughter!"

"Dahlia cannot marry Luis!" Dustin frowned. "I know the truth. I know she was forced. She doesn't need to sacrifice herself. I can solve everything!"

"You can't solve shit!"

Florence glared at him. "Rhys! I'm warning you not to poke your nose where it doesn't belong! It's a blessing for my daughter to have the chance to marry the Langfords. I'll fight you to death if you get in the way!"

“Is wealth more important than Dahlia’s happiness?”

Dustin reasoned with her, “Luis is a typical playboy with a volatile temper and violent tendencies. If Dahlia marries him, she’ll be walking into her own misery!”

“Nonsense!”

Florence erupted in anger. “Rhys! You better not spout nonsense! Luis was brought up in a wealthy family with class and manners. He’s miles better than you will ever be!”

To her, Dustin only said those words out of jealousy. He was slandering Luis since he knew he wasn’t Luis’ competition. She didn’t realize he was such a malicious person!

“Dahlia, I know you’re in there. Can you please come out and talk to me?” Seeing that Florence wouldn’t budge, he raised his voice in hopes that Dahlia could hear him from inside.

“Shut up! I’m warning you. My daughter is not at home. If you continue to cause trouble for us, I’ll call the police!” Florence threatened him.

Dustin ignored her and continued yelling, “Dahlia, listen up! I don’t need your sympathy. Don’t make decisions on your own! Do you think a mere Luis can hurt me? You must be crazy! We’re divorced. What makes you think you can use your life to save mine? Can you not think so highly of yourself?” His tirade echoed throughout the villa.

“Hey! You’ve got some nerve!” Florence grabbed a broom and was about to hit him in her fury when a clear voice rang out.

“Mom, let me talk to him...” Dahlia finally walked out.

“Dahlia, why did you come out? Just let me deal with this insolent brat.” Florence was clearly upset.

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“Some things are better discussed in person.” Dahlia shook her head.

“Fine. I’ll give you three minutes. Break it off cleanly.” Without another word, Florence went to stand by one side. After all, tomorrow, their family would move to Stonia and live the life of the wealthy. By then, a lowlife like Dustin would never have the chance to see her daughter again.

“Didn’t you say we’d never have anything to do with each other? Why are you here?” Dahlia looked Dustin straight in the eye.

Dustin responded seriously, “I’ve found out the truth. I know Luis forced you into this, but you don’t need to get married to him. I can solve all your problems!”

Dahlia was momentarily stumped before she put up a polite smile. “I don’t know where you heard that, but I’m getting married to Luis on my own accord. I wasn’t forced, but thank you for your concern.”

So what if he knew? It wouldn’t solve anything. Her marriage to Luis was a strategic union between the Langfords and the Nicholsons. Anyone who dared stand in the way of their marriage would be going up against two majorly influential families. How many people dared make enemies out of the two families in the whole of Balerno? That was why, even if Dustin now knew the truth, it didn’t change anything. It would only cause him more trouble.

“That’s not true!” Dustin’s brows knitted. “You don’t even like him. Why are you getting married to him?”

“Does that matter? Luis can give me wealth and riches, as well as power and status, aren’t those enough?” Dahlia smiled faintly.

“You’re lying! I know you’re not that kind of person Dustin wouldn’t give up.

“Stop joking. Do you really know me?” She scoffed,

“Oh, Dustin. People should live life realistically, especially women. Instead of working so hard to make a name for myself, wouldn’t it be better to marry a wealthy man? I can live an easy life. Why not seize the opportunity?”

Dustin’s gaze was intense. “No! You don’t mean that”

“That’s what I think. It doesn’t matter whether or not you believe me. I’m tired. I’m going to rest now. Please go back.” That was the last thing Dahlia said before turning inside.

“Did you hear that? She’s tired. Now get lost!” Florence raised her broom aggressively.

“Dahlia Nicholson! Don’t you dare think you actually helped me. I’ll never be grateful for your actions!”

Dustin stood by the door and continued with rightful indignation, “Oh, and one more thing. I hate being indebted to someone. I will do everything I can to stop this marriage. I will never let you marry Luis! Do you hear me?”

“Bastard! If you try anything, I won’t hesitate to beat you to death!” Florence was anxious and raised the broom in her hand, about to land a hit, when Dustin grabbed it and broke it easily,

“Dahlia Nicholson! I’ll be at the engagement party tomorrow afternoon. All you need to do is nod, and I’ll take you out of there. You don’t need to think about the consequences. Just follow your heart. I will make sure there is nothing to worry about. I will also ensure your safety! Please just trust me. Have absolute faith in me this one time!” Dustin finally left after his speech.

Since he had found out the truth, he would not allow her to walk into her own misery. It didn’t matter if they were the Langfords or the Nicholsons. If they angered him, he would annihilate them all!

As Dahlia listened to Dustin’s determined speech, she leaned against the door and sank to the floor. She ended up crouching on the ground as tears streamed down her face. Biting her lips, she wrapped herself in her arms and tried her best to muffle her cries.

“Oh, Dustin. Why are you so foolish? Couldn’t you just let go? Why do you need to put yourself in danger like that?”

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Chapter 334

The next morning, at Empire Hotel. A grand wedding was in full swing.

The union of the two prominent families had caused a sensation throughout Swinton. Countless businessmen, wealthy individuals, and high-ranking officials arrived with great anticipation. Hundreds of luxury wedding cars were parked at the hotel square, occupying almost every available space. The entire street had also been cordoned off specially for today's wedding ceremony.

Dressed in his groom's attire, Luis personally welcomed the guests at the entrance of the lobby. Of course, he only greeted those who held status and influence, while the ordinary guests were attended to by his men.

"Mr. Langford..." At that moment, Wilson walked up to him and said in a hushed voice, "There's a turn of events. Dustin's not dead yet, and the assassins I sent out are all missing."

"What did you say? What's the point of me hiring you if you can't handle a small matter like this?" Luis frowned.

"I'm sorry. I underestimated that punk." Wilson lowered his head in shame.

"Forget about it. After today, I'll send someone personally to deal with him." Luis didn't bother making a fuss out of it.

"Mr. Langford, there's something else..." Wilson hesitated to speak.

Luis was slightly unhappy. "What now?"

In a whisper, Wilson continued, "I heard that Dustin might disrupt the wedding today."

"Disrupt the wedding?" Luis was taken aback for a moment before he laughed out loud.

"Are you joking? My men are all here. Would he dare act rashly here?"

"It's best to consider all possibilities." Wilson smiled apologetically.

"He can try if he wants. I'm itching to see how he'll barge into my den!" Luis sneered coldly.

An ordinary citizen, trying to go against him? He didn't mind shedding blood today at the party if it came to it.

In the meantime, in one of the rooms of the hotel, Dahlia sat in front of the dressing table, in a daze.

Ever since Dustin came looking for her yesterday, she has been on edge, worried he might attempt something foolish. For this reason, she'd been sending him messages and making calls, but she never received a response. It worried her more as he ignored her.

"Dahlia, why are you sulking? You should be smiling. It's your big day." Right then, Florence walked in with a grin and started picking out Dahlia's jewelry.

Dahlia suddenly asked, "Mom, do you think Dustin will come today?"

"Why do you care?" Florence's brows furrowed. "I've looked around the area. It's heavily guarded here, with security personnel inside and out. If Dustin dares break-in, he'll probably be beaten up

badly."

Dahlia's concern deepened upon hearing her mother's words.

"Dahlia, stop thinking about it. That punk is all talk. He won't really come. He's not stupid. Why would he seek his own demise?" Florence took advantage of the situation and comforted her.

It was clear to her that her daughter had unresolved feelings. Unfortunately, they could never be together. Besides, it was a lifelong dream of Florence to have her daughter marry into a wealthy family. How would she allow someone to ruin her dream that easily?

"I hope so..." Dahlia sighed, but her expression remained troubled.

"Alright, it's about time. Let's go." Florence smiled, leading Dahlia out.

At the venue, the seats were already filled with distinguished guests. Amidst the applause, Luis walked up the stage slowly.

He received the microphone from the officiant and said with a face full of smiles, "Dear guests, family, and friends, thank you for attending my wedding. Today is the most important day of my

life.

“Even though I’ve only known Dahlia for a short time, from the moment I laid my eyes on her, I knew she was the only woman I would want to marry in this lifetime! I hope all of you present here today will bear witness to our grand wedding

As soon as he spoke those words, the crowd erupted in thunderous applause and cheers.

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Chapter 335

“Here comes the bride!” The officiant announced.

Amidst enthusiastic applause, Dahlia walked in. She looked gorgeous in a beautiful white gown. and took her place at the altar on stage.

“Oh, my God! The bride is so pretty. She looks like an angel!”

“They look so good together. They are truly a match made in heaven!”

Following her appearance, the atmosphere grew increasingly lively as the crowd looked on in admiration.

The ceremony officially began with Dahlia’s parents, John and Florence, seated in the front row alongside Luis’ fourth uncle. Seeing the both of them standing at the altar together, Florence couldn’t hide the smile on her face. All her hopes and prayers for her daughter to marry into a wealthy family were finally materializing.

While John wore a smile, his eyes betrayed a complexity of emotions. Despite his prolonged absences, he had a basic understanding of what went on at home. As for Luis’ uncle, he had an impassive expression right from the start, not showing much of a reaction.

“Dahlia is so lucky to be able to marry Luis.” Not far away, Dakota watched the new couple in jealousy. If only she hadn’t been engaged, she would have been the one up there instead.

“Hah... It seems like she’s lucky, but she’s actually not. With Luis’ personality, I’m afraid Dahlia won’t be having a good married life.” Jane shook her head. She knew of Luis’ reputation.

It was finally time to exchange vows as the officiant said, “Dahlia, do you take Luis to be your wedded husband, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, as long as you both shall live?”

While Luis was smiling widely, Dahlia looked troubled. After a short silence, he finally noticed that she didn’t seem inclined to speak.

Thinking the bride didn’t hear him, the officiant repeated himself, “Dahlia, do you take Luis to be your wedded husband...

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In the end, Dahlia remained silent. She truly did not wish to get married to Luis. She didn’t even understand why. That was why she hesitated at the last moment.

“What’s happening? Why isn’t the bride saying anything?”

“Is she regretting it?”

As a result of her actions, a wave of dissonant murmurs swiftly swept across the venue.

“What’s the meaning of this, Dahlia? Are you embarrassing me on purpose?” Luis narrowed his

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eyes, his expression menacing.

“If you dare humiliate me today, our previous agreement will be thrown out the window! I can’t guarantee what will happen then!”

Dahlia clenched her fists at his words, finally giving in.

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She was about to exchange her vows when a resounding crash reverberated through the hall. The doors had been kicked open, and at the same time, a tall figure strutted in proudly.

“Dustin! Why are you here?” Florence slammed her hand on the table and shot up to her feet,

feeling shocked and furious.

“I’m here to... steal the bride!”

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Chapter 336

“I’m here to... steal the bride!”

Dustin’s every step resounded through the entire hall like a loud bell; his footsteps could be heard over the quiet hall.

The crowd had their eyes wide open, and their expressions were filled with shock. Nobody could have imagined that someone dared object to the union between the Langford family and the Nicholson family.

“Oh my goodness! Who is this punk? He dares disrupt the wedding? Does he have a death wish?”

“You have to give him credit for being so brave. He actually dared to provoke the two powerful families!”

“Interesting. This is definitely interesting. Seems like a good show is about to start!”

After a momentary silence, the crowd erupted in frenzied discussion, pointing and gossiping incessantly.

“Dustin?” Staring at the familiar face, Dahlia’s expression revealed how happy she was. However, that happiness was quickly replaced with worry.

Although she was grateful and touched, she knew his actions would bring about a disaster. By disrupting the wedding, it meant that he was challenging both the Langfords and the Nicholsons.

“Is this punk insane? He’s making a scene all by himself? Where did he get the courage?” Dakota was astonished and couldn’t believe it.

“What an idiot!” Jane pursed her lips. It was as if she was looking at a dead man. She knew Luis had already made preparations, and stationed numerous security personnel around the hotel. Dustin had sent himself into the lion’s den by barging in here.

“Insolent bastard!” Luis’ expression turned cold. He felt the urge to kill rising within him. He couldn’t believe Dustin really came to meet his demise!

“Rhys! I’m warning you to get your ass out of here! Otherwise, you’ll bear the consequences!” Florence screamed in frustration. Her daughter was one step away from getting married into a wealthy family. She would make an enemy out of anyone who dared ruin her dreams.

“Dahlia, I’m here.” Dustin ignored all the criticisms and threats surrounding him and walked up the stage with deliberate steps. His determined gaze was fixed on the person in front of him. “What are you doing here? Go back immediately! Dahlia’s brows were furrowed, and she looked – anxious. She had noticed the number of bodyguards of the Langford family approaching the stage. Dustin’s expression was solemn. “I told you. I won’t let you get married to Luis. I’m definitely taking you away today!”

“Are you crazy? This is not the place for you to act so recklessly! Just leave!” Dahlia made fervent gestures to urge him to leave.

In a serious tone, Dustin told her, “I know what you’re worried about, but please believe me. I promise there won’t be anything to worry about after this.”

“It’s no use... You don’t know who you’re up against!” Dahlia shook her head vehemently.

She knew he could fight. She also knew he had the Harmon family backing him. But even the Harmon family was no match for the Langfords. Not to mention, the Langfords also had the Nicholsons behind them.

Dustin suddenly asked, "Dahlia, in all these years, with everything that has happened, have I ever lied to you?"

"No." She shook her head firmly.

"Since I've never lied to you, please believe me once more." Dustin extended his hand as an invitation.

Dahlia went silent; her heart was conflicted. She longed to leave with Dustin. Even if that meant eloping and wandering the entire world with him, she would do it gladly. However, there were far too many factors to consider.

"Dahlia, you don't need to think about anything else. Leave everything to me. Just this once, let yourself be a little selfish," Dustin said, full of sincerity.

Dahlia bit her lips. It seemed like she had come to a decision. She took a deep breath.

Alright! She would be selfish this one time!

She stopped thinking about the consequences and extended her hand with resolve, holding tight to Dustin's hand. At that moment, Dustin formed a smile. So did she.

"Dahlia Nicholson! Do you know what you're doing?"

Seeing them holding hands, Luis' expression was laced with extreme fury. In front of such a large crowd, his fiancé regretted her decision and decided to elope with another man.

Nothing was more humiliating than that!

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Chapter 337

It was humiliating not only to him but to the entire Langford family!

"Dahlia Nicholson! If you dare elope with him, you'll be the Nicholson family's enemy!" Jade and Dakota stood up in fury, screaming at the top of their lungs.

“Dahlia, please don’t act recklessly! Once you leave with that trash, our family is done for!”

Florence screamed in panic.

Once they humiliated the Langfords, they weren’t just losing out on wealth, their whole family. would be annihilated!

“Mom, 1...” Dahlia wasn’t able to continue.

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“Don’t worry. I’m here.” Dustin tightened his grip on her hand and scanned his surroundings. He declared in a loud voice, “Nobody is stopping me from taking the bride away today! Anyone who is dissatisfied can come for me!”

The moment Dustin said that, the crowd erupted in an uproar.

“Oh, my God! This guy is so cool! He’d fight the world for the woman he loves.”

“If only a guy loved me that much, I’d be happy my whole life!”

“He’s cool, all right. But too bad he’ll be paying a heavy price.”

“He offended both the Langfords and the Nicholsons. I bet he won’t live to see tomorrow.”

The guests gossiped fervently as they looked at Dustin, who was still on stage. Voices of shock, praise, and even disdain could be heard.

“Let’s go, Dahlia ” Without another word, he pulled her behind him, ready to leave.

“Stop them!” Following the angry roar, a large number of security personnel swarmed in from all sides, surrounding the both of them in no time.

“Trying to leave? Have I given my permission?” Luis’ expression was livid as he approached them slowly. His gaze was intense.

“Dahlia Nicholson, I’m giving you one last chance Say your vows now and be my lawfully wedded wife, and I will forget about what happened today Otherwise, don’t blame me for being merciless!”

I'm also giving you one last chance. Leave Swinton immediately. Otherwise, you will regret it." Dustin responded coldly.

"You bastard! Break his limbs!" Luis erupted in fury and ordered.

"Yes, sir!" The security personnel swiftly drew out their batons and were about to attack when a figure descended from above, swinging their sword in rapid succession

The blade shimmered and swirled in the air, emitting a series of sharp whistles. Before the dozens of security guards could reach them, their arms were severed, scattering limbs on the floor. Blood splattered across the ground, and screams pierced through the air.

"What the hell? Who is that? They're so skilled!" The crowd looked on in shock and horror. It was a terrifying sight before them, a man with a single sword effortlessly took down dozens of men

"Stop right there!" With a wave of his hand, Maximus held his long sword to Luis' neck. A few of the Langford family's highly-skilled martial artists, who were about to launch an ambush, stopped in their tracks, afraid of advancing any further.

"The audacity!"

"How dare you!"

"Let Mr. Langford go!"

Upon witnessing Luis being held hostage, the crowd erupted into chaos. Their eyes widened in a mix of shock and righteous indignation. Forget about stealing the bride, the audacity to threaten Mr. Langford was akin to committing a grave crime!

"You wouldn't dare to touch me, punk!" Luis narrowed his eyes, looking unperturbed.

"Really?" Maximus sneered and moved his sword slightly. The sharp blade sliced through Luis' skin, drawing a thin line of blood.

"You" Luis froze, afraid of making another sudden movement. He was worried that the reckless man in front of him would really just kill him!

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Because of Maximus' appearance, the situation turned against the Langford family. While a few highly-skilled martial artists from the Langford family were eager to take action, they were cautious, afraid of hurting Luis.

"Both of you should leave first. Leave this place to me, Dustin," Maximus said confidently. After the battle at Mount Halgue, he'd finally achieved divinity, and his skills improved tremendously.

"Leave?" Luis sneered.

"Where do you think you can hide? Even if you survive today, you will never escape our wrath!"

Dustin was about to leave when he heard Luis and stopped in his tracks. Turning around, he asked coldly, "Are you threatening me?"

"So what if I am?" Luis laughed diabolically. He had no qualms about confronting Dustin.

"I don't know how you met this friend of yours, but if you think he can go up against me single-handedly, then you're too naive for your own good.

"Do you really think you're that powerful?" Dustin questioned him.

"Against you? Absolutely!" Luis grinned. "Not only you, but Dahlia and everyone around her will get a taste of our revenge! I'm going to make your lives a living hell!"

Dahlia found herself unsettled by his words. In the end, she couldn't avoid the very thing she dreaded most. When she made the decision to elope with Dustin, she put her entire family in danger. That burden was overwhelming for her to bear.

"How about it? Are you scared now?" Luis was pleased with Dustin's silence. "Rhys! If you don't want to die like a chicken, get down on your knees immediately! Also, you're going to send your woman to my bedside personally. Perhaps, then, I will let you live!"

He'd just finished speaking when a resounding slap landed on his cheek, and Dustin's bright red handprint was clearly imprinted on his face.

"Huh?" Luis cradled his burning face, dazed. Everyone else looked on in shock. Dustin must have truly gone insane to actually strike Luis in public.

"You dare hit me?" Luis' expression grew dark as he finally came back to his senses.

"So what if I did? That slap was for your shameless boasting!"

As he spoke, he raised his hand and landed another vicious slap on Luis' face.

That was for your arrogance!"

"Slap!"

"That was for threatening Dahlia!"

"Slap!"

That was for being unrepentant!

"Slap!"

"

Dustin slapped him left and right, with every earsplitting slap landing heavily on his face. The force turned his face bloody and swollen beyond recognition, and he lost a few teeth in between the slaps.

As the crowd took in Luis' battered state, they were shocked into silence. They knew blood would be shed today. Nobody would survive when the Langfords sought revenge.

"Y-you ... You're dead meat!"

"Everyone related to you will pay as well!"

The members of the Langford family screamed one after another, their anger reaching a tipping point.

“Dahlia, leave this place with Maximus first. I’ll handle the rest,” Dustin said as he turned to look behind him.

“What are you going to do?” Dahlia’s brows knitted. She couldn’t explain the uneasiness she felt. At that moment, regret washed over her as she realized the gravity of her actions. Dustin wasn’t only taking her away from Luis; he was also challenging death head-on!

“Don’t worry. I’ll be fine.” He smiled. “Maximus, bring her away to somewhere safe.”

“Alright!” Maximus nodded. “Dahlia, please follow me. Dustin knows what he’s doing. He won’t be in any danger.”

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“But-” Dahlia wanted to say more.

“Just go. I’ll be distracted if you’re here,” Dustin interrupted.

Left with no choice, Dahlia bobbed her head in agreement helplessly in the end. Since things had come to this point, there was no turning back.

As long as Dustin could come back unscathed, she was willing to give up everything and roam all over the world with him.

After making sure that Dahlia had left safely, Dustin’s gaze scanned around the place and then fixed on the Nicholson family. “What are you waiting for? Hurry up and leave!”

“Let’s go.”

Dakota and Jane exchanged a glance. Then, they turned around and left on the spot.

Dahlia’s breach of promise had caused the Langfords to have a fallout with the Nicholsons. If the latter continued to stay there any longer, trouble might land upon them.

“What a jinx! Look at what you have gotten us into Florence stomped her feet in anger before fleeing away.

Now that the wedding ceremony had been ruined, the Nicholsons’ dream of living a wealthy and comfortable life went up in smoke. Most importantly, they had offended the Langford family. From now on, their days would no longer be peaceful.

At that time, Luis’ fourth uncle, Kingston Langford, suddenly stood up and said flatly, “You’ve got a nerve of steel, young man. No one has ever dared to humiliate us in public. You’re the first, and of course, you will also be the last! Frankly speaking, I’m quite impressed with your courage. But today is the day you die!”

As he spoke, he made a hand gesture.

Right then, a large group of armed guards barged in from every direction and surrounded Dustin, leaving him no way to escape.

“This is bad. Mr. Kingston is doing it for real. That brat is going to be done for.”

“He snatched the bride away blatantly and even got Mr. Luis red in the face. Even if he has ten lives, they are not even enough to pay back for what he has done.”

“Well, he only has himself to blame.”

The guests couldn’t help but mutter among themselves as they watched Dustin get trapped in the middle.

If you let go of Luis now, I will let you die in one piece.” Kingston had an indifferent expression as if he had control over everything..

Are you trying to scare me off since you have the strength in numbers?” Dustin glanced around without feeling any ounce of fear.

Yeah. You’ve got that right.”

“Sure. Let’s see who has more people, then!” Dustin took out his phone and dialed a number.

Five minutes later, the door of the banquet hall burst open. Mason rushed in aggressively with

hundreds of gangsters.

“Mason Zims from the Drey Group is here with the gang under Mr. Rhys’ orders!”

At the sight of this, everyone was stunned for a moment before they burst into laughter.

“Is this a joke? Are you trying to fight against us with this group of thugs?”

“Hmph! What an ignorant person! You’re thinking too highly of yourself!”

“I’ll be so disappointed if this is your trump card.”

The group of guards led by Kingston had disdainful looks on their faces. They couldn’t believe that even some random thugs had the guts to provoke the Langford family.

“Hey, Rhys! Are you in your right mind? Do you actually think that you can outdo us with this bunch of small fry?” Luis laughed uncontrollably.

However, the smile on his face immediately dropped when the next group of people rushed into the hall

This time, Hunter was in the lead.

“The president of the Chamber of Commerce, Hunter Anderson is here to listen to Mr. Rhys’ orders!”

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Seconds later, another group of people showed up, and it went on for a few more rounds. “The chief inspector of the investigation bureau, Aspen Cruiser, is here to assist Mr. Rhys!” “Roderick Brooks from the Brooks Corporation is willing to do his best to help Mr. Rhys out!” “The mayor of Swinton, Alex Granville, is willing to stay till the end with Mr. Rhys!”

As the groups barged in one after another, the ridicule directed at Dustin gradually disappeared. It was replaced with shock and fear.

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Looking at the groups of elites barging into the banquet hall one after another, all the guests at the scene were dumbfounded.

None of them expected Dustin to have such great connections. All he did was make a call, and hundreds of people came over to assist him. Not only were there underground organizations and official armed forces, but there was also help from a business tycoon. On top of that, even the mayor of Swinton was here to back him up in person.

In other words, as long as Dustin said the word, all the forces in Swinton could be under his command.

That was a terrifying connection he had.

No wonder he dared to be insolent in front of the Langford family. He had come prepared.

Now the Langfords were not fighting against Dustin alone, but the whole of Swinton. "Who is he exactly? How come he can have influence over so many forces?"

The guests exchanged glances with one another, shocked at the turn of events.

At that moment, the arrogant Langford family finally sensed that the current situation wasn't favoring them. Even though these forces wouldn't be able to weaken their foothold, the former could still bring trouble to the latter. After all, the Langfords' power was in Stonia. Requesting immediate help was simply impossible.

"It looks like I have underestimated you." After being stunned for a moment, Kingston quickly regained his composure and said, "But if you think that you can win against us with their help, then you're wrong."

The Langford family had been an influential family in Stonia for generations. Whether it was power or connections, they were way stronger than the ones in Swinton.

“Rhys! Indeed, you have more people with you. But what can you do about it?” Luis sneered, “They are just a bunch of shrimp.”

In his eyes, Swinton’s powers were akin to ants. He could even easily get rid of them if he wanted. This was how strong an affluent family from Stonia was.

“If they can’t, what about me?” Right then, a loud and clear voice pierced the air.

A well-dressed, handsome man walked dauntlessly into the banquet hall with a few female officers. He carried such an overwhelming aura with him that everyone lowered their heads subconsciously the moment they saw him.

“Adam Spanner-the God of War?” Kingston’s eyes widened in fear.

It had never occurred to him that the chief commander of the West Army, who was in charge of 300 thousand soldiers, would appear here.

“What’s wrong, Uncle Kingston? Do you know him?” Luis quickly noticed that something wasn’t right.

That is Adam Spanner!” Kingston exclaimed

Hearing that, Luis was stunned and could no longer maintain his composure. “What? He is...

Adam?”

As the heir of the wealthiest family in Stonia, Adam was not only a wunderkind but also a living legend. His outstanding battle achievements at a young age had earned him the title of “God of War ” and the command of hundreds of thousands of soldiers.

In the whole of Stonia, there was barely anyone of his age who could be on par with him.

“That’s quite arrogant of you. How dare you bully my friend!” As Adam strode in, the crowd automatically stepped aside to make way for him.

“Friend? Could it be... him?” Kingston’s gaze shifted to Dustin in shock.

“How could someone from this insignificant place know Adam?” Kingston thought.

“Mr. Kingston, you said that these people weren’t able to drive the Langfords away. But what about with my help?” Adam stared piercingly at him, his eyes filled with provocation.

“M-Mr. Spanner, what brings you here?”

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Kingston forced out a smile.

“Stop acting like we are close friends!” Adam wasn’t giving Kingston any respect. “Weren’t the Langfords full of themselves just minutes ago? Come on, show me how arrogant you can be!”

When Kingston heard that, his expression darkened. If it had been someone else who humiliated him today, he would have flipped his lid long ago. However, he just couldn’t afford to offend the man standing in front of him.

“Why aren’t you saying anything? Weren’t you all high and mighty just now? You even had the guts to bully my friend!” Adam pointed at them and hauled them over the coals.

Kingston and Luis dropped their heads, falling into silence.

At the sight of that, the guests were stunned. Who would have expected that there would be a day when Kingston from the Langford family would be chewed out publicly and dared not talk back?

It was indeed shocking.

“What are you waiting for? Kneel down and apologize to my friend now!” Adam shouted.

“This...” Kingston frowned, his expression gloomy

As the direct descendants of the Langfords, how could they possibly get down on their knees for

someone else?

If outsiders knew about it, their reputation would be tarnished.

“Adam, you shouldn’t go too far!” Luis was slightly bent out of shape.

Raising his hand, Adam slapped Luis in the face. “Do you think you can stop me?”

“You” Luis parted his lips. However, before he could say anything, he received another slap

across his cheek.

“I’ll break your legs if you don’t apologize today!” Adam was extremely assertive.

Luis’ eyes blazed murderously as he gritted his teeth. Although he was livid, deep down, he knew that he couldn’t afford to mess with such a powerful man.

“Get on your knees and apologize!” Adam shouted again.

Just as Luis was about to yield to them, a majestic voice floated across the air. “Adam, don’t you think

you are going to the extremes by treating my Langfords like this?”

At the same time, a bearded, burly middle-aged man with an imposing demeanor walked in.

It was the head of the Langford family, Ethan Langford!

“Uncle Ethan!”

“Ethan!”

When Kingston and Luis saw Ethan, their eyes lit up at once. It was as if they had found their savior. They couldn’t afford to offend Adam because they had no real power in their hands.

However, Ethan was different. Not only did he have an official position, but he also possessed great authority, just like Adam. When it came to seniority, even Adam had to show Ethan to show him a certain degree of respect.

With Ethan around, it was hard for Adam to take advantage of the situation.

“Oh, it’s Mr. Ethan I didn’t know you would be here too.” Adam was quite surprised.

“Today is my nephew’s engagement ceremony. As his elder, it’s natural for me to attend,” Ethan replied faintly. “Luckily, I came here in time, or else the Langfords would end up at the mercy of others ”

“Mr Ethan, it was them who threw their weights around. I was just helping you teach them a lesson” Adam faked a smile.

“Hmph! Even if they made a mistake, an outsider like you is in no position to punish them!” Ethan’s gaze was frosty.

“What if I insist on doing so?” Adam arched his brow.

“Well, then we’ll have to see if you have the ability to walk your talk.” Ethan waved his hand.

Right then, two white-haired men appeared behind Ethan. One of them was taller than the other. Just looking at their stance, one could tell they were unfathomably powerful.

Upon seeing them, even Adam couldn’t help but frown.

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Chapter 342

It was said that the Langfords had two master-level martial artists working for them. They were an extremely powerful pair and wouldn’t show up normally. It seemed that they had come over

with Ethan today.

Adam rubbed his chin, thinking about how to seek revenge. It wasn’t easy to take the Langfords down with the pair around.

“Hmph, what’s so great about the God of War? He still can’t do anything to the Langfords when Uncle Ethan is here,” Luis muttered inwardly. There were traces of arrogance on his face.

“As expected of Ethan!” Kingston held his head up, having regained his previous confidence.

Although the Spanner family was powerful, the Langfords weren't weak either. Now that Ethan was around, members of the Langford family would become unrelenting.

Adam turned to look at Dustin and asked, "Dustin it seems like they are not going to let me have my way. Shall we force our way through?"

As long as Dustin agreed to it, Adam would launch his attacks straightaway. After all, someone else would deal with the aftermath.

"Since Mr. Ethan is here, forget it, then," Dustin said flatly.

He wasn't afraid of the Langfords, but he didn't want to cause trouble for Adam

"Alright, whatever you say." Adam shrugged.

"Discipline your nephew properly, Mr. Ethan. If this happens again, I won't let the matter slide easily," Dustin threatened firmly before he turned around to leave.

"Stop right there!" Ethan's expression darkened.

"Do you actually think you can just walk away like that after beating up my nephew and humiliating the Langfords? What do you take us as?"

"Exactly! You have to pay back for what you did!" Luis echoed from the side. He was determined to even the score with Dustin.

"Ethan, I'm holding back out of respect for you. You shouldn't go overboard!" Adam's gaze was laced with hostility.

"Adam, this is concerning the reputation of the Langford family. I can't just gloss it over! I can spare his life for your sake, but he has to get down on his knees and apologize to my nephew!" Ethan refused to back down.

Wealthy families cared about their reputations the most. If the Langfords let the matter go today, it would be equivalent to saying that anyone could walk all over them.

"Kneel down and apologize!" Luis looked down his nose at Dustin.

“So what if you have Adam backing you up? I can still trample you underfoot!” Luis mocked him in his heart..

“Kneel before you? Are you worthy of it?” Dustin was indifferent to their demands.

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“Kneel before you? Are you worthy of it?” Dustin was indifferent to their demands.

“Hmph! Don’t assume that you can behave insolently just because you have the Spanner family behind you. The world is larger than you think,” Ethan warned coldly.

With the Langford family’s power, getting rid of a person was simply child’s play to them.

“Ethan, heed my warning. You can’t afford to offend this friend of mine. Don’t get yourself in the soup. If you are on the outs with him for real, it’ll be too late for you to beg for mercy,” Adam

warned them.

“What a joke!” Ethan snorted. “Adam, since when have you learned to boast so shamelessly? In the whole of Stonia, nobody stands a chance against me!”

Those he feared were all thousands of miles away.

“Ethan, are you sure you want to do this?” Adam raised his brows.

“Let me tell you frankly, I’m so going to take this punk down today. You’d better stay out of it!” With a snap of Ethan’s fingers, the skilled fighters of the Langford family drew their swords and surrounded Dustin, ready to fight.

“Ethan is not giving any respect to Adam. It looks like the punk will be doomed today!”

“Even the Emperor won’t be able to save him for disgracing the Langfords!”

“This is the price for offending someone powerful in Stonia”

The guests couldn’t help but sigh when they saw the scene. Dustin’s forces were indeed impressive. However, they were nothing in Ethan’s presence.

“Rhys’ Weren’t you acting like you were great earlier? Why aren’t you saying anything now? The Langford family has a long-standing reputation. Even if you have the Emperor backing you today, you will still have to show us respect! If Uncle Ethan orders you to die, you’ll have to do it too!” Luis cackled with arrogance.

In Ethan’s presence, Luis was a cock who crowed upon his own dunghill.

“Oh? Who is asking my son to die?”

Right then, a flat voice came through. It wasn’t loud, but everyone could hear the voice clearly. When they looked over, what hove into their view was a thin, middle-aged man limping in. His looks and clothes were ordinary, and so was his physique. Other than being a little lump and having a little hump on his back, there was nothing special about him. If he were to walk in a crowd, no one would pay any attention to him.

However, it was such an ordinary person who drained the color from Ethan’s face. His gaze was filled with not only shock but also fear.

“H-how could it be? No, this is impossible! He stays in the military encampment all year round. How can he be here?” Ethan was in a fit of panic.

The moment Ethan saw the hunchbacked man, it was as if he had bumped into a ghost. His

fingers couldn’t help trembling as he broke into a cold sweat.

“What’s wrong, Ethan? Do you know this person?” Kingston, who was standing at the side, quickly sensed that something was amiss.

“H-he. He is Rufus Rhys!” Ethan’s voice quavered.

That was a bolt from the blue. When Kingston heard that, his face turned pale at once. “What?! Rufus Rhys?”

Rufus Rhys, the current head of the Rhys family, was someone who had made great contributions to the nation. He was the bravest in the army when he was young and took the lives of eight hundred thousand people during his time.

He had watched over West Lucozia for 20 years and attacked countless barbarians. On top of that, his means of doing things were impartial, and he never infringed on the citizens' rights. His achievements were so great that he possessed the authority to go against anyone.

When he was 30 years old, he was appointed Prince of Theswe and was the second most powerful

person in the nation. His status was on par with that of the Emperor, and that made him a truly terrifying figure.

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Looking at the hunchbacked man, who appeared as if he had zero prestige, Ethan was scared out of his wits. He dared not say anything. This man in front of him was someone noble from Stonia. Even the crowned head would have to show him respect.

Hence, it wasn't exaggerating to say that Rufus could easily take their lives at will.

When Dustin saw him, his expression darkened. There was fury in his eyes.

"It looks like a good show is coming up." Curling up his lips, Adam gloated and immediately retreated to one side.

Under the crowd's gaze, Rufus limped in, looking like someone of ordinary status. Nevertheless, the people in the hall unconsciously made room for him to walk past them.

Finally, he stopped in front of Dustin. "It's been a while. I didn't expect you to have grown this

much."

Staring at Dustin, who was taller than him by half a head, Rufus couldn't help but part his lips and grin. His broken front teeth made him seem a little comical.

"I didn't expect you to be still alive too," Dustin said frostily with a sharp gaze.

Hearing that, Ethan and Kingston were shocked. They wondered who Dustin was for him to speak to Rufus in such a manner.

Rufus laughed. He didn't look like he was angry at all. "Well, it's said that good people die early but not the bad ones. Someone like me, of course, has to live longer.

"Really? But you don't look like someone with a long lifespan," Dustin replied coldly.

"Hey! How can you curse your dad like this?"

"Do I have anything to do with you? Don't think so highly of yourself."

"No matter what you say, it's not going to change the fact that you're my son." Rufus shrugged.

"Hmph! Ten years ago, I paid you back all that I needed to. We have nothing to do with each other anymore!"

Dustin had held a grudge against him for a decade

"It has been ten years, and you're still a stubborn one." Rufus shook his head helplessly.

Deep down, he knew that what happened between them couldn't be solved in a day or two. Nevertheless, he would do his best to make it up to his son.

"Hey, old man!" At that moment, Luis was starting to get impatient. "I have no time to see how affectionate you are with your son. If you don't want to die, buzz off quickly!"

Ethan and Kingston were stunned as Luis spoke. They stood there in a daze, feeling at a loss as to what to do. No one in Stonia ever had the guts to be so presumptuous toward Rufus. They wondered if Luis was out of his mind.

"And who are you?" Rufus spared him a glance.

“I’m Luis, a member of the Langford family.” With his head held high, he continued loudly, “Your son has humiliated us publicly today, and he needs to pay for that! If he isn’t willing to kneel down and make his apology, you’ll have to do it on his behalf!”

“You’re asking me to kneel?” Rufus let out a chuckle, appearing to be harmless.

“That’s right! You’re his father, after all!”

“Do you know who I am? I’m afraid you can’t afford to have me kneeling before you.” The corner of Rufus’ lip curled up into a smirk.

“I don’t care who you are! Even if the Emperor is here today, he will have to get down on his knees and apologize! Otherwise, he’ll have to die!”

As soon as Luis finished saying that, Kingston fainted on the spot.

Meanwhile, Ethan’s face was as pale as death, and his legs were trembling uncontrollably.

“It’s all over now. We’re doomed. Why does the Langford family have such an idiotic fool?” he thought.

“Ethan, your family member is quite a character.” Rufus faked a smile.

“I” Ethan opened his mouth to explain.

However, before he could say anything, Luis butted in, “Hey! Who do you think you are to be calling my uncle without any honorifics?”

“How should I address him, then?”

“Call him Mr. Ethan!”

Rufus laughed and looked at Ethan. “Mr. Ethan, is this the right way?”

The moment Ethan heard that, he fell directly to his knees. “I beg your mercy, Your Highness!”

Upon seeing such a scene, everyone was astonished

After all, that was Ethan, the head of the Langfords. They wondered who could make a big shot. like him kneel on the floor.

“Uncle Ethan, what’s wrong? What are you doing on the floor? Get up quickly!”

Luis immediately stretched out his hand to help Ethan up. However, before Luis could touch him. Ethan smacked him hard in the face. “Fuck! Don’t touch me! I have nothing to do with you! From now on, you are no longer a part of the Langford family!”

“What?” Covering his reddened cheek, Luis was confused “Uncle Ethan, what’s going on? Why are you kicking me out of the family all of a sudden? I’m your nephew!”

“Get lost! I don’t have such a moronic nephew like you!” Ethan sent another slap across Luis’ face. Even if the person who offended Rufus was his biological father, he would have to cut ties with him there and then, let alone his nephew. Sacrificing one person was better than dragging the whole family down.

“What’s going on exactly?” Luis was on the verge of tears

This person standing here is none other than the Prince of Theswe. How dare you act so

disrespectfully in front of him? Even the Emperor won’t be able to save you!” Ethan reprimanded him fiercely.

“What?”

Luis froze and stood there in a daze with disbelief on his face. It had never occurred to him that this ordinary man in front of him would be the dignified Prince of Theswe.

“Wait... If he is the Prince of Theswe, then isn’t Dustin the renowned skilled martial artist, Kirin? Oh, God! What kind of person have I offended?” Luis muttered inwardly.

At the thought of that, Luis’ legs turned to jelly, and he slumped down to the floor. His gaze was filled with despair. Not only did he fight with Kirin over a woman, but he also called the Prince of Theswe an old man.

Was there anyone in the world who would do anything much worse than him?!

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Chapter 344

Meanwhile, Florence was frantically rummaging through the drawers and cabinets in the Nicholson Villa to pack up their things.

“Dahlia, quick! Go and get all the jewelry we have in the house! We can’t stay in Swinton anymore. Let’s quickly pack up and flee abroad for the time being. I’ve already bought the flight tickets. We still have several million dollars of savings and some valuables at home. Those will be enough for

us to survive for a while.” Florence was on tenterhooks.

Dahlia’s breach of promise had not only humiliated the Langfords but also offended the Glenstead

Nicholsons. Even if they were in Stonia, Dahlia and the rest wouldn’t be able to find a safe place to

stay, let alone in a small place like Swinton.

When Florence saw that Dahlia wasn’t responding to her, she became even more anxious. “Dahlia! What are you waiting for? Quickly pack your stuff!”

“Mom, the matter has yet to reach that extreme. We don’t need to run away.” Dahlia shook her head.

“Alas, don’t you realize how serious the current situation is?” Florence slapped her forehead in frustration. “It’s the Langfords, the cream of Stonia, that we have fallen out with! They are a terrifying existence. How can they possibly let us go when we have gotten them hot under the collar?”

“I understand what you’re trying to say. But Dustin said that he has a way to solve the problem. I believe in him,” Dahlia replied firmly.

“Are you crazy? How can you put your trust in that loser?” Florence was breathing fire at that point.

“Who does he think he is to go against the Langfords? If it weren’t for him, you wouldn’t have run away from the wedding, and we wouldn’t have come to this point. He’s simply a jinx!”

The Nicholsons could have led a silk-stockings life. However, Dustin ruined everything in the end. Florence just hated him to the core.

Dahlia frowned. “Mom! I breached the marriage promise on my own accord. It has nothing to do with Dustin!”

“You’re still defending him at times like this? Do you have to wait until our family is destroyed in his hands for you to come to your senses?” Florence asked bitterly.

“Enough. I won’t go anywhere without Dustin.” Dahlia was firm.

Bent out of shape, Florence reproached, “Y-you... You’re hopeless!”

“How did I raise her up to be such a foolish daughter? She’d rather be with someone penurious than marry into a rich family. What a stubborn child!” Florence muttered inwardly.

At that moment, James staggered down the stairs with the two large suitcases. “Mom, I’m done packing up our things. When are we leaving?”

“Hmph! Your sister is insisting on waiting for that loser!” Florence flumped onto the couch angrily.

“Sis, why are you waiting for him? Hasn’t he made our lives miserable enough?” James frowned.

“You leave with Mom first. Don’t worry about me.” Dahlia shook her head.

“Leave? Where do you think you are going?” Right then, Dakota burst through the door with several people following behind her. “Are you trying to shrug off all the responsibilities after what you have done?”

“What are you implying?” Dahlia knitted her brows

“It’s natural to be punished for making a mistake. I’ll have to hand you over to the Langfords so that the conflict between the two families can be resolved!” Dakota declared in a stern voice.

“What?” When Florence heard that, her expression changed in an instant. She stood up and put on an apologetic smile. “Dakota, you don’t have to be this ruthless, do you? Aren’t we family?”

“Ruthless?” Dakota snorted humorlessly. “It wasn’t easy to have the chance to be in-laws with the Langfords. However, not only did you not cherish this opportunity, but you also dragged the whole family down! Tell me, who is more ruthless?”

“Dakota, this has nothing to do with my daughter. It was all because of Dustin. If you need someone to blame, go and look for him!” Florence said in a hurry.

“You don’t have to worry about that. Dustin is with the Langfords. Perhaps he has already been skinned alive by now. But Dahlia has yet to make amends for what she did, so she has to come with us!”

As Dakota spoke, she made a gesture. Seconds later several burly bodyguards barged into the house.

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Chapter 345

“Take her away!” Dakota pointed her finger at Dahlia

“Let’s see who has the guts to do that!”

All of a sudden, a loud and stern voice came through the door.

Then, Dustin strutted in with Maximus. “Don’t blame me for being merciless if you dare challenge

me today!”

“Dustin?” Dahlia brightened up.

At the sight of him, she finally felt relieved. He had promised her that he would come back safely.

Indeed, it wasn’t a lie.

“You. You’re still alive?” Dakota’s eyes widened in disbelief.

She clearly saw him surrounded by the Langfords before she left the banquet hall earlier. “How could he escape from that?” Dakota thought.

“Do you want me to die so badly? No matter what, I am still your mom’s life savior. Don’t you have any sense of gratitude toward me?” Dustin replied flatly.

“Hmph! Stop playing dumb! I don’t care how you escaped! You have offended the Langford family, and now you’re going to suffer because of that!” Dakota shot daggers at him.

“So what if I offended the Langfords? I have my ways of dealing with them.”

“You have your ways?” Dakota snorted. “Like what? A mere doctor like you is simply courting death by going against the Langfords.

“Don’t look down upon people. Not only can I resolve the current problem, but I can also get Luis to come here and apologize in person.”

“Apologize?” Hearing that, Dakota was stunned for a moment before she burst into laughter. “Dustin, are you in your right mind? Who do you think you are to ask Mr. Langford to apologize?”

“You’re only good at bragging. I seriously don’t understand why my daughter will take a fancy to you,” Florence said disdainfully.

Luis was a wealthy aristocrat from Stonia. He could easily get Swinton squashed if he said so. It was already considered extremely lucky to have one’s life spared after offending him. Asking a big shot like him to make an apology was simply wishful thinking.

“Well, what if I really do get Luis to apologize?” Dustin asked in a provoking manner.

“If you can do that, I will change my last name!” Dakota sneered.

As soon as she finished speaking, countless luxury cars roared and pulled up outside the Nicholson Villa. Within seconds, the villa was surrounded from all sides. Luis and his men hurriedly got out of the car.

When Dakota saw that, she couldn't help but laugh and gloat. "Rhys, you're dead meat! The Langford family is here to get you!"

"This is bad! Dustin, hurry up and leave!" Dahlia's expression also changed at the sight.

The other party was nowhere near friendly.

"It's all over now. We should've left just now, but you kept insisting on waiting for Dustin. Look, the Langfords have arrived. Now we can't leave even if we want to!" Florence's face fell.

"Alas! Why are we so unlucky?" James uttered mournfully.

Just as everyone thought that a great misfortune was impending over them, Luis walked up to Dahlia and directly fell to his knees without hesitation.

"Ms. Nicholson, I was too ignorant. Everything was my fault. I'm sorry. Please forgive me!" As Luis spoke, he repeatedly knocked his head to the floor as he bowed.

That was completely unexpected. Everyone at the scene was dumbfounded. They wondered why Luis, a powerful figure, would kneel down and apologize to Dahlia.

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Chapter 346

"We beg for your forgiveness, Ms. Nicholson!"

The rest of the Langfords followed suit and kneeled down on the floor.

At the sight of that, Dahlia was stunned, and so was Dakota. Even Florence, who had been whining

until a moment ago, stood there in a trance.

They thought the Langfords were here to seek revenge. However, it had never occurred to the Nicholsons that the Langfords would behave so humbly all of a sudden.

“Ms. Nicholson, I’m sorry. I thought too highly of myself. Please forgive me!”

When Luis saw that Dahlia wasn’t making any responses, he began to slap his face like he was crazy, even though his cheeks were already red and swollen. Despite the pain, he dared not stop.

Half an hour ago, after finding out Dustin’s true identity at the banquet hall, Luis was frightened out of his wits. He thought he was doomed. Ethan even wanted to kick him out of the Langford family and cut ties with him.

However, to everyone’s surprise, Dustin was willing to let Luis off the hook on the premise that Luis had to ask for Dahlia’s forgiveness.

Luis was, of course, happy with what Dustin said. Hence, he immediately rushed over to the Nicholson Villa to apologize to Dahlia. As long as his life could be spared, he didn’t mind swallowing his pride.

“What is going on?” Dahlia raised her brows, at a loss as to what to do.

A while ago, Luis was still acting all high and mighty, having control over her life, and now he was kneeling before her. She found it hard to comprehend such a drastic change in character.

“Am I seeing this wrongly?” Florence kept rubbing her eyes in disbelief, wondering if that was still the powerful aristocrat.

When Dakota finally came to her senses, she immediately reached out her hands to help Luis up. What are you doing, Mr. Luis? Get up quickly! They aren’t worthy of having you kneel down to them.”

“Out of my sight!”

However, instead of letting her touch him, Luis slapped Dakota in the face so hard that she almost fell.

If Dakota hadn’t asked him to marry Dahlia, then he wouldn’t have offended Dustin.

“Mr. Luis, why did you hit me?” Dakota asked aggrievedly as she cupped her cheek.

Shut up, or I’ll rip out your tongue!”

After shooting a fierce glare at Dakota, Luis continued to apologize to Dahlia. It was a complete change of attitude.

Dakota bit the bullet and asked, “What happened exactly, Mr. Luis? Why don’t you get up first?”

“It’s okay. I’ll continue kneeling. It’s better this way.” He then said to Dahlia, “Ms. Nicholson, I’m

extremely remorseful for what I have done. Please give me a chance. I promise I’ll never show up in front of you again. If you’re still angry, I can cut off my finger to prove my sincerity!” As he spoke, he took out a knife and cut his finger off directly.

“Huh?” Dahlia was startled.

She did not expect Luis to cut his finger for real and be so cruel to himself.

“If it’s not enough, I’ll cut off another one!”

Clenching his teeth, Luis endured the severe pain and cut another of his fingers.

With beads of sweat forming on his forehead, he asked, “Ms. Nicholson, has your anger dissipated?”

“If it hasn’t, I can continue cutting them.”

“Enough... It’s enough.”

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Chapter 347

Dahlia shook her head fervently with a bewildered expression. “Mr. Langford, we’d be more than thankful if you didn’t find any faults with us. We would never dare blame you for anything!”

“Exactly! Please get up, Mr. Langford. Look at you! You’re bleeding so much! I’ll go get you a Band- Aid!” Florence quickly went into the bedroom to get the first-aid kit.

“A Band-Aid?” Luis could not believe his ears. He’d severed two of his fingers, for goodness sake! What use did he have for Band-Aids?

“Why don’t you go to the hospital, Mr. Langford? Your bleeding doesn’t seem to be stopping,” Dahlia suggested cautiously.

“Have you forgiven me, Ms. Nicholson?” Luis asked expectantly.

“I guess so. As long as you don’t come and bother me anymore, you’re forgiven.” Dahlia nodded.

“No problem at all! I’ll make myself scarce now and never bother you again!” Luis was elated. He nodded at both Dustin and Dahlia as a sign of apology before he made a run for it with his men in

tow.

“Hey, Mr. Langford! Your Band-Aid!” Florence raised the bandage in her hand and waved it around, but Luis did not even turn back at all. If anything, he picked up his speed.

“Dahlia Nicholson, just you wait! I’m not done with you yet!” Dakota saw that the situation wasn’t favorable for her, so she escaped too. What happened today was nothing but peculiar. Why did the great Mr. Langford apologize to Dahlia? And he even got down on his knees! How unbelievable. How absurd! She had to thoroughly investigate what exactly was the reason behind all this. “Say, Dahlia, what exactly came over Luis Langford? Has he gone cuckoo?” When everyone had left, Florence couldn’t hold back her curiosity. From how she saw it, the only plausible reasoning behind everything was that Luis had lost his mind. Why else would he apologize to them? He even went to such lengths as to amputate himself! Which person in their sane mind would do something like that?

“I have no idea either.” Dahlia shook her head. Then, her gaze swiftly fell on Dustin. “Did you do something?”

“Truth be told, I did nothing. It was Luis himself who offended a big shot, so he had to atone for his actions today.” Dustin shrugged.

“Is that so?” Dahlia had her doubts. Dustin had told her before that if she faced any sort of difficulty, he would be able to straighten things out for her. And now he really did clear things out for her. She refused to believe that

there wasn't anything fishy going on behind the scenes. "Alright, alright, I'll admit, I'm acquainted with an influential person." Seeing that he could not hide things any further, Dustin decided to come clean.

"Do you remember the man I had dinner with the other night? He's the scion of the prestigious Spanner family. Both his power and his status greatly exceed those of Luis Langford. He was the one who helped me out."

Mr. Spanner?" Dahlia immediately recalled Adam Spanner.

"How do you know such a prominent person?" She asked dubiously.

"I helped him before, so I guess he's just repaying me a favor." Dustin chuckled.

Adam had been a sickly kid who had constantly been bullied, so Dustin would stand up against those rich and arrogant youths of Stonia for him and often taught them a lesson for messing with Adam. Because of that, Dustin even earned himself the nickname "vile demon".

"I never would have guessed that you'd be affiliated with such an important person. How did I not know this before?" Dahlia asked, curious.

"These are old-time stories. No point bringing them up." Dustin shook his head.

"Alright then. I will not probe too much into your past. But in the future, please do not act rashly," Dahlia warned in all earnestness. "It's not every day you get favors from people like him. If you bother him too often, Mr. Spanner won't want to help you all the time. You have to rely on yourself."

"You don't have to worry. I know what I'm doing." Dustin smiled.

As they spoke, a hunched, middle-aged man with gray hair knocked on the door and made his way in. It was none other than Rufus Rhys, the King of Theswe!

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“Wha-” Dustin’s smile immediately dropped from his face the moment he saw who it was that came in through the door His smile was replaced by hostility “Who let you in? Get out!”

“Don’t be mistaken, I’m just here to see my daughter-in-law This has nothing to do with you” Rufus chuckled merrily as he hobbled in through the door

“Do you do you know each other?” Dahlia looked from one to the other, perplexed.

“You’re Dahlia, aren’t you? As expected, what a beauty! Rufus beamed brightly “Oh, right, I haven’t introduced myself. I’m Dustin’s father, your father-in-law

“Dustin’s father?” Dahlia was taken aback by the piece of information Though there wasn’t exactly anything special about Dustin, he had exceptionally good looks He was a fine specimen of a man if anything However, this old man before her was the farthest thing from handsome The two were vastly different in the looks department

“What? We don’t look alike?” Rufus chuckled nonchalantly This lad looks like his mom, so it makes sense that we look nothing like each other If he looked like me, I guess he’d never find himself such a beautiful wife like you ”

‘Don’t say that, Mi Rhys You carry an air of prowess about you Dahlia felt a little awkward that he saw through her doubt so easily

“Rufus Rhys’ You saw the person you were here to meet Now, would you please leave? You’re not welcome here” Dustin exclaimed out of nowhere

“Hey, watch it! That’s rude” Dahlia shot Dustin a glare. Then, she swiftly turned around and smiled apologetically at Rufus ‘Mr Rhys, Dustin’s just in a foul mood today Don’t mind him. Please, have a seat I’ll go make you a cup of tea

“Great Rufus grinned

“Hmph’ Another freeloader” Florence looked Rufus up and down as she studied him haughtily. She could tell from his attire that he wasn’t a wealthy person Sure enough, the apple doesn’t fall far from the tree The slacker’s father was a bum too

“This must be my in-law Unfortunately, I haven’t got much for you. As this is our first meeting, all I’ve got for you is this little gift. Please don’t mind it Rufus produced a box from his pocket and handed it to her

Florence was awe-struck when she opened up the box to take a quick look inside. A sapphire the size of an egg was laid inside the box. It was so clear and exquisite. “This thing. It isn’t a fake -stone, is it?”

Florence strongly doubted that it was a genuine gemstone. It was rare enough to come by a regular sapphire the size of one’s fingernail. But this one was the size of an egg! It was shocking, to say the least.

“No way. This is a family heirloom” Rufus laughed

“An heirloom? That’s great!” Florence immediately broke out into a wide smile when she heard that. She reckoned that he was a fool to give her something so precious. A sapphire of that size

“How do you know such a prominent person?” She asked dubiously.

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Chapter 348

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Chapter 349

"Lunch is ready!" Florence had quickly whipped up a lavish meal, and every dish looked.

sumptuous.

Dustin had been prepared to make an excuse and slip away but was stopped by Dahlia. In the end, he had no choice but to stay for the meal with Rufus. It was the first time the father and son pair had had a meal together at the same table.

As they ate, Rufus' eyes gradually welled up with tears. It felt like it'd been a lifetime for him, but the day finally came when he could sit down and have a meal with his son.

He had yet to receive his son's forgiveness, but what he had now was good enough. He was already very satisfied. Of course, many people out there would never believe that the ruthless and formidable Prince of Theswe would get teary-eyed over a meal.

Once he had his fill, Rufus tactfully took his leave. He knew that if he stayed on any longer, his son would most likely lose his temper.

Rufus left the Nicholson Villa with a spring in his step.

"How did things go, Sir?" When he got into the car, Albert, who sat in the passenger seat, asked inquisitively.

“Hahaha! I had a meal with my son today!” Rufus laughed heartily. Anyone could see that he was pleased

The driver found it strange that he’d be so glad because of a meal. “So you had a meal with your son, what’s the big deal? Does it really warrant such joy from you? You’re the Prince of Theswe! Where’d your dignity go?” He thought to himself.

“Congratulations, Sir! That’s one step closer to success!” Albert smiled. He was the only one who knew how much it meant to Rufus to have a meal with his son. Even winning ten cities was nowhere near as important as that.

“We’re indeed off to a good start, but knowing that rascal, it’ll be difficult to make much progress.” At the thought of that, Rufus was once again troubled.

“Take it slow, Sir. I believe that one day, Mr. Logan will find it in him to forgive you,” Albert consoled him.

“I sure hope so...” Rufus sighed before he continued “Oh before I forget, is my daughter-in-law related to the Nicholson family of Glenstead?”

“Yes, according to my investigations, she is from the prestigious Nicholson family of Glenstead. -Albert nodded.

“Very well, give that fella-what’s his name? Reggie?”

“Regulus Nicholson.”

“Ah, right, give Regulus a call. Have him take good care of my daughter-in-law, but make sure that he isn’t exposed. I wouldn’t want to frighten her,” Rufus said after some consideration. Gaining his son’s forgiveness would be a challenge, but he could get his daughter-in-law on his side first. That would make things much easier for him.

“Rest assured, Sir. I know what to do.” Albert nodded.

“Great. Let’s go visit the Drunken Maniac at Peaceful Medical Center. It’s been a long time. You old

buddies should catch up.”

Back at the Nicholson Villa, Dustin watched emotionlessly as Rufus’ car drove off. He knew perfectly well that what happened back then had nothing to do

with Rufus, but he still could not forgive him. He was but a mere mortal. He wasn't above his emotions.

All his life, he had known that kindness should be repaid with kindness and that revenge must be sought for any wrongs. He would willingly go against the world for his family and loved ones. It was different for Rufus, however. As a person of status, his priority was always what benefited him, and his gains and losses. Outsiders might think that Rufus did nothing wrong, but to Dustin, his one mistake was that he did absolutely nothing at all.

"Why are you spacing out?" Dahlia picked up a cup of hot tea and walked over to Dustin to pass it to him.

"Nothing." Dustin smiled and took a sip of tea.

"Didn't you tell me that both your parents had passed away? Who was this father of yours today?" Dahlia found things puzzling.

"He's as good as dead to me," Dustin stated calmly.

"I guess there must be some sort of major conflict going on between you. Can I ask what it is about?" Dahlia tried to make sense of the situation

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Chapter 350

Dahlia was genuinely curious about Dustin's past. After getting to know him better these days, she found that he was indeed a mystery.

"It's a long story." Dustin shook his head.

"Alright, I'll be here whenever you feel like talking about it." Dahlia gave him a warm smile.

"Sure." Dustin nodded.

"It's getting colder these days. Let's go to the mall to get some new clothes for winter," Dahlia suggested.

“Sure, we can get some new clothes, but I’ll have you know, I’m broke!” Dustin shrugged.

“Ugh! What a miser!” Dahlia rolled her eyes. “I’ll pay for everything today. Will that do?”

“Why, thank you, Ms. Nicholson!” Without another word, Dustin hurried off to bring the car over. It’s been three years since they got married, but they rarely went out shopping together.

The moment they left, Florence immediately took out the sapphire and had a good look at it. “Oh, my precious honeybunch of a sapphire! What luck I’m in today!”

The more she studied it, the more she loved it.

“Aunt Florence, what are you looking at?” Right then, Julie walked in.

“Julie! You’ve come at just the right time! Come have a look at this!” Florence showed off the sapphire to Julie and handed it to her.

“A sapphire?” When Julie had a good look at it, her voice raised a pitch and she sounded so excited. “Aunt Florence, where did you get such an enormous sapphire? It must be worth a fortune!”

“Haha! You might not believe this, but it was Dustin’s father who gave this to me.” Florence beamed proudly.

“What? Dustin’s father?” Julie was shocked and could not believe her ears. “Aunt Florence, didn’t you say that Dustin’s as broke as can be? How can his father afford to give you something so precious?”

“I find it strange too.” Florence rubbed her chin. “I was wondering if Dustin secretly came from a wealthy family. Maybe he’s just kept a low profile all this while so we never noticed.”

“Him? The son of a wealthy family? Does he look like one?” Julie wondered out loud.

“If he isn’t, then how can his father afford to give me such a huge sapphire just like that?” Florence continued to expound on the situation.

“Aunt Florence, let’s put that aside for now. The matter of utmost importance now is whether you’ve found someone to verify if the sapphire’s genuine?” Julie piped up.

“But it’s so pretty! It can’t be a fake gem, can it? Besides, Dustin’s father said this is a family heirloom!” Florence refused to believe that the gem could be a fake.

“Aunt Florence, how can you believe everything he says? You’re too gullible! For safety’s sake, it’s best if you get it appraised! You never know if it’s a sham!” Julie instigated.

“You’re right.” Florence nodded. “But where should I get it appraised?”

“Don’t you worry, Aunt Florence. I know just the right person to get it appraised. Just let me have the sapphire for a while, and we’ll soon have our answer,” Julie affirmed confidently.

“Alright, then. I’ll be waiting.” Florence did not doubt Julie even for a moment, and passed the sapphire along with the box it came with to her.

Half an hour later, in the gemological laboratory.

“What? This is a genuine sapphire worth billions? You—you’re not mistaken, are you?” Julie was dumbfounded when she heard the results.

“We’ve run multiple tests on it. It can’t be wrong. In fact, this is an extremely rare variety of sapphire. If it were to be auctioned, the starting bid would be one billion, at the very least,” the expert appraiser told her.

“Great! This is just great! We’ve struck gold this time!” Julie burst out laughing. A sapphire worth billions! How did they run into such luck?

Just then, Julie’s phone rang. She answered the call. It was Florence.

“Hello, Julie. How did the appraisal go? Is it a genuine sapphire?”

“O—of course it’s... It’s a fake one!” An idea came to Julie. She feigned disappointment. “Aunt Florence, you’ve been

deceived by Dustin and his father! I just had the sapphire appraised. They confirmed that it's just a synthetic gemstone. It'll just cost you maybe 20 or 30 dollars to get your hands on one. It's trash. I've thrown it away!"

"What? It's synthetic? Those darned loafers! How dare they trick me! I'll make them pay!" She let out a curse and cut the call.

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Chapter 351

That evening at Peaceful Medical Center, Natasha waltzed in through the doors happily with two bottles of wine in her hand. "Honey, I'm back! Look what I brought! These are aged wines, I'm sure you'll love them!"

All of a sudden, the smile on her face froze as she noticed that not only was Dustin not inside, but there were also two strangers in there instead. Gregory, who was usually in a drunken stupor, now sat upright with a stern expression on his face. How peculiar.

"Mr. Jones, who are they?" Natasha's curiosity was piqued.

"You're back, lass? Here, let me introduce them. This one here is Dustin's father, and this one is an old pal of mine." Gregory gestured to Rufus and Albert, respectively, as he introduced them to Natasha.

"Dustin's father?" Natasha's eyes lit up.

"Oh, so my father-in-law is here! I'm sorry I didn't recognize you!" As she spoke, she immediately got up and poured them each a cup of tea. Then, she smiled sweetly and said to Rufus, "Please have some tea, Father!"

"What?" Rufus took a while to adapt to such enthusiasm. "Young lady, may I know who you might be?"

"As this is our first time meeting, it's only expected that you do not know me, Father. My name is Natasha Harmon, and I'm Dustin's wife, so I'm your daughter-in-law." Natasha beamed brightly with confidence.

"My daughter-in-law?" Rufus was taken aback momentarily. Then, it quickly dawned on him what exactly was going on. He broke out into a hearty laugh.

"That's great, that's great! How lucky my son is to have such an enchanting wife like you! This is amazing!" As expected of a man from the Rhys family. Dustin managed to s

nag two charming ladies without anyone knowing. He sure had his way with women! Rufus was delighted.

“Oh, you flatter me too much, Father. I’m the lucky one to have Dustin. He’s such an amazing man. I’d say he’s quite a catch!” Natasha chuckled.

“Oh, is that lad really such a fine man?” Rufus teased.

“Of course he is!” Natasha did not go easy on her praise. “Not only is he capable intellectually, but he’s also skilled in martial arts. Besides, his medical skills are top-notch. It seems like there isn’t anything he can’t do! And to top it off, he’s such a gentle and caring man who shoulders his responsibilities well. You don’t come by men like him these days!”

“Hahaha! You sure know your man well!” Rufus chortled loudly when he heard his son being praised. He beamed so brightly that his wrinkles showed, but pride was evident on his face. He was beyond himself with joy. What was more delightful than hearing one’s own child being praised by others?

“Of course, it goes without saying that you must have taught him well for him to turn out into such an amazing person, Father. Now that I think about it, ultimately, you’re the one who has the

1/2

wisdom to raise such a brilliant son!” Natasha took the opportunity to praise Rufus as well.

“Hahaha!” Rufus was truly over the moon. He laughed so much that his cheeks started to hurt. He had never been so happy in the past ten years.

Albert, who sat beside him, smiled brightly too. He was happy for Rufus that he had yet another daughter-in-law.

“Oh, you do have your way with your words, young lady! Since you called me ‘father’, I must give you a present.” After Rufus calmed down from his joyful laughter, Rufus took out a dagger and handed it to Natasha. “This dagger has been by my side for many, many years. It shall be my gift to you to mark our first meeting.”

“This is too precious! I cannot have it!” Natasha waved her hands in protest. With her sharp eyes, she could tell at a glance that the dagger wasn’t just any other dagger. Just the gemstones embedded on the hilt for decoration alone were worth an exorbitant amount, much less the blade itself.

“Have it. It isn’t worth much. It’d be good to carry it around as protection,” Rufus chuckled. Seeing how understanding his daughter-in-law was, he would gladly give her the stars above if she so wished, let alone just a dagger.

“Just accept it, lass. This is your father-in-law’s affection towards you.” Mr. Jones winked at her. The dagger was listed as one of the top ten blades in the world. Even the Sword Whisperer, who was obsessed with swords, had requested to have the dagger multiple times before, but Rufus had never been willing to part with it.

“Alright, then. Thank you, Father.” Natasha smiled sweetly at him and quickly stashed the dagger away safely.

Then, they both had a good chat and quickly bonded with each other, so they decided to just address each other as father and daughter, respectively.

For a moment, all was warm and cozy in the medical center.

“Natasha, when did you come?” Right then, Dustin, who was just done shopping, entered. There was a smile on his face when he saw Natasha, however, when he caught sight of Rufus, his smile died down.

“Oh, not too long ago. And what a coincidence that I met Father! Why did you not tell me that Father was coming? I had nothing prepared!” Natasha whined. Had she known that Dustin’s father would drop by, she would have prepared some presents for him to win him over and gain her future father-in-law’s favor.

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Chapter 352

“Natasha, you haven’t had dinner yet, have you? Come on, I’ll treat you to dinner.” Dustin did not answer her and changed the topic instead.

“Now that you mention it, I am feeling a bit hungry. Father, shall we go grab a bite?” Natasha turned around to ask Rufus.

“Don’t worry about them. We’ll go get dinner, just the two of us,” Dustin insisted.

“Well...” Natasha paused. She could sense that something was off between the two.

“Natasha, go ahead and enjoy your meal together. We, old folks, won’t tag along and ruin your fun. Run along now.” Rufus smiled and nodded at her.

“Alright, Father. We’ll be quick and buy some food back for you.” Natasha did not try to pry further. After she made sure they were alright, she left with Dustin.

All was quiet in the car before Natasha broke the silence. “Your father... Did you have a fallout with him?”

“A fallout?” Dustin laughed dryly. “If only it was that simple, things would be much easier.”

“So then what is it? Can you tell me?” Natasha coaxed softly. She had never seen such a melancholy expression on Dustin.

“Say, if a man’s wife and son were harmed, and he did absolutely nothing about it, do you even still consider him a man?” Dustin did not straight up tell Natasha what had happened between him and his father, but he threw her a hypothetical situation instead.

“Well, could it be possible that the man had his dilemmas too?” Natasha asked warily.

“As long as he puts his mind to it, there isn’t anything that he can’t do. Dilemmas? They’re just excuses.” Dustin shook his head.

“As I have not experienced what you’ve been through, I’m not in a position to offer you any advice. However, I do believe that one day, all truths will come to light.”

“Forget it. Let’s not talk about this anymore. Where do you want to have dinner tonight?” Dustin changed the topic yet again.

“Shall we go to Hillview Restaurant?” Natasha suggested with a smile.

“Sure!” Dustin nodded. Then, with a step on the accelerator, they sped off towards Hillview Restaurant.

As the car went around a bend, there was suddenly a loud bang. They seemed to have hit something.

“Oh no! We’ve run someone over!” Natasha paled. She saw clearly through the rearview mirror that an old lady was groaning in pain in the middle of the road.

“Are you alright, ma’am?” The moment Dustin pulled the car over, Natasha rushed out of the car and hurried over to check on the old lady. But just as her hand touched the old lady’s shoulder, the old lady leaped up and pulled out a dirk, intending to stab Natasha with it.

1/2

Utterly shocked by the turn of events, Natasha failed to duck in time. Just as she thought that would be the end of her, a hand reached over and grabbed the blade of the dirk. With a forceful jerk, the dirk snapped into two.

“Who sent you?” Dustin stared icily at the old lady, chucking the blade away as it clattered to the ground.

“You have a bounty of a hundred billion on your head, and she has ten billion on hers. What a waste! I was just inches away from having ten billion dollars in my pocket.” The old lady cackled maniacally, showing off her yellow teeth.

“A Bounty Killer.” Dustin squinted. Edwin Hummer had offered a bounty of a hundred billion dollars to have Dustin killed. Though they had put an end to the Hummers, Edwin Hummer was still alive, so the bounty had yet to be called off.

The old lady sniggered evilly. “Since you know that I’m a Bounty Killer, then you should understand that today is the day you meet your maker!”

“You wish to kill us? Just you alone?” Dustin asked contemptuously.

“There’s such a huge bounty for you! Of course, I’m not the only one after you! Look around you!” The old lady lifted her chin to the side.

Dustin looked in the direction she signaled to find that they had been surrounded. He could see that eight figures were closing in on them. Though there weren’t many of them, they were all adept assassins.

“I know you’re gifted, young man, so I deliberately sent for the Eight Giants today. Skilled as you may be, you stand no chance against them! The more you struggle, the more suffering you’ll put yourself through, so don’t even think about escaping,” the old lady taunted.

“The Eight Giants? Are they powerful?” Dustin was unfazed.

“Hah! Are they powerful? Truth be told, young man, once the Eight Giants have their eyes set on someone, not a single one of their targets has ever escaped alive!” She announced confidently.

The moment she finished speaking, Dustin flicked his wrist, and a loud whooshing sound was heard. Immediately, the Eight Giants stopped in their tracks and crashed heavily to the ground. On closer inspection, there was a silver needle buried smack in the middle of each of their foreheads.

All eight of them died right then and there.

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The old lady stood frozen in place as she watched the Eight Giants crash to the ground with dull thuds, one after another. All the calmness and confidence she had earlier on had completely vanished into thin air and were instead replaced by downright fear. Those were the Eight Giants! They were renowned bounty hunters who had yet to fail before this!

Ever since they set foot in the field, they had been revered by all and had never missed a single target. No matter how great their opponents were, they had been able to wipe them out without breaking a sweat. She had thought that with

the Eight Giants working alongside her, everything would have gone smoothly without any hiccups. Who would have guessed that they'd be defeated in a matter of seconds? They did not even have time to react! What freak of nature was this man standing before her?

"Those are the Eight Giants that you've been harping on about? Pretty weak, aren't they?" Dustin shook his head. How dare mere mortals who had yet to achieve divinity dream about assassinating him?

"Y-y—you... What tactics did you use?" The old lady was so flustered that she stumbled several steps backward. Panic was evident on her face.

"I have only one question for you. How many more of you Bounty Killers are after me?"

"I—I don't know. We Bounty Killers work independently. I—"

"That's enough. You can go straight to hell now." Before she could even complete her sentence, Dustin sent another silver needle flying with a flick of his wrist. She, too, dropped dead on the spot.

The Bounty Killers was an extremely mysterious organization of bounty hunters. Every individual in the organization was an expert at what they did, and each one was more powerful than the one before. He had to call off the bounty on him and Natasha as soon as possible, or it was going to mean more trouble for them.

Just then, his phone started to ring. He answered the call to find that it was from Maximus. "Dustin! Things are looking ugly here. The Boulderthorns have surrounded the medical center!"

"The Boulderthorns?" Dustin frowned. "Were they sent by Royal Valor?"

"You're right! Royal Valor sent all their elites along too! Even their best warriors are here. They're here to kill you! Go hide somewhere, and whatever you do, remember to stay away from here!"

Maximus warned him.

They were severely outnumbered. As powerful as Dustin was, he could not hold up against all of Royal Valor's warriors surrounding him.

“I know what to do. Take Caitlyn and bring her out of there.” Dustin ended the call.

“What’s wrong?” Natasha asked worriedly from beside him.

“Nothing much. There’s just a minor complication over at the medical center. You head back to Park Place first. I’ll make it up for dinner tomorrow.” Dustin smiled at her assuredly.

“Okay. You take care!” Natasha nodded at him and drove off without any further questions.

1/2

“What an exciting evening. Who would have guessed that Royal Valor would join in on the fun.” Dustin scoffed. He hailed a cab and went straight back to Peaceful Medical Center.

Boulderthorn was a major sect of the Balerno martial arts discipline. Dustin had intended to keep things peaceful between them, but since they refused to back off, he would gladly face them head-

1. on.

At that moment, there were more than 20 cars pulled up around Peaceful Medical Center, surrounding the place tightly. All surveillance cameras in the vicinity were destroyed, and every alley in the area was blocked by Boulderthorn guild members. Not a single person could get past their barricade.

Several hundred elite Boulderthorn guild members stood at the door; a murderous aura

surrounded them. They looked like they were prepared to annihilate whoever and whatever that stood between them and their goal.

“Maximus Kane! I’m asking you this for the last time, where is Dustin?” A young man in a white shirt stood at the forefront of the crowd with the tip of his sword pointing squarely at Maximus. The person was none other than Keane Tovello, the second-most senior guild member of Royal Valor. After the death of Tatum Thunders,

he became the ace of Royal Valor. In order to win the guild members over and for them to accept him, he had to avenge the previous ace of the guild.

“Keane Tovello, if you must know, Dustin has already left Swinton. If there’s anything you need from him, you can come to me!” Maximus declared loudly.

“Hah! You ignorant fool! I see you’re the type who refuses to cry until death stares you in the face!” Keane was infuriated. With a light tap of his feet, he swiftly leaped towards Maximus in an attempt to take him down.

“I have long since heard that you’re adept with a sword. Let’s have a look at how good you are, then! Maximus wasn’t daunted by him in the least. As a burst of energy coursed through his body, the sword that he carried with him on his back was unsheathed, and with a single-handed forward motion, the sword launched through the air, aimed straight at Keane’s chest.

Keane let out a grunt and sliced through the air with his sword. He brought down a shower of sparks on himself as his sword made contact with Maximus’ sword, which sent it flying.

Maximus sprang upwards with a “whoosh” and accurately caught his sword mid-air. Then, with a quick flick of his wrist, he used the Illusory Sword technique. As the name suggested, it was a

technique that cast an illusion on its opponent, causing a momentary distraction.

With Dustin’s guidance, Maximus advanced in his swordsmanship. Now that he had mastered the Illusory Sword technique, he used it and cast an illusion of countless swords flying around in the air, all aiming at Keane. It was an extremely impressive technique.

“Superior skills indeed! No wonder you’re behaving so arrogantly!” Keane shot Maximus a glare and no longer held back, unleashing all that he had.

In a split second, the calmness of the night sky was broken by the sparks of swords coming into contact with each other and the whoosh of rapid movements. The crowd of elite Boulderthorn guild members instinctively backed off to make space for them.

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Chapter 354

Amid a fierce battle between two divine-level masters, ordinary warriors would never stand a chance to approach them.

While the battle was in full swing, Rufus, Gregory, and Albert were happily drinking inside the medical clinic.

Used to such chaotic scenes, they naturally paid no mind to such minor scuffles.

On the other hand, Caitlyn, who was pouring them drinks, wasn't as calm as them. She anxiously peered through the doorway, her worries evident.

How could Maximus handle all the opponents alone?

"Only if Mr. Rhys was here." As soon as this thought crossed her mind, Caitlyn immediately shook her head.

No!

Those people were here for Dustin. If Dustin were here, things would only get more dangerous!

"Kid, stop fretting over there. That lad will be fine for now. Bring us another bottle of wine!" Gregory shouted.

"Alright. I'm coming..." Upon hearing his words, Caitlyn promptly retrieved another bottle of wine

from the counter.

Observing the calm demeanor of the three men, she frowned and curiously asked, "Mr. Jones, aren't you all worried at all? If those bad guys were to barge in, you would be in danger!"

"What's there to worry about? Life's a cheap thing, and if we die, we die," Gregory answered

casually.

“Gosh, don’t be such a doomsayer!”

Caitlyn pouted and said solemnly, “Mr. Jones, you will live a long and healthy life. Even if there’s

danger, I will protect you!”

With that, she grabbed a mop nearby and acted like a bodyguard, vowing to defend the medical

center. Her actions caused the three men to laugh in amusement.

“She’s truly an interesting girl.”

Rufus grinned. “Don’t worry. None of us will die today.”

“Really?” Caitlyn’s eyes lit up.

“Of course. Do you think I would lie to you about such matters?” Rufus chuckled and pointed at

Albert. “See this old man here? He’s a powerful guy. Dealing with these minions is a piece of cake

for him.”—

“Is that so?” Caitlyn sized Albert up. She seemed skeptical.

He was an elderly man in his sixties or seventies, walking with a cane. How could he withstand a fight? The wind could even blow him down!

1/3

After observing everyone, she realized she was the youngest and strongest of the four of them.

Indeed, it seemed like the responsibility to protect them all would fall on her shoulders. With this in mind, Caitlyn raised the mop again and stood guard at the entrance. Clearly, she didn’t trust

these three oldies.

“Rufus, these minions are indeed nothing to fear. However, people have found out about your arrival in Swinton. I guess Streuqua will not let this opportunity slip by,” Albert suddenly said, his

tone serious.

“Are you suggesting that someone will come to assassinate me?” Rufus raised his glass and took a

sip.

“Yes.” Albert nodded.

As the Prince of West Lucozia, Rufus stood like an invincible barrier. He could single-handedly intimidate the Gods of Streuqua.

If Rufus encountered an assassination attempt, it would undoubtedly lead to a border conflict.

In West Lucozia, there were numerous experts to protect him. No matter how powerful Streuqua was, they would not find the slightest loophole. However, the situation was different in Swinton.

Without the protection of the West Lucozia army and death warriors, it presented a rare

opportunity for Streuqua to carry out an assassination attempt.

Therefore, Albert was sure there would be chaos in the coming days.

“Let them try all they want. It’s not like it’s the first time,” Rufus shrugged, seemingly

unconcerned.

Even in West Lucozia, assassination attempts would occur every now and then. So, of course, it would happen in Swinton.

Outside the medical center, the duel between the two swordsmanship prodigies had reached a white-hot stage. Both sides had sustained injuries, and it was difficult to determine the victor.

Maximus' movements were fast and accurate. He was particularly fierce and used ruthless techniques. In terms of swordsmanship alone, Maximus was superior to Keane.

However, Keane had higher cultivation and was in a more stable state. He was closer to divinity.

Thus, their battle was neck-and-neck.

"When did this kid become so powerful?" Standing among the crowd, Luther watched the two fight with a look of astonishment on his face.

Keane was a Divine-level martial artist and a sword prodigy. Yet, he couldn't defeat Maximus.

Did Maximus already reach divinity as well?

"Hmph! What a waste of time!" Meanwhile, Clement looked displeased as he peered through the window of his car at the battle ahead.

He had thought that his second disciple could easily claim victory, but he hadn't expected him to be unable to handle a mere minion.

Seeing the deadlock persist, Clement flicked his wrist, and a chess piece precisely struck

2/3

Maximus' knee. Maximus groaned and fell to his knees.

In that instant, Keane thrust his sword at him!

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Chapter 355

"Go to hell!" Noticing an opening, Keane immediately seized the opportunity and fiercely swung

his sword down.

At that moment, a silver needle suddenly appeared, flew past the crowd, and struck Keane's sword. "Clang!" With a clang, Kaene's long sword shattered.

"What? Who the hell did that?" Keane quickly retreated and had his guard up.

The fact that someone could use the needles as a weapon and break his sword demonstrated the profound internal energy of the assailant.

"To bully the weak with strength is one thing, but resorting to sneak attacks as well? Are all the people from Boulderthorn so despicable?" A cold voice came from behind.

Everyone turned around and saw a handsome man slowly walking out of the shadows. He then stood tall under a street lamp.

It was none other than Dustin, who had just arrived!

"Sir Lincoln, that's the guy! That's Dustin! He's the one who murdered Tatum's nephew!"

Seeing the newcomer, Luther immediately roared, "Kill him! Kill him quickly! We must avenge Tatum!"

Brody and Oliver stood up, their aura intimidating.

Ever since their father was crippled, the status of their lineage has plummeted. Naturally, they harbored a deep hatred toward Dustin, the one responsible for everything.

"Young man! So you're the one who killed my two beloved disciples?" Clement narrowed his eyes, his face filled with hostility.

"I killed Joshua, but not Tatum. I only crippled him," Dustin said calmly.

"Nonsense! You killed Tatum!" Brody shouted angrily.

"That's right! We saw through you a long time ago! You took advantage of Tatum's severe injuries and launched a sneak attack. How despicable and shameless!" Oliver chimed in.

"I wouldn't have gone through all the trouble if I wanted to kill Tatum. I would have finished him off directly in the arena. But of course, if you don't believe me, you can assume I killed him," Dustin replied indifferently.

Looking at the current situation, Dustin knew there was no hope of clearing up the misunderstanding. No matter how much he explained, it would be futile.

"Hey, Sir Lincoln! Did you hear that? This brat is extremely arrogant!"

"If we don't tear him limb from limb, how will Boulderthron continue to stand on in the martial world?"

Luther and his two sons continued to fuel the flames.

"Young man! According to the rules of the martial world, a life for a life. If you offer your neck for

1/2

the kill, I can give you a quick death!" Clement declared.

"Go ahead if you want to fight. Stop talking so much nonsense," Dustin replied rudely.

"Not bad, kid! You're surely arrogant!" Clement's face darkened. "If I personally take action, others will accuse me of bullying the weak with strength. So today, let my disciples have a go at you. If you manage to survive by some stroke of luck, I'll spare your life!"

"Formation!" With a single gesture from Clement, seven of Keane's disciples stepped forward and surrounded Dustin from all sides.

Those disciples were the best in Royal Valor. All of them were powerful. Among the seven, three had already reached divinity, while the other four were High-level martial artists.

Royal Valor was truly showcasing its experts!

"Dustin, I'll help you!" Maximus quickly realized that something was amiss.

“No.” Dustin raised his hand and rejected Maximus’ offer. I want to see how formidable Royal Valor, one of the eight sects of Boulderthorn, truly is!”

“Hmph! Today, I’ll make you admit defeat willingly! The Star–shifting Technique! Transform!” Keane shouted, and suddenly, the seven disciples changed their positions. They trapped Dustin in a peculiar formation.

“The Big Dipper Array? Haha. This brat is doomed!” Luther’s face couldn’t help but light up with joy when he saw the scene before him.

The Big Dipper Array was a well–known formation in martial arts. In the formation, each of the seven participants took the positions of Dubhe, Merak, Phkeda, Megraz, Alioth, Mizar, and Alkaid. With this, they would trap their enemy.

The seven individuals would continuously move in an unending cycle as the formation changed.

Once the formation took shape, no one could break it!

“Attack!” Keane attacked from the front with three people, while the other three attacked from behind.

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Displaying a perfect balance between offense and defense, the seven individuals worked together seamlessly. They complemented each other with no discernible flaws.

As the formation came into motion, the sharp, sword–like aura was formed and ran rampant instantly. A swirling gust of wind sent the sand and stones flying.

“Interesting.” Dustin frowned. His figure flickered as he dodged. He moved like a fish swimming in the water, constantly evading attacks within the sea of swords.

It seemed dangerous, yet he managed to dodge every strike at critical moments. The sharp, sword-like aura grazed his body, but it couldn't harm him in the slightest.

Brody and Oliver clenched their fists, their expressions filled with excitement.

They would loudly cheer whenever Dustin seemed to be in danger. However, they gritted their teeth with hatred when they saw him narrowly escape.

"Calm down. The Big Dipper Array grows more powerful as it faces stronger opponents. Once the offensive is in full swing, it becomes like a raging wave, one wave after another, and it becomes unstoppable. The longer he drags it out, the more dangerous it becomes for that brat," Luther explained calmly.

In his eyes, Dustin's defeat was only a matter of time.

"Dustin, catch the sword!" Maximus called out to Dustin.

Seeing the situation turn unfavorable, Maximus quickly thought of a clever idea. He threw his sword directly into the middle of the deadly formation.

"Alright!" Dustin stepped on the ground and instantly soared into the air before grabbing the sword in his hand.

"He must be seeking death!" Seeing Dustin leap into the air, Keane smirked. He commanded the sword formation to attack from bottom to top.

In a battle between experts, showing weaknesses was the last thing one would want to do. Being in the air without support was like presenting oneself as an easy target.

"Hah..." Looking at the sword formation beneath him, Dustin sneered disdainfully.

He forcefully swung his sword downward.

"Swish!" Like a meteor descending from the heavens, the shining sword slashed into the formation.

"Clang!" The formation was instantly shattered into pieces.

Keane and his seven companions were forced to retreat because of the powerful force. All of them were stunned.

“How is this possible?” Keane furrowed his brows.

The strength of the Big Dipper Array laid in harnessing the power of seven individuals to launch a combined attack. There was only one possibility of the formation breaking. And that was someone

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with strength surpassing the combined force of the seven members of the Big Dipper Array.

Did Dustin’s strength far exceed their expectations?

No! It couldn’t be possible! It must be an accident!

“Cycle of the Sun and Moon! Change formation!” Keane shouted loudly, commanding everyone to change their formation again.

The Big Dipper Array had seven variations and styles. It could attack, defend, and move at any speed. It was ever-changing and unpredictable.

“I’m just playing around with you. Are you even taking this fight seriously?” Dustin said, losing interest as he watched Keane and the others scattering away.

He swung his long sword. The sword flashed and shot out of his hand instantly, heading toward the chests of the seven guys.

“Defend!” The faces of the seven individuals fell slightly. They instinctively raised their swords to block Dustin’s attack.

Soon, Dustin’s sword struck them, and all seven of their swords shattered to the ground.

The relentless force of the impact sent the seven individuals flying backward and coughing up blood.

One person was severely injured, while the rest died on the spot!

For a moment, everyone at the scene fell into complete silence.

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As they looked at the six corpses on the ground and Keane, who was heavily injured and coughed up blood, all the disciples of Boulderthorn were dumbfounded.

They never expected Dustin would break the Big Dipper Array and simultaneously kill six top-notch experts from Royal Valor with just one sword

Was their opponent hiding his true strength all along?

“How ... How is this possible?” Luther widened his eyes in disbelief.

Dustin actually broke the renowned Big Dipper Array. Not to mention, he did it so effortlessly.

Just how powerful was this guy?

“No way! The seven top experts of Royal Valor couldn't defeat him?”

“This guy must be on some kind of drug; otherwise, how could he be so powerful?”

Brody and Oliver exchanged glances, their faces full of confusion.

“This guy is on a different level!” Even Clement's face turned grave at that moment.

Dustin wiped out the Big Dipper Array so effortlessly. Not to mention he only used a sword!

From that incident, it could well be said that Dustin was about to reach divinity. His martial talent must be extraordinary to possess such formidable power at such a young age!

It was definitely a bad idea to provoke such a monster.

The only thing they could do now was use all means to exterminate Dustin. Otherwise, if they

waited another two years, even Clement wouldn't be able to suppress him.

"All disciples of Royal Valor, listen up! Surround him!" Clement suddenly shouted.

"Yes, sir!" Hundreds of elites from Royal Valor quickly surrounded Dustin. They faced Dustin,

oozing a murderous aura.

"You people from Boulderthorn are truly unreliable. I can't believe you're going back on your own words," Dustin said, looking at them with disdain.

He was not surprised by Clement's treacherous actions. Those who resorted to sneak attacks

when their disciples were in battle could not be trusted.

"Young man! Pardon me. Blame yourself for being too threatening to be left alive!" Clement said

coldly.

"Good! Then today, I will eliminate the entire Royal Valor!" Dustin waved his sword, and a tremendous pressure exploded at once.

Instantly, a howling gale blew up. His robe fluttered, and his hair stood on end. He exuded an aura of invincibility, as if he could defeat every one of them alone!

"Ah!" Just as the two sides were about to erupt into a full-scale battle, a piercing scream suddenly resounded from the crowd.

Everyone instinctively turned their heads and saw that a burly man with blond hair and a foreign

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appearance had appeared out of nowhere.

He was holding the head of a Royal Valor disciple with his bare hands.

“Haha...” The blond man grinned and then forcefully put pressure on his finger

.

With a loud “pop“, the head of the Royal Valor disciple exploded like a ball.

His methods were extremely cruel.

“This is outrageous!”

“How daring!”

“Who is this guy? How dare he kill a Royal Valor disciple? He must have a death wish!”

Seeing this scene, everyone raged. Unanimously, they aimed their weapons at the blond man.

While internal conflicts within the martial world were one thing, all martial artists would unite when facing an external enemy.

It was an unwritten rule.

“You bunch of weaklings!” The blond man showed disdain and extended his hand, beckoning the crowd to come at him as if inviting them to attack him all at once.

“How dare you?” Several Royal Valor disciples were furious and immediately wielded their weapons. They began slashing at him.

“Clang, clang, clang...” Accompanied by the sound of metals colliding, all the weapons that struck the blond man were shattered.

“What?” The disciples were shocked.

However, before they could react, the blond man suddenly made a move.

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He slapped two of the guys hard on the head.

Two loud bangs rang out the next second, and their heads exploded like water melons.

The remaining two individuals instinctively tried to step back, but the blond man caught them and crushed their skulls with his bare hands.

It was bloody, cruel, and savage. Onlookers felt their scalps tingling with horror.

“Attack together! Kill him!” Clement’s face darkened. He immediately ordered his disciples to take

action.

“Attack!” Over a hundred disciples of Royal Valor shouted angrily and launched a coordinated assault.

Grinning, the blond man slightly bent his legs and jumped off the ground.

“Boom!” The ground exploded, and a pit formed.

Like a bullet fired from a gun, the blond man directly landed in the crowd.

Wherever he went, bodies were strewn across the ground, drenched in blood. Anyone blocking his path was brutally crushed by his unstoppable force!

“Hahaha...” The blond man laughed wildly, growing more excited as he killed the disciples. He was like a ferocious beast unleashed from its cage.

The Royal Valor disciples were like lambs waiting to be slaughtered. They couldn’t fight back at all.

“Beast! Stop this madness!” Seeing more than half of his disciples dead or injured, Clement could no longer contain his anger. He shouted furiously and leaped up, delivering a full-force palm strike to the back of the blond man.

“Boom!” A muffled sound echoed.

The blond man’s body trembled slightly, but then he casually turned his head. There was a hint of disdain on his face.

“How is that possible?” Clement’s eyelid twitched, and his face paled with horror.

The opponent had taken his full-force palm strike directly without the slightest injury.

Was this guy even human?

“Go to hell!” Clement gritted his teeth and forcefully delivered a powerful kick to the blond man’s head.

“Boom!” Another muffled sound rang out.

The blond man’s head only turned to the side slightly, then quickly returned to its original position, completely unharmed.

Clement was terrified by the scene. Cold sweat began to drip down his forehead,

“You weakling!” The blond man smirked and threw a light punch.

Clement closed his eyes and instinctively raised his arms to block the attack.

“Boom!” A loud explosion reverberated.

Clement’s arm instantly fractured, and his entire body was sent flying over ten meters before crashing heavily into a tree. Blood spewed from his mouth.

“What ...?” Witnessing this scene, everyone was dumbfounded.

No one could have imagined that Clement, the esteemed guildmaster of Royal Valor, who was halfway to becoming a grandmaster, couldn’t withstand a single punch from the blond man!

What the hell was this creature?

Terrified, the crowd scattered in all directions, not daring to get close.

“Who... who are you?” Both astonished and scared, Clement laid helplessly on the ground.

There was only one possibility for the person to defeat him with just one move. He must be a formidable grandmaster!

“I am from the Hall of Gods, bestowed with the name Ares!” the blond man proudly declared.

“The Hall of Gods from Streuqua? You’re the God of War, Ares?”

Everyone was shocked at his introduction.

The Hall of Gods was the most prestigious martial organization in Streuqua.

It was home to numerous formidable individuals, each with their own unique abilities and talents. Any one of them can wreak havoc wherever they go!

Not to mention those who were bestowed with divine titles. They were truly unmatched powerhouses.

Take the current figure, Ares, the God of War, for example.

In Dragonmarsh, he would be considered a martial arts grandmaster and would stand out as one of the best among the grandmasters.

An existence like him could easily overpower not just Royal Valor alone, but even if all eight sects joined forces, they would still be unable to stand against him.

However, Clement didn’t understand why a top-tier powerhouse from the Hall of Gods suddenly appeared in Swinton.

Also, why did he unleash such a merciless onslaught against the disciples of Boulderthorn?

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“Dad, what’s going on? Why is the God of War from the Hall of Gods here?”

“Could Sir Lincoln have crossed some big shot from the Hall of Gods?” Both Oliver and Brody cowered in fear when they saw the man with blonde hair who was brimming with a murderous

air.

“How the f*ck would I know? Why are you even asking me?” Luther gulped nervously and chided them. They had been there to ambush Dustin and had never expected to be assaulted by such a formidable individual from the Hall of Gods. This was mind-blowing!

“Your Excellency, I have never offended any of you from the Hall of Gods. Why have you come to massacre the members of Boulderthorn?” Clement asked, his face pale with fear.

“What? Arent you all the West Lucozian army?” The blonde-haired man asked with confusion. “Huh? West Lucozian army? We’re members of the Boulderthorn guild!” Clement exclaimed defeatedly. After all the mess, it turns out that the members of his guild died for no reason. “Oh, so you’re not the West Lucozian army? No wonder you’re all so weak! But that’s alright. There’s nothing we can do about the dead anymore. I’ll just take this as a warm-up exercise.” The blonde-haired man laughed hysterically.

Clement stood there, dumbfounded. But there was nothing he could do. He dare not retaliate either. This was a grandmaster they were talking about! He could kill them all as easily as one would kill an ant.

“Ares, stop messing around. Stay focused on our mission.” Right then, the crisp voice of a woman rang from a distance. Immediately after, a purple-haired woman donned in full armor made her way towards them from the shadows. She held a sword in her left hand and a shield in her right. The shapely and s*xxy woman exuded an overwhelming aura all around her.

“You know that my power heightens along with the number of people I kill, Athena. I’m merely warming up. It’s no big deal.” The blonde-haired man chuckled.

“Athena?” The crowd was once again astonished. Never in a hundred years would they have foreseen the Goddess of War from the Hall of Gods to be there too. This was another powerful god who was no less formidable than Ares, the God of War! Just Ares alone was enough to

wipe out Royal Valor in its entirety. With Athena there, even if the eight major guilds joined hands, they would stand no chance against these two!

“Come on out, you two. No point hiding anymore,” Athena suddenly called out. As she said that, two more figures emerged from the shadows. One was a handsome man with his hand holding a bow and some arrows, and the other was a ripped and bulky man who was about six and a half feet tall.

“Apollo of the Hall of Gods,” the handsome man said first, not forgetting to flex his muscles. “Heracles,” the built man grunted, obviously not a chatty person.

The moment they spoke, Clement and the rest of the Boulderthorns were utterly flabbergasted, looking ashen.

“Apollo, the God of Sun?”

“And Heracles, the God of Strength?”

“Well, f*ck me! Four of the major gods from the Hall of Gods are here! Are we doomed?”

The crowd was terrified.

Ares, the God of War, Athena, the Goddess of War. Apollo, the God of Sun; and Heracles, the God of Strength! They weren't just any other gods from the Hall of Gods! These were major gods!

It was already a great enough deal to see one of them, much less all four of them! Who would have thought that all four of them would appear in one place together? This was truly shocking! These four put together were enough to go against the entire Boulderthorn guild!

“How could this be? Why has the Hall of Gods sent so many major gods here? What's going on?” Clement felt weak in his knees. Nobody could care less for the guild master of Boulderthorn when there were four major gods here! He was nothing compared to them!

“Oh no, we won't die here today, will we?” Oliver and Brody were drenched in sweat and in a state of extreme panic.

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Both Oliver and Brody felt their knees start to buckle.

“Why are such legendary beings here?” Luther’s face was as white as a sheet as he lamented inwardly. Had he known that he would meet these masters here, he never would have come in the first place!

Everyone was silenced by the presence of the four major gods from the Hall of Gods. An

overwhelming, murderous aura permeated every inch of the place. The crowd stood idly in place, and no one dared to speak, move, or even so much as breathe loudly.

At that moment, they knew that they were no longer in control of their lives. And the fact was, they weren’t wrong. Not in the least. In the presence of the four major gods, their lives were as insignificant as ants. Beneath their fear and terror, there was also a genuine curiosity as to what exactly brought the four major gods there.

“Mr. Rhys, we know you’re in there. Would you please come out to meet us?” The four major gods stood in a row, and it was Athena who first broke the silence.

“How merry it is out here!” Rufus walked out with a glass of wine as he laughed heartily. “Since the Hall of Gods sent all four of you, I guess they’re really intent on ending me today!”

“Mr. Rhys, the Hall of Gods really admires talented people like you. As long as you agree to join us, not only will you walk away unscathed today, but you will also gain our protection!” Athena declared loudly.

“Haha! From what you’re saying, I gather that you’re proposing that I betray my country?” Rufus asked with amusement.

“We can give you everything that Dragonmarsh has to offer and more! You will be able to fully unleash your talents in Streuqua,” Athena persuaded unceasingly.

“I’ll have you know, there are three things I’ll never do. First, I’ll never kill the weak, the old, women, and children. Secondly, I’ll never put up with corrupt bureaucrats. And finally, I’ll never betray my country. So, unfortunately, I’ll have to disappoint you today.” Rufus’ smile remained as wide as ever.

“If you do not agree, then today is the day you’ll meet your maker!” Athena’s gaze was cold.

“Are you able to kill me with just the four of you?” Rufus took a sip of his wine.

“We might not be able to go to war against you, but there’s nobody out there who does a better job at assassinating than us!” Athena announced confidently.

“Cut the chit-chat! I can’t wait to get things started!” Ares laughed maniacally and began to move. With an agile leap, he charged toward Rufus like a bullet.

“Get him!” With Athena’s command, all of them charged toward Rufus immediately. Though all four of them were major gods, none of them dared slack off in the slightest because the person standing in front of them was someone worthy of being taken seriously by them.

“Major gods? Hah! I call bullshit on that!” Albert, who stood behind Rufus, scoffed. In one swift motion, he stepped in front of Rufus and met the four major gods head-on.

In an instant, thunderous sounds echoed from all around as fierce gales howled unceasingly and waves of true energy swept across their surroundings. The members of Royal Valor backed off as quickly as they could, lest they got caught in the middle.

Dustin stood at the entrance to the medical center and squinted as he watched the battle between the five of them. The Rhys family had three great generals, namely the Sword Whisperer, the Executioner, and the Drunken Maniac. Out of the three of them, the Sword Whisperer was undoubtedly the most powerful. However, the most ruthless of them all was none

other than Albert, the Executioner. Albert had reached peak level grandmaster y ten years ago. Now that ten years had passed, he'd refined his skills so much more that he was on par with the four major gods.

"Oh my goodness! Who's this old fella? How can he hold up against the four major gods so well?" Oliver and Brody were amazed by what they saw. From their point of view, the four major gods were deities who had total control during any battle! And when four such unrivaled beings teamed up and were still no match for an old man, it was truly mystifying!

"Damn it! I'm lucky I didn't barge into the medical center earlier on! I'd be dead meat if I did!" Clement broke out in a cold sweat when he saw the ongoing fight. Never in his dreams had he ever thought that there would be such a powerful master in the tiny medical center! He wouldn't even know how he died if he actually went and challenged such a person!

Hang on... The old man was someone from Peaceful Medical Center. And Peaceful Medical Center belonged to Dustin. Could it be possible that Dustin was somehow related to the old man? Ashen-faced, Clement dared not even continue his train of thought.

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As the battle raged on, Albert held his ground firmly against the four major gods' attacks. The five figures moved around so fast that they seemed to be intertwined, and it was impossible to tell them apart. It was quite an overwhelming sight to behold. Everywhere they passed by, trees would fall and houses would collapse. The entire place was in ruins.

Dustin stood at the entrance to the medical center, blocking out the occasional stray bursts of true energy that went their way. It was a good thing that Albert had the sense to lead the fight away from them or the medical center would also have been destroyed.

"Dustin, who would have thought that you had such a powerful elder in your family! Even the four major gods cannot defeat him!" Maximus stared straight ahead at the five figures who were engaged in a tight battle. They moved so fast that he could not even make out who each person

was.

"He's not an elder," Dustin said coldly,

"He's not? Then why is he with your father?" Maximus was intrigued.

"He's just a servant working for the Rhys family," Dustin answered aloofly. He didn't particularly like Albert.

"A servant?" Maximus could not believe his ears. He was awe-struck, to say the least.

"You have such a powerful person as a servant? Are you royalty, Dustin?" Maximus wondered to himself.

"We've got trouble." Suddenly, Dustin seemed to detect something. His head whipped up, and he stared intently down the street. The lights along the street briefly dimmed before they started to flicker.

In the blurriness, a figure could be seen coming towards them. When the lights came on, the figure disappeared, and when the lights went out, the figure materialized again. He approached closer each time the lights flickered, and in just a matter of seconds, the person appeared before the crowd. It was an old man with a black beard who wore a dark cloak. He was shrouded in a dark mist and emanated an air of demise.

“|—|—

I... I know him! He's Hades, God of the Underworld from the Hall of Gods!” So someone from the crowd exclaimed all of a sudden.

Chaos broke out instantly!

“Good heavens! Even Hades, God of the Underworld is here! What on earth is going on today?” The three Williams men were scared out of their wits and reduced to a flustered state.

The reason behind their shock was that Hades, God of the Underworld, was a royal god! His status and power far exceeded those of major gods like Athena and Ares. They were on two completely different levels. There was no mistake in saying that his presence in the Hall of Gods was unparalleled.

If the strongest of major gods were comparable to grandmasters in Dragonmarsh, then a royal god would be equivalent to the most superior of ultimate grandmasters. There were only a handful of

ultimate grandmasters in Dragonmarsh, and each of them was regarded as a national treasure. They usually busied themselves with protecting the country's borders or guarding the palace grounds, and they rarely ever made public appearances.

The same could be said for the royal gods of the Hall of Gods. They were never deployed unless their nation's security was at risk of being breached. Akin to nuclear weapons, they were more often used to intimidate and deter enemies rather than to engage in actual battles.

But today, it was truly beyond anyone's imagination that the most elite person in Streuqua, a royal god from the Hall of Gods, would actually make an appearance here in Dragonmarsh! Were they here to initiate war?

"It's been a long time, Mr. Rhys." Hades took off his cloak and nodded at Rufus like he was greeting an old friend.

"The Hall of Gods has truly gone all out this time around! Even a royal god has been deployed! Wouldn't it be a calamity if your nation lost you here?" Rufus raised a brow, looking as calm as ever.

"Mr. Rhys, if you were in West Lucozia, it goes without saying that I would not act rashly. Unfortunately, you have chosen to leave your own safe zone, so don't be surprised that we're taking action," Hades said with a smirk.

"Oh, so do you think that you're able to kill me?" Rufus asked lightly.

"We've done our investigation. You only have a grandmaster guarding you now. Athena and the rest of them will be able to keep him busy. And that would leave me to deal with you alone, and I'm fairly certain I can take your life." Hades was very confident in their plan.

There was an ace in the West Lucozian army who was extremely accomplished in his swordsmanship, and Hades knew that he was no match against that person. But luckily for them, that person was not here today, so this was the best chance for the Hall of Gods to launch an attack on them.

that

As long as Rufus died, West Lucozia would be left without a leader, and Streuqua could boldly invade them, and they wouldn't stand a chance. This was a vital step for them, and they would not allow themselves to fail!

"Since you already have everything planned out, come on then," Rufus invited impassively. "Have your last look at the mortal realm, Mr. Rhys!"

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Hades mimicked a courteous Dragonmarshian gesture before he raised a hand and swiftly brought it downward. As a loud thunder boomed around them, the dark shadow of a palm the size of a hill materialized out of nowhere, and with the downward motion of Hades' hand, it too slammed down upon Rufus.

Under the enormous shadow, Rufus looked as tiny as an ant. Had the impact been brought down anywhere else, it would have reduced the entire medical center to a pile of rubble, much less any human.

"Boom!" Even from a great distance away, most of the Boulderthorn members fell to their knees and threw up blood from the remnant of the force. Vulnerable bystanders were always the ones who bore the brunt of the consequences whenever there were conflicts between those of greater power.

Ultimate grandmasters were basically nuclear weapons in human form! Just one move from them was enough to bring down mountains and cause the earth beneath their feet to part! Of course, these mere mortals would not be able to withstand it.

"Huh?" Dustin's brows furrowed when he saw the huge shadow of a palm overhead. Just as he was hesitating on whether he should go ahead and make a move, an old man dressed in white emerged and pulled Rufus behind him.

At the same time, the old man emitted dazzling golden rays from his body, and a golden giant about 15 feet tall arose from behind him. In one swift motion, the giant's fist made contact with the enormous palm-shaped shadow. With a reverberating bang, the shadow, which was about the size of a hill, instantly shattered into fine shards. The golden giant stood motionless and steady behind the old man, looking very much like a golden statue.

"Who are you?" Hades demanded maliciously. He had thought that they had their assassination plan down to a tee. It had never occurred to them that there would be a secret master hidden under their nose.

"You may call me Wilkins. I'm just a regular attendant in Aylka." Though the old man had white hair, he had a childlike appearance. When he spoke, his gaze was cast downward to the ground, showing extreme humility and submission, and he lacked any sort of authority.

“Mr. Wilkins?” Hades squinted as he studied the man in front of him.

Then, it suddenly seemed to dawn on him. “Oh! I remember now. So you’re Nestor Wilkins? The legendary, unrivaled master within the palace gates?”

“That’s just a rumor. Nothing of the sort.” Still, the old man hung his head low, as if embarrassed.

“I do not care if that’s a rumor. I need you to get lost right now, or I’ll make sure you never get to see the next sunrise!” Hades ordered haughtily. They were in Dragonmarsh territory now, so he needed to get things done as fast as possible. The longer things dragged on, the higher their chances of failing were.

“I can’t.” Nestor shook his head. “I’ve come bearing two orders, and the first one is to protect the prince.”

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“Oh? And what of the second one?” Hades asked nonchalantly.

“To annihilate the gods of Streuqua.” And as he spoke, Nestor suddenly disappeared into thin air. When he took form again, he stood right in front of Hades with less than three feet between them.

“Huh?” Hades blanched. He felt like he had fallen into an icy stream. His scalp crawled, and all his hair stood on end.

Just as he was about to make a move, Nestor grabbed him by the throat and lifted him up over his head. Hades stiffened all over, and he could not feel his limbs. He could not even lift a finger. Gasps of astonishment broke out all around as they saw how weak Hades was in this person’s hands.

“We have laws here. And when you’re in our territory, you’ve got to obey our laws. It doesn’t matter if you’re a human, a demon, or a god; if you break our laws, you will pay for it. Oh, and I forgot to mention, no gods allowed in Dragonmarsh!” And with that, Nestor’s grip on Hades’ throat

tightened, and with a deafening crack, his neck was snapped in two. Hades ceased to exist right then and there.

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A deathly silence fell over the crowd. Even the fierce battle that raged on between Albert and the four major gods came to a standstill. Everyone gaped with disbelief as they watched on. Hades, the God of the Underworld, a royal god of the Hall of Gods, had died just like that? With just one move? By a mere mortal? How the hell was that possible?

He possessed powers no less than those of ultimate grandmasters and was a supreme expert in Streuqua! His level of destruction was supposed to be on the same level as nuclear weapons! But such an impressive person just had his neck snapped by an old man! How horrifying!

After a short moment of eerie silence, a commotion broke out.

“I wasn’t hallucinating, was I? A royal god from the Hall of Gods had just been killed in one move?” “Oh goodness! What’s going on? Am I dreaming?”

“An impressive fight! An impressive fight indeed!”

The members of Boulderthorn watched everything with their hearts in their mouths. From the Williams men to the guildmaster, Sir Lincoln, every one of them was gripped by fear. Who would have thought that an attendant was so mighty? Was this truly the power of the unrivaled master in the palace? He was fearsome!

“Lord Hades died?” Athena and the rest of the major gods were horrified by the sight before them. Their original plan had been to let the four of them hold the West Lucozian army back while Lord Hades delivered the fatal blow to Rufus.

They had predicted every possibility that could happen during the assassination, rehearsed a million times, and had a success rate of over 99%. But in all of their predictions, they had never expected Nestor to arrive so soon, and that even Lord Hades was no match for him. As much as they were unwilling to accept defeat, they had no means of denying it. They were utterly and completely defeated!

“Ares! Get out of here!” Athena hissed through clenched teeth as she made a dash for it.

“Damn it! We were so close!” Ares roared defiantly. However, he had no other choice but to escape along with his comrades. If the person was able to kill Lord Hades, then they clearly weren’t a match for him.

“Do you think that you can escape?” Nestor’s eyes narrowed before he disappeared once again. When he appeared again five minutes later, he held four heads in his hands.

Athena, Ares, Apollo, and Heracles... The four major gods from the Hall of Gods. Not a single one of them escaped. All four of them died at the hands of Nestor Wilkins.

The crowd inhaled sharply at the grotesque sight of four bloody heads hanging from his hands. To even have the chance of escaping was a luxury in and of itself in the face of true power. At that moment, Nestor was a person who was many times more daunting than any God they ever believed in.

With a dull thud, Nestor chucked the heads aside. Then, under the disbelieving gaze of the crowd, he got on one knee before Rufus and Dustin. “Nestor Wilkins at your service, Your Highness,

Prince of Theswe! And at your service, Your Grace!” With that, he bowed deeply with such humility towards them.

“What?” The crowd felt as if they had been struck by lightning and were all shocked silly. They had not even gotten over the fact that four major gods and a royal god had been killed today, and now they had even more surprising news to digest.

Never in their dreams had they ever imagined that the unrivaled master from the palace, someone who had killed Hades with just a single move, would get on his knees and bow to another person. in public.

How the hell was that possible? They had always known that only the strong were respected. The old man, Nestor, seemed almost invincible! He was definitely the most superior person in all of Dragonmarsh!

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A person as mighty as him should have been respected and admired by all, no matter where he went. His presence alone should be worshiped like that of a god, so why was he behaving so humbly?

“Prince of Theswe? Your Grace?” Clement stared dully, first at Rufus and then at Dustin. He felt an immense fear that he had never experienced before creep up on him and spread throughout his entire being.

There was only one person in the whole world who was known as the Prince of Theswe, and that person was the ruler of West Lucozia, the person who had total control over the Rhys household, and the one person who reigned Dragonmarsh. It was the remarkable Rufus Rhys. Could it be possible that the ugly and hunched old man was the indestructible Prince of Theswe?

At the thought of that, Clement was so terrified that he broke out in a cold sweat and looked as white as a sheet.

And if the hunched old man was the Prince of Theswe, then wouldn't Dustin, who was addressed as “Your Grace”, be the son of the Prince of Theswe? Which would make him... the renowned Kirin, Logan Rhys?

Clement's knees buckled, and he fell heavily to the ground on his backside. His face was ashen, and his gaze was full of despair. He wasn't the only one reduced to such a state. By then, all three of the Williams men were also trembling and shaking in fear.

Brody, especially, quivered like a leaf, and his pants were dripping wet. He was so scared that he had wet himself! None of them had ever thought that the person they had assumed to be just a small fry would turn out to be the son of the Prince of Theswe! And they had offended him!

“Get up, Mr. Wilkins. What's a grown man doing staying on his knees everywhere he goes? Oh, wait. I nearly forgot. You're not a man, are you?” Rufus mocked with the hint of a smile teasing on his lips.

“Thank you, Your Highness.” Nestor's eyes narrowed ever so slightly before he resumed his humble and submissive facade.

“You’ve come just in time today. You must have followed me the entire way here?” Rufus asked intentionally.

“The master was worried about your safety, Your Highness, so he sent me to secretly protect you along the way. I beg for your pardon ” Nestor lowered his head.

“To protect me? I’m sure you meant he sent you to spy on me?” Rufus smiled ambiguously.

“Please do not get the wrong idea, Sir. You are of esteemed status, and your identity dictates the destiny of the whole of Dragonmarsh. Even the slightest scratch or injury on you would threaten the fate of the nation,” Nestor explained humbly.

“Hah! What a good attendant you are!” Rufus reached out to give Nestor a pat on the back.

“Thank you, Your Highness.” Nestor nodded.

“We shouldn’t stay here any longer, Sir. Please return to West Lucozia immediately to ensure that you face no mishap.”

“Oh? Are you telling me what to do now?” Rufus’ expression darkened.

“I would never dare to.” Nestor held his head low.

“If you’re a servant, then act as a servant should. Don’t you ever dare tell me what to do, or you’ll be sorry,” Rufus warned.

“Yes, Your Highness.” Nestor remained submissive and kept his gaze fixed on the ground.

“Well, why are you still here? Get lost!” Rufus waved his hand impatiently.

“Yes, Sir,” Nestor answered.

Just as he was about to take his leave, he was stopped by Dustin. “Hold up! Did I say you could leave?”

“Do you have any orders, Your Grace?” Once again, Nestor kept his head low

“Tell me, were you involved in the incident ten years ago?” Dustin asked coldly.

“I do not understand what you’re referring to, Your Grace.”

“Do you not understand, or are you feigning ignorance?” Dustin’s gaze was frosty, and killing intent was starting to surface.

“I’ll ask you one last time. Did you have anything to do with my mother’s death?”

“You must have been mistaken, Your Grace. I know nothing about it.” Nestor shook his head. “Who, in the whole of Aylka, could stop my mother, if not for you, an ultimate grandmaster?” Dustin clenched his fists, and fury burned within him.

“From what I know, the princess consort had passed on due to an ailment.” Nestor sidestepped.

“F*ck you and your ailments! Go to hell, vermin!” Dustin pulled out his sword and charged head-on toward him.

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With a whoosh, Dustin’s sword immediately emitted blinding rays. Swift as the wind and with such immense strength, he drove his sword toward Nestor’s chest.

Out of nowhere, an enormous and translucent golden bell came down out of the sky and landed around Nestor with a dull thud, shielding him from Dustin’s attack. As the tip of Dustin’s sword made contact with the golden bell, rings of ripples spread out from the point of contact as they would on the surface of the water.

There weren't any sounds produced, no explosion, and not even so much as a tiny clang from the impact. The true energy that Dustin channeled was completely absorbed by the bell and did not harm Nestor at all.

"What are you doing, Your Grace?" Nestor's expression remained unchanged.

"I'm doing away with you!" Dustin kicked himself off the ground and propelled himself forward, stabbing the golden bell forcefully. Strong ripples spread out across the bell once again, but still, it remained intact and did not even budge an inch from its position.

"Your Grace, I came bearing orders from the master. Do you think this is a good idea?" Nestor asked calmly.

Dustin did not say a word and merely drove his sword against the bell continuously. With his ceaseless effort, the bell gradually started to vibrate, and the ripples on it grew more violent.

After another ten stabs or so, Dustin's sword suddenly snapped with a clang and fell to the ground noisily. It was just an ordinary sword that could not withstand the constant surges of true energy channeled from Dustin.

"That's enough!" Rufus stopped Dustin when he saw that Dustin was still intent on attacking Nestor.

"You're no match for him. There's no point carrying on."

"Who's to say I'm no match for him? We'll never know until we end this!" Dustin retorted defiantly. "He came under orders, and he has someone behind him. If anything were to happen to him here, you wouldn't be able to bear the consequences!" Rufus warned him.

"So? Are you telling me that I should stand idly by and watch as my mother's murderer walks away without doing anything?" Dustin's eyes were bloodshot, and he looked much like a bloodthirsty beast.

"Hear me out, Logan. Now's not the time yet." Rufus shook his head. Nestor was the King's most trusted guard. If, for any reason, he happened to die in their hands, it would have many repercussions.

He did not wish for his son to be entangled in the mess that took place all those years ago. At least, not yet; it was still not the time yet.

“Rufus Rhys, if you do not wish to be implicated, then just back off! I will take full responsibility and bear all the consequences of my actions today. This has nothing to do with the Rhys family!” Dustin roared menacingly before once again charging toward Nestor with his broken sword.

This time, Nestor no longer played the part of the defensive party. He removed the golden bell that shielded him from Dustin’s attacks and let Dustin do as he wished.

Just as Dustin was about to make contact with his target, a dragon cane parried his sword, blocking his advances.

“Mr. Logan! Please calm down! Many will die if you harm him!” Albert warned gravely.

“How dare you block me!” Dustin’s expression darkened even more. He looked feral and seemed intent on murdering anyone who dared stop him from achieving his goal of killing Nestor.

“Quit messing around, lad!” Gregory, who stood a little way to the back, called out to him.

“All this fighting is meaningless. If you really have a mind to get revenge, you might as well just march right up to Stonia and launch an attack on Aylka!”

Dustin clenched his jaws and took a deep breath when he heard that. Finally, he suppressed his urge to kill and backed off. Of course, he knew that Nestor was nothing more than a puppet and that there was someone else behind the scenes.

Gregory was right. If he really wanted revenge, he would have to go up to them with his head held high and kill openly without any restraints. He would make those who were in power in Aylka tremble with fear!

“What are you still standing around here for, scum? Get the hell out of here now!” Rufus struck Nestor harshly with his foot.

“I shall take my leave now,” Nestor said humbly before he nodded at them and turned to leave. But before he left, he deliberately turned back and shot Dustin a challenging glance.

“Listen up, Wilkins! I will personally go to Aylka for you in a year! I will fight you to the death at the highest fort in Aylka!” Dustin’s fury was overwhelming and unbridled.

“I await for your presence, Your Grace.” Nestor smiled curtly before quickly disappearing into the darkness.

“You acted too rashly, young man! Even though he’s just an attendant, he’s an unrivaled master in Aylka! The Sword Whisperer is the only person in the whole of West Lucozia who can put up a fight against him! Did you really think that it would be so easy to kill him?” Gregory asked huffily.

His words seemed to have more effect on Dustin than Rufus’.

“Of course, I know that it wouldn’t be easy to kill him off. I was just putting on a show.” The resentful and feral expression on his face had completely dissolved away and was instead replaced by his usual calmness and nonchalance.

“Putting on a show?” Gregory did not understand what he meant.

“A decade ago, he designed such an intricate scheme just to do away with me. I do not believe that his desire to get rid of me will change after a decade. If I did not make a move earlier on, he’d still find a means of assessing me. If that were the case, I’d much rather make the first move and show him what a vengeful and aggressive young rascal I am,” Dustin said aloofly.

“Have you been acting the whole time, lad?” Gregory quickly caught on to what he meant.

“Not exactly acting. I was dead serious about wanting to do him in. I simply made myself seem more impulsive and quick-tempered, and I also showed him how little progress I’ve made over the years so that they would not be too wary and guarded against me.” Dustin looked up

calmly into the sky with bright eyes. He had ten years of practice that allowed him to mask his emotions and not let anyone see past his true feelings.

“The strong show weakness to their enemies, whereas the weak show strength. Well done, young man! You truly have some tricks up your sleeves!” Gregory laughed heartily.

“Hah! He takes after his father!” Rufus lifted his chin proudly.

Dustin paid him no heed and raised his sword. With a quick swish, he brought his sword down in an arc, and Clement, who had been secretly attempting to escape, was sliced in half.

“Please—please don’t kill me... I’m begging you, please don’t—” Luther and his two sons were begging on their knees as tears ran down their faces. But before they could even finish their words, Dustin brought his sword down on them, and all three of them were beheaded.

“I gave you lots of chances, but you never treasured them.” And then, he turned around and walked into the center as though nothing had ever happened.

“Albert, spare no one,” Rufus ordered impassively.

“Yes, Sir.” Albert nodded. Then, a murderous glint flashed in his eyes as he turned to face the members of Royal Valor. He looked like a ravenous beast who had spotted a flock of lambs. They were going to pay with their lives for angering Rufus!

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After he left Peaceful Medical Center, Nestor quickly got into a car. The driver was a pale young man with handsome features who had a layer of thick makeup and bright red lipstick. It was hard to identify his gender at first glance.

“Who would have thought that Logan Rhys would have gone into hiding in such a pathetic medical center for the past ten years that he’d been missing, Mr. Wilkins? And it seems like he’s still very much hung up on the incident back then. Should I put an end to him when the opportunity arises so that we won’t get into any trouble

with him in the future?” The pale man had a shrill voice that carried a hint of malice.

“We can’t kill him yet,” Nestor said calmly with his eyes closed. “So long as Rufus is still in power, nobody will be able to harm him.”

“Every mortal goes through life and death, Sir. I promise I’ll make his death look so natural that nobody will suspect anything amiss.” The pale man chuckled venomously.

“Don’t be silly. Things aren’t as simple as you make them out to be.” Nestor shook his head. “Do you know why Rufus willingly stayed cooped up in West Lucozia serving our master when he has such impressive skills and a troop of 50,000 men at his disposal?”

“Of course, it’s because he’s intimidated by our majestic and powerful master!” The pale man declared proudly.

“It’s partially true that he’s intimidated, but more importantly, it’s because he’s worried about the potential consequences.” Nestor gave a slight smile. “As long as the so-called Kirin is around, Rufus will never take action, no matter how ambitious he is. On the contrary, Rufus would be an uncontrollable beast with nothing left to lose once his son was dead. And when that day comes, Stonia’s destiny will be rewritten.”

When the Princess Consort of West Lucozia died a decade ago, Rufus had attempted to deploy his armies from the borders several times. But in the end, he always held back.

Was the reason behind it because he feared death? Or was it because he feared the King? What a joke! The true reason behind his retreat was to protect Logan. Simply put, the influential and great Prince of Theswe only had one last precious treasure left, and that was his son, Logan. If anything were to happen to him, maybe he would break out in Stonia.

“Sir, I’m just worried that when Logan returns to West Lucozia and inherits the throne, it’ll bring great disaster upon us!” The pale man reminded Nestor.

“Hah! The so-called Kirin that people claimed to be an unrivaled genius is just a rascal who’s still wet behind the ears. He’s impulsive and easily angered; he’s utterly transparent. Even if a person like him inherits the throne, he’d just be a reckless man who does not warrant our fear. I’m certain. that once Rufus Rhys dies, the entire Rhys family, and even the whole of West Lucozia, will fall apart and end up in a mess!” Nestor smiled vilely.

“But Rufus is only in his fifties. What if he still has a long life ahead of him? Will we continue living in fear for another twenty or thirty years to come?” The pale man frowned.

“It wouldn’t take so long. Just wait. Things will soon come to an end.” A meaningful smirk crept

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up on Nestor’s face. The master had waited for ten years; it was ten years’ worth of laying out their tactics. It was almost time to carry out their plan and reap the fruits of their labor.

When Dustin woke up the next morning, the medical center had been thoroughly cleaned, both inside and out. All traces of the fight that took place the night prior had vanished, and all relevant information had been hidden away.

Everything was as calm and peaceful as before..

“Lad, your father has returned to West Lucozia.” Gregory walked down the stairs toward him. As opposed to his usual drunken state, he seemed exceptionally sober today.

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“He should have left long ago. He’s only going to bring us trouble if he stays here,” Dustin said frostily.

“Before your father left, he asked me to talk you into returning to the Rhys family. I refused.” Gregory sat down on a chair and poured himself a cup of tea.

“I told him that the Rhys household is a dangerous place to be in. I’d much rather see you do what you love and live your best life out here than be constantly caught in power struggles and deceitful manipulations back there. Surprisingly, he agreed. He told me that all he wants is for you to be happy, and that the Rhys family will always be there to back you up. His only wish is for you to make time to go back and visit your mother’s grave to pay her respect.”

Dustin stood there, frozen in place, when he heard that. He felt a prick on his chest, right above his heart. He reached up to find that it was the crystal necklace that his mother had left him.

Taking in a deep breath, he said, “I’ll go back. But now’s not the time. The day the murderer pays with his life will be the day I return!”

Because how could he visit his mother’s grave now knowing that her death has yet to be avenged?

“Alright then, I’ve said all that’s left to be said. You make your own decision.” Then Gregory downed the cup of tea and went upstairs, ready to go back to bed again. As for Dustin, he sat on a chair and started to ponder over his great vengeance scheme.

“What’s on your mind?” Dahlia walked in and waved a hand in front of Dustin’s face.

“Hey, when did you come in?” Dustin was surprised to see her.

“You didn’t even see me coming in? What are you so lost in thought over? Is it me you’re thinking about, or is it Natasha that’s occupying your thoughts?” Dahlia probed inquisitively.

“Neither.” Dustin shook his head. That was a trick question, and he knew better than to answer it. “Oh? Is there someone else that you’ve got your mind on?” Dahlia asked, looking at him questioningly.

“Of course not!” Dustin was amused by Dahlia’s question.

Then, he quickly changed the topic. “Did you come here so early in the morning to ask me about this?”

“Hah! Do you think I have nothing better to do with my time?” Dahlia rolled her eyes at him. “I’ve come to share some good news! The Nicholson family in Glenstead has finally accepted our family again! We’ll be reunified. From now on, we’ll be scions of a prestigious family!”

“Oh? Is that so? Well, congratulations!” Dustin chuckled.

“That’s not all!” Dahlia smiled proudly. “Not only have we been accepted to return, but the patriarch of the family, Regulus Nicholson, has also listed me as a potential successor! I’ll stand a chance of competing against the rest of his offspring as the future head of the household!”

“So what you mean, is that as long as you perform well, you stand a chance of becoming the head of a prominent family?” Dustin was quick to catch on.

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“Precisely!” Dahlia snapped her fingers and giggled excitedly. “So many people dream about being listed as potential successors of the family. I never would have guessed that the patriarch would choose me! What a pleasant surprise!”

Truth be told, she hadn’t held high hopes of being reunited with the Nicholson family of Glenstead. She knew that even if she were to return to the prestigious family, she would not be properly recognized or appreciated as she wasn’t part of the direct lineage.

But things were different now. To be selected as a potential successor was a big deal.. It put her at a different standing and status from all the other descendants who weren’t on the list. This was her one chance to take control of her destiny and break free from the oppression of her family. All she needed to do was prove her worth and defeat her competitors, and she’d be able to emerge as a successor and rise above them all.

“Congratulations! Seems like the patriarch is placing great importance on your family!” Dustin

smiled.

“Well, of course!” Dahlia lifted her chin confidently. “Now that the chance presents itself, you better butter me up nice and well or you’ll be sorry you missed the opportunity to do so when I become the successor!”

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Amused by Dahlia's antics, Dustin chuckled and nodded furiously in a joking manner. "Ah, yes! All hail, Ms. Nicholson! The ever-capable and talented Ms. Nicholson is bound to be the leader of a prominent household one day!" Then, he even went so far as to pump his fist in the air dramatically to entertain her.

"Hey! Quit fooling around! I'm being serious here! As long as I become the matriarch of the Nicholson family, I'll be even more influential than Natasha Harmon! And when the time comes, I'll take good care of you!" Dahlia raised her chin and declared confidently.

Anyone could tell that she was full of hope and determination. In the past, Dahlia had always felt inferior compared to Natasha due to their differences in background and social status. But now that she was a potential successor to the Nicholson family, she was on par with her, and they would have to vie for Dustin according to their abilities.

Right then, Dahlia's phone rang. She answered the call and quickly heard Florence's voice. "Honey, where are you? Come back immediately. Madam Gloria from the Nicholson family in Glenstead is here to see you."

"

"Madam Gloria? Why is she here?" Dahlia tried to gather more information to grasp the situation over at Florence's.

Regulus Nicholson, the patriarch of the family, had been a remarkably outstanding man in his youth, and he had married three wives. His first wife was over 70 years old, and both his second and third wives were more than 60 years old. Gloria Gustav was his third wife.

"Haven't you been selected as a potential successor of the family? I'm sure Madam Gloria is here to cozy up to you. You're in luck!" Florence exclaimed excitedly.

"Okay. I'll head home right away." Dahlia ended the call, and without saying anything else, she led Dustin out the door with her.

“What? I’m going too?” Dustin was caught off guard.

“You’re part of the family too, aren’t you? So why not?” Dahlia retorted.

“But...”

“Alright, cut the chit–chat! This is your chance to gain favor from an influential person!” And with that, Dahlia dragged Dustin along with her and got into the car. One had to be assertive and dominant with men occasionally. At least that’s what she read.

Half an hour later, they pulled up at the entrance to the Nicholson villa. When they got out of the car and went in, they found that there was already quite a crowd in the living room. An old lady with thick makeup who was heavily adorned with all sorts of jewelry sat at the center of the crowd. She even had a serpent–head cane clutched in one of her hands.

Dakota and Jane sat to either side of her, regarding her with such reverence and respect, while Florence and James only stood by the side, appearing exceptionally meek. They looked like household staff who were waiting on her when they were, in fact, the rightful owners of the place. “Honey, you’re finally home!” Florence quickly went up to Dahlia when she saw her. However, just

as she was about to continue, she caught sight of Dustin following in behind Dahlia. Her expression immediately darkened as she hissed, “Who asked for you to be here, Rhys! I haven’t made you pay for the fake gemstone your father gave me yesterday! How dare you show your face here today?”

“Fake gemstone?” Dustin raised a brow at that. “Are you mistaken? Rufus might be a degenerate, but he’d never stoop so low as to fool others with fake goods.”

“Hah! How dare you make excuses! I sent Julie to have the gemstone appraised, and they confirmed that it was a synthetic gemstone! I’m warning you, you better pay for my loss! I won’t back off without at least 5 million dollars!” Florence demanded meanly.

“Mom, there might be some misunderstanding going on.” Dahlia tried to smoothen things over between them.

“Hah! What misunderstanding could there be? We have already proven that it’s a fake gemstone! His entire family is full of swindlers!” Florence spat angrily.

“Hey! What are you bunch bickering about? Don’t you see that my grandma is here? Get over here and pay your respects!” Dakota barked impatiently from the couch. How dare they whisper and chat among themselves when her grandmother was right there in the center of the living room? Didn’t they know that they should greet her and pay their respects to her first? How rude!

“Hmph! I’m not done with you yet!” Florence glared at Dustin angrily. But when she turned towards Gloria, there was a bright smile on her face once again. Dustin shook his head at her subservient attitude.

“Dahlia, this is Madam Gloria. She’s an important person in the Nicholson family!” Florence gestured towards the heavily made-up old lady fawningly.

“It is an honor to meet you, Madam Gloria.” Dahlia nodded at Gloria respectfully. From the looks of it, Gloria did not look like someone who was nice to be around.

“Tea.” Gloria sat in the middle of the living room with her hands on her cane, looking

condescending and arrogant.

“Quick! Serve Madam Gloria some tea!” Florence immediately signaled Dahlia.

Dahlia nodded, poured a cup of tea, and handed it to Gloria respectfully.

“Is this how you serve tea? Have you no manners?” Gloria asked darkly.

“What?” Dahlia did not understand what she meant by that.

“Grandma, this is just how uncultured people behave. They do not know how to conduct themselves befitting of elite families like ours.” Dakota smirked.

“Dahlia Nicholson, don’t you know that in the Nicholson family, it’s customary for one to stand behind their elders and serve them tea with both hands from behind? That’s how you show your respect and sincerity.”

“Standing behind them and serving tea from behind?” Dahlia frowned. Does anyone still do that these days? She wasn’t a maid-in-waiting, for goodness’ sake!

“What? You’re not willing to do so? It looks like you’re being disrespectful to my grandma!” Dakota remarked snidely.

“No, no! That’s definitely not the case!” Florence waved her hands quickly.

“Dahlia’s just not used to these customs. Please do not get angry, Madam Gloria. I’ll serve you tea.” Flustered, Florence took the tea from Dahlia and went a round to stand behind Gloria, serving her tea respectfully with both hands.

“Who do you think you are? Do you think you’re even fit to serve me tea?” Gloria looked at Florence with such contempt, clearly having no intention to take the cup of tea from her.

“Well...” Florence’s smile stiffened as she stood there awkwardly. In the end, she had no choice but to turn to Dahlia. “Honey, quick, serve Madam Gloria her tea. It makes perfect sense for you to serve your elders tea.”

Dahlia’s brows knitted together tightly as she looked at Florence pleadingly. Finally, she gave in. She took a cup of tea and stood behind Gloria, and then served it to her with both hands in the most respectful manner.

“Hmph! We should have done this right from the start to save us all the hassle!” Dakota gloated with a smirk on her face.

“Don’t you always behave like you’re all that? Where’s the proud act you always got? But after all that, you still have to humble yourself and serve my grandma tea!” Dakota thought to herself gleefully.

As Dahlia stood behind Gloria and served her the tea, Gloria did not take it immediately. Instead, she let Dahlia stand there for some time before she slowly reached out to take the cup of tea. She took a small sip, turned around, and spat it all on Dahlia’s face.

“Hey! Are you trying to scald me with such hot tea?” Gloria slammed her hand furiously on the table and shot to her feet, accusing Dahlia nastily.

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At the sight of the cold glare Gloria shot her, Dahlia frowned, and her expression darkened too. This was no longer about paying respect or following customary practices. When Gloria spat the tea on her face, she made it clear that she was blatantly insulting her. She was here to flex her authority over Dahlia and exert dominance over them all!

“What’s wrong with you, Dahlia? Grandma asked for tea, and you served it to her boiling hot? Did you do it on purpose?” Dakota started to pin the blame relentlessly on Dahlia once she saw the opportunity.

“I think someone’s just not happy with us and is deliberately trying to make things difficult!” Jane echoed.

“No, no, no! Dahlia did not do it on purpose! Besides, I’ve had the tea too, it isn’t boiling hot!” Florence quickly tried to salvage the situation.

“Oh, so what you’re saying is that I’m lying?” Gloria’s expression was as cold as ice.

“N—no! I—

I must have been mistaken. I’m sure the problem is with me,” Florence said apologetically with an awkward laugh. She dared not refute Gloria’s words.

Gloria, Jane, and Dakota were secretly pleased by her response. After all, their main purpose there was to flaunt their dominance so that Dahlia and her family would learn to submit to them.

“Why

are you still standing there, Dahlia? Pour Grandma another cup of tea!” Dakota ordered huffily. She really could not fathom why the patriarch would pick this woman to be a potential successor to the family. Even Dakota herself did not have such privilege, so she was both livid and green with envy.

“Sure, sure! I’ll pour another cup right away.” Not daring to stall any longer, Florence immediately brought a fresh cup of tea over and handed it to Dahlia, beckoning for her to serve Gloria the tea again. Dahlia, however, did not take the cup of tea. She could tell

from their actions that they were intentionally being difficult and finding fault with her.

“What? Do you think that you’re above all of us?” Gloria shot her a nasty side-eye. “If you can’t even perform these basic practices, then I think you’re really unfit to be the successor of the family!”

As she said that, she pulled out a document and slapped it on the table. “Have you any idea what this is? This is your letter of authorization. The family has a conglomerate with a market value of over 10 billion in the southern province. You have initially been nominated as president to further expand the group, but from what I’ve seen today, you do not seem worthy of the position.” Gloria looked down on Dahlia dismissively.

“A conglomerate worth over 10 billion?” Florence’s breathing became erratic when she heard that. If her daughter were to become president of a conglomerate worth over 10 billion dollars, it would drastically improve the family’s status and lifestyle!

“Dahlia! Quick! Serve Madam Gloria her tea now!” Florence urged, signaling to Dahlia as best she could. This was the opportunity of a lifetime! She’d never let her pass it up! So what if she was humiliated? What did it matter anyway when there were 10 billion dollars involved?

“Dahlia, keep your eyes on the prize!” James urged her too. If he were to be known as the brother

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of the president of a 10 billion dollar conglomerate, all the beautiful women out there would eagerly flock to him in a heartbeat!

When Dahlia saw the expectant look in her mother’s and brother’s eyes, she drew a deep breath and finally picked up the cup of tea and served it to Gloria. And then, beyond everyone’s expectations, she took a sip and spat it all on Dahlia’s face once again.

“It’s tepid,” she said impassively.

By then, even Florence and James could tell that something was amiss. First, she said that it scalded her, and now, she complained that it was tepid. Was it

really tea that she was after? It was obvious to everyone that she was deliberately putting on a show to put Dahlia in a difficult position.

“Well, why are you idling? Get Grandma another cup!” Dakota commanded haughtily with a subtle smile.

“So what if you’re chosen as a potential successor? We still have you under our thumb!” Dakota thought to herself smugly.

“Fine,” Dahlia said nonchalantly.

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Dahlia seemed adamant about getting things over and done with. But just as she picked up the third cup

of tea and was about to serve it, someone’s hand stopped her. She turned around and found that it was Dustin. With a frosty expression, he said, “Let me do it this time.”

“You?” Dahlia did not understand what he was playing at. Knowing him, he wasn’t one to bow down to others’ wishes easily. Could he be doing this for her?

“Who do you think you are? Do you think you are even fit to serve Grandma tea?” Dakota questioned arrogantly. She was here to shame Dahlia, not this good-for-nothing scumbag. “Hmph! You uncultured folks! How dare you speak in my presence?” Gloria lifted her chin, obviously dissatisfied.

“It’s just a cup of tea, what difference does it make who serves you? I’m in an absolutely brilliant mood today, so I’ll personally serve you your tea. Here.” Dustin picked up the cup and walked up to Gloria.

Then, under everyone’s disbelieving gaze, he emptied the entire cup over Gloria’s head. Everything rained down on her—tea, leaves, and all. Her whole face was wet, with tea leaves sticking all over.

For a moment, there was pin-drop silence in the living room. Nobody had expected Dustin to pull such a reckless move. This was one of the most influential members of the Nicholson family. She was Regulus' third wife! Wherever she went, she was admired and respected by all. When had she ever been disgraced as such?

"Dustin! How dare you!" Dakota was the first to react. "You must be out of your goddamn mind! How dare you humiliate Grandma like this!"

"You! Dimwitted swine! Have you any idea what a grave mistake you've committed?" Gloria glared at him with such vengeance. Her body shook with anger. Having been in authority in such a prominent family for so long, she was used to humiliating others, never the other way around. "My, such a fiery temper. I guess one cup isn't enough to do the job. Here, have another." Dustin smiled mirthlessly and poured a glass of piping hot water before splashing it on Gloria's face.

"Ah-!" Gloria shrieked in agony as the water scalded her. The effect was almost immediate, and one side of her face soon became red and swollen. In hindsight, it looked pretty ridiculous and amusing.

"Do you see this? This is what I call boiling hot water," Dustin said condescendingly as if educating them.

"Rhys! Have you gone mad? How dare you harm them?" Florence exclaimed in a state of shock and anger. It was bad enough that he had poured the first cup of tea on her. To pour a second cup, which was boiling hot, was simply too much!

"When did I ever harm anyone? I'm merely serving an elder her tea." Dustin shrugged.

Every family had its own rules. He understood that. If she only made Dahlia serve her tea as was customary in the family's practices, he could let that slip. But it was plain for all to see that Gloria

had shamed Dahlia on purpose by spitting the tea on Dahlia, and he damn well wasn't going to sit by and watch her do as she pleased.

“Guards! Where are my guards?” Gloria roared in a seething rage. Within seconds, two of her bodyguards, who stood guard outside the door, rushed in.

“How dare this insolent brat touch me? Guards, beat him up! He needs a good beating to teach him some manners!” Gloria roared.

“Yes, Ma’am!” The two bodyguards received their orders from Gloria and were ready to bring Dustin down. But they had barely approached him when Dustin gave them each a strong slap and sent them flying across the room, passed out on the spot.

“It isn’t good practice to use your age as leverage. Dahlia is a potential successor of the family. What good will it do you to disgrace her in public like this? Have you ever considered what consequences you’ll face if she ever becomes the next matriarch? Everyone gets old one day, but it’s important to maintain your clarity and make wise choices. If you insist on being unreasonable and making things difficult, don’t be surprised when I take action.”

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Florence and the others present were stunned into silence as they took in Dustin's righteous speech. Their faces were etched with disbelief. How dare he humiliate the highly respected third matriarch of the Nicholsons in public!

"You... insolent brat! You? Teach me a lesson? Do you know I can bring your family to ruins with just one word?" Gloria cradled her burning face as she screeched in anger, losing her previous dignified elegance.

"You can try." Dustin showed no signs of fear.

"Hah!" Gloria exclaimed in anger before dissolving into scornful laughter. "Oh, Florence, what a great family you have. I came all the way here to Swinton just to elevate your family to a higher status. And yet, you're not only ungrateful, but you dare rebel against me? I believe this letter of appointment would have better use for another person! Since you're not interested in assuming the role of Chairman at Cardinal Group, I'll have the family patriarch revoke the appointment."

As Gloria pulled out her phone, Florence panicked and fell to her knees with a thud. She begged, "Madam Gloria, let's not be rash, shall we? This punk has nothing to do with us. You can't put the blame on us for his actions."

Dakota interjected, "Don't listen to her nonsense, Grandma! This guy is their son-in-law!" "Ex-ex-son-in-law! They got a divorce a long time ago!" Florence corrected her vehemently.

"Hmph! No one cares about your complicated relationships! Since he'd already married into the Nicholsons, he's a part of your family!" Gloria continued with a dark expression, "Your family had better give us a satisfied response; otherwise, we are no longer family!"

"R-right! I'll have him apologize immediately!" Florence nodded incessantly and turned toward Dustin. She bellowed, "Rhys! Why are you still standing there? H

urry up and get on your knees!” “You can kneel all you want. I’m not about to i
ndulge her,” Dustin said lazily.

“D—
did you hear that? Did you? This brat has no manners!” Gloria was irritated to
her core.

“Bastard! I told you to apologize!” As Florence erupted in fury, she stood up
and was about to land a heavy slap when Dustin grabbed hold of her hand.

He gritted his teeth and said coldly, “Don’t involve me in your buttering—
up scheme!” He threw her aside forcefully.

Florence staggered back two steps, almost losing her balance. Her anger reac
hed a tipping point. Wow! Did you just lay your hands on me? Dahlia! Look! T
his is the kind of man you love!” “Enough!” Dahlia shot up and glared at Gloria
and her group.

“Madam Gloria, I’m not sure about your purpose for visiting. If you’re here for
a serious
matter, please get to the point. I believe it’s pointless if you’re just here to sho
w off your authority.” Even though Dahlia was grateful for the opportunity, that
didn’t mean she would let them walk all over

her.

“Dahlia Nicholson, how bold of you! How dare you use that tone with Grandm
a?” Dakota reprimanded her severely.

Dahlia replied calmly, “What’s wrong with my tone? I’m just asking for an expl
anation. If the family patriarch thinks I’m not fit for the position, I have no qual
ms for him to revoke the appointment.”

“You ...” Dakota was about to start a new tirade when Gloria raised her hand
and interrupted her. “Alright, since you wish to discuss serious matters, we’ll f
ollow the usual discourse!” Gloria backed off at the mention of the family patri
arch, but her expression remained hostile.

“Even though the family patriarch has appointed you the chairman of Cardinal
Group, there’s a
condition. You have to prove you have what it takes to assume control of Card
inal Group.”

“And how should I do that?” Dahlia asked.

“It’s simple. The company is in the midst of an important expansion and is in urgent need of funds amounting to one billion. You’ll pass the test once you manage to secure one billion in

investments.”

“One billion?”

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Dahlia frowned, for it wasn’t a small amount. In the whole of Swinton, there were only a few individuals who had one billion in liquid assets to withdraw from.

“Of course, if you’re unable to secure the investment funds needed, please step aside and make way for someone more deserving. We don’t want you hindering the company’s development.” Gloria sneered.

In truth, she was the one who set the conditions for a one billion investment fund, not the family patriarch. She didn’t wish for an outsider to hold that much authority. That was why she came up with the idea to make her step aside on her own accord. She would also be able to give a good explanation when questioned by the family patriarch.

“Why are you silent? Don’t tell me you can’t even manage such a small matter?” She taunted on purpose.

“Hmph! If you can’t do it. I’ll take on the role of chairman instead.” Dakota raised her head arrogantly. With her connections and Gloria’s help, one billion wouldn’t be hard to secure.

Dustin suddenly spoke, “Who said she couldn’t manage? It’s only one billion. We’ll get it done in three days!”

“Three days? Are you crazy?” Florence almost jumped out of her skin. “How on earth will we secure one billion in three days? That’s a huge amount! Thirty days would be more reasonable!” Dahlia’s brows knitted. “Dustin, where would I get one billion in just three days?” Securing one billion already posed a cha

llenge, but now, she had to secure it within three days. It was practically impossible.

“Not to worry. Leave it to me. I’ll make sure to get it done.” Dustin smiled reassuringly.

“Alright. You’re the one who promised. I’m giving you exactly three days.” Gloria’s eyes sparkled, and she sneered. “If you can’t do it within three days. All of you will get the f*ck out of this family!” With that, she left with the aid of her cane, not allowing them any space for a rebuttal.

“Hah, what a joke! One billion in three days? Don’t be naive, you’re not that rich!” After mocking them, Dakota and Jane followed Gloria.

It was impossible for both of them to achieve such a feat, not to mention Dahlia. They believed Dustin was only trying to show off and said so in a moment of indignance. However, that just made him appear childish to them.

After they left, Florence burst out in anger, “Rhys! What makes you think you can just agree to their conditions on your own? Do you know that once we fail, Dahlia will lose her position as chairman of Cardinal Group? Are you bringing us down on purpose?”

Dustin explained, “If we didn’t agree, Dahlia’s position as chairman would be threatened either way.”

“Hah! Easy for you to say. Even if money fell from the sky, we wouldn’t be able to secure one billion in three days!” Florence exclaimed in frustration.

Dustin responded calmly, “Since I agreed, naturally, that means I’m confident. Just leave it to me.”

“Leave it to you? Who do you think you are? You just own a shabby medical center. Do you really think you’re someone of high status?” Florence admonished him.

“Hah! If you do manage to accomplish the feat, I’ll get on my knees and kiss your feet!” James looked at him in contempt.

“Great, that’s a deal.” Dustin flashed a smile.

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Dustin walked out of Nicholson Villa and was about to make a call when his phone rang. It was from Roderick Brooks.

Dustin answered, "Hello, Mr. Brooks, I was just about to go look for you. It's such a coincidence that you called first."

"Oh? Is there anything I can help you with, Mr. Rhys?" Roderick was taken aback.

"I have a friend who got into some trouble and needs a sum of money. Would it be possible for me to borrow money from you?" Dustin asked.

"Phew, you scared me. I thought it was something serious. It turns out you just need money. Of course. I might not have much of anything else, but I definitely have money. How much does your friend need?" Roderick breathed a sigh of relief.

"One billion."

"No problem. I'll send it to you tomorrow."

"Thank you, Mr. Brooks."

"No need to be so polite, Mr. Rhys. You were the one who treated my recurring illness!"

"Congratulations again. Right, is there a reason you called me?" Dustin changed the subject.

"Mr. Rhys, didn't you have me be on the lookout for a few precious herbs? I just heard that neighboring Alorith recently put out a few treasures. Apparently, the Heliotrope you're looking for, which is also known as the thousand-year green lotus, is among them."

Roderick's revelation caught Dustin off guard. "A thousand-year green lotus? Are you sure?" His eyes widened. He only lacked three mor

the precious herbs to produce Longevitum—the flower of Crimson Gem, Cherusia, and the thousand-year green lotus. Each item was an extremely precious treasure that was hard to come by. It came as a happy surprise to him to hear news about the thousand-year green lotus in such a short time.

“It should be true. Anyway, that was how they advertised the auction. Even members of the

Stoneray Order are heading there. As for the specifics, we won’t know until we get there.”

Roderick was careful with his words, afraid of giving the wrong information.

“Alright, I hope it won’t trouble you to accompany me to the venue.”

“It would be my honor!”

Since Alorith was neighboring Swinton, the journey wasn’t far, and it only took two hours by car. As they made casual conversation in Roderick’s car, it didn’t take long before they finally arrived at their destination.

The venue was an underground auction house, and the place teemed with a diverse crowd and a vast array of treasures. They had almost everything one desired, albeit at a higher price.

“Mr. Rhys, after you.” Roderick led Dustin personally as they headed inside the auction house.

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At the moment, the venue was a roaring hubbub of voices. Prices rose rapidly from the intense bidding as items were brought on stage one after the other. It was clear that Roderick had made preparations in advance since they both took a seat in the front row.

“Mr. Rhys, we’re in luck. It seems like they haven’t started the bidding for the thousand-year green lotus.” Roderick silently breathed a sigh of relief.

“It’s always best to come at the right time instead of coming early.” Dustin smiled.

“Hey! Are you two here for the thousand-year green lotus too?” At that moment, a young woman seated beside them suddenly spoke. She was wearing a baseball cap and had a lollipop in her mouth. She was also dressed in branded items from head to toe and had a beautiful appearance. However, she seemed to carry a hint of rebelliousness within her

“That’s right. A thousand-year green lotus is a rare find. Naturally, we wouldn’t miss it for anything.” Dustin nodded in response.

“Hmph! Let me tell you, I already have it in my bag, so it’ll be best to give up!” The woman in the baseball cap said coldly.

Roderick plastered on a smile. “Miss, aren’t you too confident to declare it as our item when the bidding hasn’t started yet?”

“Confidence comes from power. As long as it’s something I want, I will definitely get it. You two, don’t say I didn’t warn you. You better not challenge me, lest you humiliate yourselves.” She cocked her head to one side.

Roderick chuckled. “You have a rough temper for your age.”

He had seen his fair share of wealthy daughters like her, who thought they could show off all because of their minuscule wealth.

How naive!

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“Don’t believe me? Let’s see what happens!” The woman in the baseball cap pursed her lips in disdain, while Dustin and Roderick only smiled back in response.

As time went on, the auction neared its end, and the remaining highly prized items were brought up on stage. Among them, was the long-awaited thousand-year green lotus everyone coveted.

“Ladies and gentlemen, our next item on auction is an extremely rare, precious herb that has thrived for a thousand years. This item is known as the thousand-year green lotus!”

With a wave from the auctioneer, a wooden box was brought forward with great care. As the box opened, one translucent and gleaming green lotus was revealed. While its petals were colored green, its core shimmered gold. It appeared to be the epitome of perfection, resembling a delicate work of art as its beauty captivated everyone present. Under the illumination of lights, its colors shone brilliantly. It was truly a sight to behold.

“It really is the thousand-year green lotus. I’m taking this baby home for sure!” The woman’s eyes sparkled, and she looked excited. Not only she, but the rest of the bidders had a similar look on their faces.

“Now that everyone has seen the precious item, I believe you have a sense of its value. The

starting bid for the thousand-year green lotus is 100 million, with subsequent raises of not less than 5 million. Let’s begin.”

As soon as the auctioneer announced the start of the bidding, the scene erupted into a frenzy.

“120 million!”

“130 million!”

“No one gets in my way! 150 million here!”

Bidding calls drowned out each other as a growing number of wealthy individuals eagerly joined the fray. Equipped with sizable funds, they had come prepared. That was because it was widely understood that the thousand-year green lotus held immeasurable value and that whoever won the bid would be able to receive substantial returns just from reselling it.

In a world abundant with wealth, precious herbs like these that could prolong life were highly favored, especially by the elderly tycoons. It didn’t matter, even if that meant staking their entire fortunes.

“500 million here!” A man in a long-sleeved shirt suddenly raised his paddle. His commanding voice reverberated through the room, instantly overshadowing the voices of the crowd.

“This thousand-year green lotus belongs to the Stoneray Order. Don’t try to take it from me!” The man scrutinized his surroundings, his gaze menacing.

Those who caught his gaze instinctively lowered their heads, not daring to look him straight in the eyes. Not many dared to offend the Stoneray Order, as they were Millsburg’s most influential group. Even though the item on auction was a precious treasure, it paled in comparison to their lives and wealth.

“Are the Stoneray Order all that? I’m bidding 800 million!” In the face of the silent crowd, the

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woman in the baseball cap suddenly raised her paddle. Her arrogant demeanor clearly showed her lack of respect for the members of the order.

The man’s expression turned grim. “Little brat, who do you think you are? How dare you challenge the Stoneray Order!”

“My name is Jayla Grant. I’m Tyler Grant’s sister!” She declared coolly.

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“Tyler Grant?!” The crowd erupted in an uproar with her reveal.

Everyone in Southern Province knew of Tyler Grant. He was the rising new general of Dragonmarsh. A true prodigy, he had recorded numerous military achievements at a young age and was given the nickname General Lionheart, holding the third-highest rank in the military. Among the younger generation in the entire Southern province, he stood as the leader.

Some influential figures even proclaimed that his achievements in the future would rival those of the God of War, Adam Spanner! The Grant family was already known for being part of the Tremendous Three, and now, with his status as the exceptional genius of the family, his name soared to even greater heights. For the past few years, he had been someone everyone did not dare

Cross.

When Jayla revealed her identity, everyone present was stunned. The man from Stoneray Order especially looked upset, but he was unable to utter another word. Although Stoneray Order possessed significant power, they were ultimately not comparable to them. Their power could never compare to that of one of the families of the Tremendous Three. Not to mention, Jayla had Tyler personally backing her.

“Why are you silent? Weren’t you being all haughty just a moment ago? Why did you stop showing off in front of me?” Jayla looked at him in contempt. She silently laughed at their attempt to show off their background, for she had never lost in that regard.

The man in the long-sleeved shirt remained silent with his head lowered.

“Hmph! How disappointing.” The corner of her lips twitched.

“Ms. Grant bids 800 million. Are there any further bids?” The auctioneer said perfunctorily. He knew from the moment Jayla revealed her identity that the thousand-year green lotus would be hers. After all, who dared challenge the Grant family?

Suddenly, a voice rang out unexpectedly. “One billion.”

Everyone’s head turned toward the voice, only to find a plump middle-aged man with his paddle raised. It was none other than Roderick.

“Huh?” Jayla’s brows knitted, glaring at the two men beside her. She had not anticipated their audacity to challenge her, especially after she had revealed her background.

“Who’s the fatty? His bravery is comparable to his size. He actually dared provoke the Grant family’s daughter.”

“He looks familiar. I think it’s Big Buck Brooks.”

“You’re right! It is Big Buck Brooks. I can’t believe he’s here!”

“So what if it’s Big Buck Brooks? He’s just filthy rich. He’s a nobody to those who hold power. If he offended the Grants, they could just annihilate his family for a simple reason.”

The crowd murmured in discussion as voices of surprise, astonishment, and disdain were heard. Even when he was extremely rich, they knew he wasn’t strong enough to challenge the Grants.

“Hey! Are you sure you want to fight me on this?” Jayla turned her head to the side, giving them a

threatening glare.

“What do you mean? Since it’s an auction, naturally, we should follow the rules, where the highest bidder wins the item. Isn’t that so?” Roderick showed no hint of fear.

Tyler Grant was indeed formidable. Under normal circumstances, he would never dream of offending him. However, it was different now. This man beside him was like a brother to Adam Spanner, and he had a prince for a father. What was there to fear when he had Dustin to back him?

“Alright, since you want to play this game, let’s play till the end!” Jayla’s expression hardened as she raised her paddle once more. “1.2 billion!”

“1.3 billion.”

“1.4 billion!”

“1.5 billion.”

“Two billion!” Jayla’s voice increased by a few octaves. It was obvious that she was unnerved.

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Even as the daughter of the Grant family, two billion dollars in cash was a stretch. Any more than that, and she would need to ask for money from the family.

“2.1 billion dollars.” Roderick was calm.

Jayla exclaimed with gritted teeth, “2.5 billion!”

She had a murderous gaze. Even if she had to borrow money, she would regain her dignity today!

With a smile still plastered on his face, Roderick raised the bid, “2.6 billion.”

His nickname, Big Buck Brooks, was not merely a nickname. The sum of money truly held no significance to him.

“Three billion!” Jayla was seeing red. She looked like a lioness about to tear into her prey.

“Three ...” Roderick raised his paddle, about to continue bidding when Dustin pulled his hand down.

“Forget about it. Just let her have it.

“What?” Roderick was surprised. “Mr. Rhys, isn’t this item something you need? Why are you giving it up? If it’s because of the price, there’s no need to worry. I can deal with it.”

“It has nothing to do with money.” Dustin shook his head. As he stared at the precious item on stage, his expression was filled with regret. “The item on auction is not a thousand-year green lotus. It’s of no use to me.”

“What? Are you saying that it’s a fake?” Roderick failed to contain his shock. Almost no one dared to auction off fake items due to the consequences that came with it.

Dustin shook his head again. "I won't call it fake. It's just not old enough. I've taken a good look at it. Even though it's a remarkable green lotus, it's only 900 years old. It'll take another hundred years to mature into a true thousand-year green lotus."

Even though the only difference between a 900-year green lotus and a thousand-year green lotus is a hundred years, their effects were vastly different.

He only had one opportunity to refine the Longevitum, and any incongruity would lead to an astronomical difference in its effects. While a thousand-year green lotus was an invaluable treasure, a 900-year green lotus was vastly inferior to it.

"So it's only a 900-year lotus. What a pity." Roderick sighed, his enthusiasm fading instantly. He had hoped to utilize this chance to leave a good impression. It was a pity that fate had other plans. At that moment, the auctioneer suddenly asked, "Ms. Grant bid three billion. Is there a higher bid?" Roderick frowned, choosing to remain silent. However, Jayla interpreted his expression as a sign of embarrassment due to his inability to afford it.

"Hmph! Why are you silent? Just continue challenging me! I'd like to see just how capable you are!" A delighted smile formed on her face.

"It's okay. Since you like it so much, Ms. Grant, we'll allow you to have it," Dustin said coolly.

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Spending three billion to buy a subpar item was foolish, even for the rich.

"Allow me to have it? Hah! If you can't afford it, just say so. You sure have the thickest skin I've ever seen!" Jayla mocked.

"Suit yourself. Whatever makes you happy." Dustin didn't bother arguing further, but that made Jayla feel like she was throwing punches in the air. What she desired was to see him submit to her and show remorse. His indifferent attitude was making her extremely vexed, but she didn't have a good excuse to challenge him.

In the end, Jayla won the bid for the 900-year green lotus on stage at a sky-high price.

“Next, we have another precious treasure. This item is a natural, uncut red gemstone, and hasn’t gone through any processing whatsoever. Its cut and clarity are of unparalleled quality. Please have a look!” As the auctioneer spoke, a palm-sized, blood-colored gemstone was brought forth onto the stage.

“What?” The moment Dustin’s gaze landed on the gemstone, his pupils constricted. While he was filled with regret just moments ago, it was now replaced with renewed vigor and excitement.

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“That gem!” Dustin was full of excitement at the appearance of the red gemstone. He had resigned himself to leaving empty-handed today, but as luck would have it, he chanced upon another treasure.

“Hmph, what a country bumpkin. What’s so exciting about a red gemstone?” Taking in the excited look on Dustin’s face, Jayla looked at him in contempt. “I’ve got plenty of those at home. Only a country bumpkin like you who hasn’t seen the world will think it’s special.”

Dustin ignored her and focused his gaze on the red gemstone on stage. Its surface was colored a blood-like deep crimson, and its shape was similar to a calabash. On the surface, it looked ordinary. However, its desirability lay in its size, and after some processing, it would undoubtedly turn out to be invaluable. In the eyes of a professional jeweler, this was definitely the finest red crimson.

Roderick was confused. “Mr. Rhys, do you like it?” Dustin didn’t seem like someone who would covet precious stones, especially with his status. It was just an uncut gemstone. Although it was a precious treasure, it didn’t particularly stand out.

“I must take this item home.” His answer was simple, yet full of resolution.

“Alright! As long as you like it, even if I spend my entire fortune, I’ll make sure to get it for you!” Roderick spoke candidly. This was a rare opportunity for him to impress Dustin, and he was determined to seize it.

“This is an extremely rare gemstone that was recovered from the deep sea. The starting bid is 50 million dollars. Every subsequent raise must not be less than one million. Let’s start!” After a short introduction, the auctioneer declared the start of the bidding. In less than no time, the atmosphere returned to its fiery state.

“55 million!”

“60 million!”

“I’m raising it to 68 million!”

A flurry of wealthy individuals eagerly raised their paddles, igniting fierce competition. Considering the size of the gemstone, a conservative estimate placed its value at no less than two to three hundred million. As a businessman, Roderick was naturally well aware of its worth. In order to discourage other potential bidders, he promptly raised his paddle and declared, “300 million!”

The previously bustling atmosphere instantly grew heavy as Roderick’s words reverberated through the room. Many shook their heads and sighed in resignation. They knew that challenging Big Buck Brooks would be futile when he had his eyes on something. No one present possessed the wealth to surpass him.

“Mr. Roderick has raised the bid to 300 million. Is there anyone willing to offer a higher price?” The auctioneer scanned the audience, but the potential bidders had all quieted down.

At that moment, Jayla suddenly raised her paddle. “I’ll raise it to 400 million.” Her eyes gleamed with provocation, clearly trying to start another fight with them.

“500 million.” Roderick didn’t back down.

Jayla flashed a smile. “600 million.” She knew they had their sights set on the gemstone and intentionally raised the bid, planning on taking them for their worth.

“700 million.” Roderick was expressionless.

“800 million.” Jayla tilted her head up, seemingly ready to fight till the end.

“900 million.”

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Roderick continued bidding.

“One billion.” Jayla showed no signs of letting up. As she was deliberately targeting the gem, the price of the red gemstone hit the billion-dollar mark, which had far exceeded the valuation of the gemstone. It would be a great loss for the winning bidder.

“It seems like they’ve come head-to-head with each other.”

“I have a bad feeling something is going to happen to Big Buck Brooks for offending Ms. Grant.”

“He’s just wealthy. How does he have the guts to challenge such a prominent family?”

The crowd pointed and gossiped fervently, clearly enjoying the farce.

“1.5 billion dollars.” Roderick raised his paddle again, boldly increasing the bid by 500 million dollars.

“1.6 billion dollars.” Jayla continued challenging him head-on.

“Two billion dollars!” Roderick then told her in an impassive tone, “Ms. Grant, if you raise it again, I’ll let you have it.”

Jayla was about to raise it when she froze. She wasn’t interested in the red gemstone. It would be disadvantageous for her if she continued increasing the price.

ice and ended up stuck with an item she didn't need. She knew it was time to end her game.

"Forget it. Since you like the gemstone so much, I'll be the generous one and let you have it," Jayla said with a mocking smile. She had raised the price of a two- to three-hundred million-dollar gemstone to two billion dollars, forcing the other party to pay ten times the price. She was

satisfied.

"Mr. Brooks has placed a bid of 2 billion. Any other contenders? Going once, going twice... sold!" The auctioneer struck his hammer, signifying Roderick as the winning bidder of the red gemstone at the staggering price of two billion.

After they received the item, Jayla mocked them, "Hah ... One look tells me you are from new money. You don't have any sense. You just had to pay two billion for something that could be bought for 200 million. What an idiot."

She deliberately showed off the box containing the thousand-year green lotus and taunted, "See this? This is a real, invaluable treasure."

A scoff escaped from Dustin's lips. "Ms. Grant, you sure are overconfident. Take a good look at it. Is your green lotus really a thousand years old?"

She raised her brows. "What nonsense. This precious item is pure, and delicate, and emanates a

characteristic smell. Of course, it's a thousand-year green lotus!"

"A thousand-year green lotus has ten petals and ten seeds. Count them. Does it have enough?" Dustin asked with a smile.

Hearing him, Jayla started to count. Soon, her expression changed. No matter how many times she counted, there were only nine petals and nine seeds. She never managed to count to ten!

“Hey! I’m warning you, you better not lie to me! If I find out you are, you’re not leaving this place!” Jayla warned coldly.

Dustin shrugged his shoulders. “If you don’t believe me, why don’t you ask the experts from Stoneray Order? They’re well-versed in various herbs. They’ll definitely be able to tell.”

“Hey! You there! Come here this instant!” Jayla turned around and shouted at the man in the long-sleeved shirt from earlier. “Take a good look at this. Is this green lotus a thousand years old?”

He stared at it, and there was a shift in his expression. “It’s a pity... What a pity! Ms. Grant, to be honest, this green lotus is only 900 years old. It’s on the verge of reaching maturity.”

Her eyes widened. “What? 900 years old? Doesn’t that mean it’s still short of one hundred years?”

Even an idiot understood the difference a hundred years made. Whether in value or effectiveness, the disparity was immense.

“Ms. Grant, even though this item is slightly inferior, it still holds significant value as a collector’s item.” The man in the long-sleeved shirt smiled apologetically.

“It is indeed a valuable collector’s item. You just need to hold onto it for another hundred years, and you’ll undoubtedly earn a great fortune.” Dustin flashed her a cheeky smirk.

“You...” Jayla’s face puffed up in anger with his words, looking like she had just ingested a load of shit. She would be rotting in the soil in a hundred years! A great fortune, her ass!

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Jayla finally realized she had been miserably deceived. However, she only had herself to blame for her mistake. Of course, with the power the Grant family held, she could demand a

refund from the auctioneer. But if she did that, she would be badly criticized. She couldn't afford to be humiliated as such. For the sake of her reputation, she could only swallow her resentment.

Roderick added insult to injury. "Ms. Grant, it seems like the item that cost you a fortune isn't that precious after all."

"You can't say that. Even though it's lacking a few years, it's still considered a precious treasure." The man in the long-sleeved shirt attempted to diffuse the situation.

"Did you hear that? Even if it's lacking, it's still precious!" Color returned to her expression.

Dustin smiled. "I'd like to ask. What's the value of a 900-year green lotus?"

He looked troubled and answered with difficulty, "Based on its effectiveness and age, it should be around three to four hundred million."

"What? It's only worth three to four hundred million?" Jayla was stunned. She bought it for three billion! That was a massive loss of ten times its price!

Roderick chuckled teasingly. "Ms. Grant, with your power and wealth, that amount of money is just a small change."

Jayla was speechless. Her eyes twitched, and her expression turned sour. In the end, it turned out that she was the loser.

The man in the long-sleeved shirt chimed in, "Mr. Brooks, I don't think you are in a position to mock her. While Ms. Grant incurred a significant loss, your purchase isn't exactly a good buy."

"That's right!" Jayla's eyes brightened. Pointing at the gemstone in his arms, she said, "Even though my treasure lacks in age, at least it's much more useful than your item! Just look at yourselves, you idiots! You spent two billion for a meager gemstone. Anyone can tell that it's just a processed stone."

Roderick responded coolly, "It's difficult to put a value on happiness. As long as we like it, what's a few billion?"

“That is why you two are idiots!” She sneered. “I forgot to mention. The Grant family was the one that recovered this red gemstone. In other words, the two billion you just spent went into my pockets. Surprising, huh?”

Roderick’s brows knitted with her words. It didn’t matter if he’d just incurred a small loss. However, he was also played by his opponent. Not only did he suffer a loss, but he was also humiliated and called an idiot. It didn’t feel good. In a heavy voice, he commented, “Ms. Grant, you intentionally raised the price with malicious intent.”

“What about it? Go sue me if you can.” She shrugged.

“Whatever the case, I’m taking this two billion dollars. I’d like to see what you can do if you’re not happy about it!” She pursed her lips; her expression was smug.

Roderick narrowed his eyes, looking irritated. However, he didn’t utter a word in fear of her family

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background.

Dustin suddenly asked, “Ms. Grant, are you saying this red gemstone is from the Grant family?”

“That’s right! I’m the one who sent it here personally to be auctioned off. Why? You’re not happy?” She taunted arrogantly.

“Of course I’m happy! If it wasn’t for your help, how would I be able to purchase this treasure for a mere two billion?” He smiled.

“Hey! Are you out of your mind? What treasure? You spent two billion on something that’s only worth two to three hundred million. What gave you the courage to say that?” She bellowed in laughter, looking at him like he was an idiot.

“Young man, is it that hard to admit you lost? Do you need to be so stubborn?”

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“That’s right. Only people like you would foolishly spend two billion on a red gemstone like that.”

“I like to call them rich airheads.”

The crowd pointed and murmured, gossiping among themselves. It seemed to them that Dustin was a prime example of a stubborn man who couldn’t accept defeat. It was clear that he had suffered a loss but was still trying to show off without merit.

“Do you hear that? I’m not the only one who thinks you’re an idiot. Everyone else thinks the same.” Her lips curled up into a smirk.

“Really?” Dustin smiled faintly. “It seems like no one has realized this is not an ordinary red gemstone. It’s an extremely rare Crimson Gem.”

“What’s a Crimson Gem? I’ve never heard of it.” Jayla pursed her lips in disdain.

“That’s fine. Allow me to enlighten you today.” As he said that, he smashed the gemstone with his palm. Everyone present heard two cracking noises as two visible crack lines formed on the surface. In the blink of an eye, the cracks spread across the whole gemstone.

His actions ignited a frenzy among the crowd.

“That’s insane! That punk’s gone insane!”

“Even if he incurred a loss, that was no reason to destroy the gemstone!”

“Ms. Grant was right. He’s an idiot!”

The crowd was filled with astonishment and regret as they voiced their disapproval and admonishment. They recognized that it was still a remarkable treasure, and it was such a waste for him to destroy it like that.

Jayla was initially taken aback, but soon, she couldn’t stop howling in laughter. “Hey! Did you get water into your brain? You spent two billion to buy that, yet you smashed it? I’ve never seen anyone as stupid as you!” She continued laughing, but it wasn’t long before she went silent.

That was because after the gemstone shattered, a crimson flower emerged from the shattered pieces. The flower, translucent and blood-colored, glistened with a mesmerizing radiance. It embodied the essence of nature in itself, looking perfectly flawless.

Upon closer inspection, it appeared as if a slow, graceful flow of red liquid was flowing within it. Illuminated under the lights, the crimson flower shone beautifully, resembling an artful masterpiece that captivated those present, leaving them awestruck.

“Could... Could it be? Is that the legendary Flower of Crimson Gem?” After a momentary daze, the man in the long-sleeved shirt suddenly exclaimed out loud.

The crowd erupted into a frenzy at his words.

“Flower of Crimson Gem? That’s a Flower of Crimson Gem? I never thought I would be able to see such a treasure in my lifetime!”

“It’s rumored that the Flower of Crimson Gem can not only prolong life but revive the dead. When taken by ordinary people, they would be reborn, and even achieve greater things!”

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“It’s a priceless treasure! It’s definitely a priceless treasure!”

“Damn it, that punk spent a mere two billion for a Flower of Crimson Gem. Lucky bastard!”

The crowd looked at the Flower of Crimson Gem with tremendous greed and envy, like a beggar who chanced upon gold. A few daring individuals had even started concocting a plan secretly.

“Flower of Crimson Gem? How is that possible?” Jayla was dumbfounded as she looked on in disbelief.

A Flower of Crimson Gem was an extremely rare treasure that could only be chanced upon once in a blue moon. It was much more valuable than a thousand-year green lotus. Who would have thought she could encounter it in a place like this?

At the heart of the matter, the Grant family was the one who discovered that red gemstone, and she had delivered it personally to the auction house. In other words, she had given away that priceless treasure!

The realization left her feeling light-headed.

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“Why? Just why!” Jayla burned with jealousy. If she had known the gemstone was hiding a priceless treasure, she would never have sold it. In the end, it ended up in the hands of a country bumpkin! What a loss!

“What a turn of events. This is such a blessing!” Dustin held the Flower of Crimson Gem up in one hand, the corner of his lips curling up into a wide smile. From the moment he laid eyes on the gemstone, he knew it was hiding something exceptional. Just as he expected, he had discovered a true treasure.

The Flower of Crimson Gem was not an ordinary flower. It was an extremely rare treasure.

Typically, it could only be found in red gemstones. And it just so happened that the red gemstone

on auction today was a Crimson Gem.

Previously, he felt regretful thinking about the 900-year green lotus. However, the appearance of the Flower of Crimson Gem came as a blessing and a happy surprise. At least he didn't travel all the way here for nothing.

“Ms. Grant, don't you think a price of two billion dollars is extremely worth it for this precious

item?” He turned to look at her and flashed a smile. “Should I say you're the true idiot here?”

“You...” Jayla was rendered speechless. The vicious words she had thrown out earlier at them

were now directed at herself. She had spent three billion to purchase a subpar item, while Dustin

had paid a mere two billion in exchange for an invaluable treasure. The stark difference was

maddening!

“Ms. Grant, thank you for the treasure. We shall meet again soon.” Dustin smiled and prepared to

leave.

“Hold it!” Jayla suddenly called out to him. “Did I say you could leave?”

“Hmm? Are you going to treat us to a meal?” Dustin smiled teasingly.

“Stop talking back. I’m taking that Flower of Crimson Gem! Name your price!” She demanded angrily. Naturally, she wasn’t going to give up such a rare gem

Dustin refused her outright. “I’m sorry, I’m not selling it.

“Not selling?” Jayla scoffed coldly. “Let me tell you honestly. Since I want it, you are selling that

treasure to me no matter what.”

Dustin raised his eyebrows. “Oh? Since when has that been the law?”

“Shut up! My words are the law!” She glared at him. “Don’t paint me as a bully. Since you spent two billion to purchase it, I’ll buy it back from you for two billion! You won’t incur any losses!”

“And if I don’t?” Dustin smiled. Did she take him for an idiot? He was to resell a two-billion-dollar

purchase for two billion dollars?

“Then you’ll bear the consequences!” Jayla threatened.

The Flower of Crimson Gem would be able to elevate her brother’s martial arts prowess to another level. That was the reason she needed to obtain it, even if that meant putting down her dignity.

“It’s a priceless treasure! It’s definitely a priceless treasure!”

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“How disappointing. It seems like the Grant family only amounts to so much.” He shook his head.

“Let me repeat myself. I’m not selling the Flower of Crimson Gem. If you insist on stealing it from me, don’t blame me for taking action.” With that, he left, with Roderick following after him.

“Hmph, we’ll see who has the last laugh.” Jayla sneered and took out her phone, making a phone call..

In the whole Southern Province, he was the first to not yield to the Grants. Since he didn’t wish to part with his treasure, he shouldn’t blame her for his own demise.

They had just left the auction house when Dustin noticed they were being followed. He had to admit that the Grants were pretty efficient. It seemed like this wasn’t their first time.

“Mr. Rhys, it appears we have some unwanted company,” Roderick remarked, also noticing the tail.

“No need to bother about them. Let’s just leave quickly.” Dustin didn’t bother to confront them and was prepared to leave. However, things don’t always go as planned. A group of masked men suddenly had them surrounded when they reached a certain alley. There were around 20 to 30 men, each armed with a weapon.

“Hey, punk! I heard you got a valuable treasure with you. Give it to us, and I might let you two walk away alive!” The leader of the group brandished his knife, his tone frosty.

“Do you mean this?” Dustin took out the Flower of Crimson Gem.

The leader’s gaze betrayed his excitement. “That’s the one! Give it to me now!”

“Come get it yourself if you can.” Dustin placed it back into his pockets and beckoned them forward with his finger.

The leader's expression darkened. He felt like he was being played. "Die, punk! Get him! We need to get that item back!" On his orders, the masked men charged forward at the same time.

Dustin smiled lightly, then flicked his wrist. Numerous silver needles shot out with sharp whistles, piercing straight into the men's acupoints. The next second, they were frozen to the spot, and their weapons were still raised. It appeared as if time stopped for them, and the only thing they could move was their eyes.

"What?" The leader's expression betrayed his horror as he took in the scene before him. Without any warning, another silver needle shot out and pierced into his neck. What followed was a numbing sensation that was hard to suppress. No matter how much he struggled to free himself, it was in vain.

"W—who are you?" He spat out with difficulty.

"I'm in a good mood today. I don't wish to kill." Dustin walked up to him and said coolly.

"When you get back, ask Jayla to stop provoking me. Otherwise, she wouldn't be able to handle it when I decide enough is enough." With that, he left haughtily, with Roderick behind him.

After 15 minutes, Jayla arrived at the scene and frowned. Not only was Dustin nowhere to be found, but her bodyguards were all frozen in their spots.

"What happened? Where's my Flower of Crimson Gem?" Jayla questioned them sternly.

The leader appeared helpless as he responded, "Ms. Grant, he's too strong. We're no match for him."

"What a bunch of useless trash! What am I paying you for if you can't even handle some country bumpkin?" Jayla snapped at them.

They lowered their heads, unable to utter a word.

"Where did they go?" Jayla demanded.

The leader pondered for a moment. "I don't know. But from their accents, they should be from Swinton."

“Swinton?” She narrowed her eyes. “It just so happens that I’m heading there tomorrow to ask for the bride’s hand in my brother’s stead. Since he’s from Swinton, I’m going to find him no matter what!”

“Ms. Grant, he doesn’t seem like an ordinary person,” The leader advised.

“Hah! So what? Even if he had three heads and six arms. I’ll make sure to deal with him cleanly!”

She cocked her head up in confidence. “Hey! What are you still standing there for? Go back and get ready! We need to put on a good show worthy of our name for our journey to Swinton tomorrow!”

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The next day, back at Swinton, a convoy of luxury cars drove into Park Palace in a grandiose display. As their procession moved through the streets, it left a lasting impression of power and splendor.

By the entrance, the entire Harmon family had been waiting, with Jessica in the lead.

As the vehicles came to a stop, Jayla, who was dressed in luxurious clothing, was the first to disembark with an arrogant look on her face.

“Jayla, you’re here! Please, come in.” Jessica greeted her with a smile and a welcoming attitude. The person she was greeting was Tyler’s sister. Her standing among the entire Grant family was not to be taken lightly.

Jayla nodded in response. “Jessica, long time no see. Where’s Natasha? Why don’t I see her?”

“She’s inside getting ready. She won’t take much longer,” Jessica explained with a smile.

“Jayla, I prepared something for you when I found out you were visiting. Have a look.” At that moment, Quentin, who was standing beside them, took out a sapphire the size of an egg and passed it to her with both hands. Jayla was not

only gorgeous, but she also came from a powerful family. That was why he knew she was the best match for him. Naturally, he wouldn't give up the chance to leave a good impression.

It was his belief that every woman was weak against jewelry.

Jayla glanced at it. "Thanks." However, instead of receiving it herself, she had the maid take it and put it away.

"Uh..." As he took in her disinterested look, the corners of his mouth twitched. He purchased that sapphire from some Amberson woman for more than a hundred million dollars. He had spent quite a fortune to impress the gorgeous woman and was aggrieved at her reaction.

"I should have gotten something cheaper," Quentin silently mumbled.

"Jayla, tea is almost ready. Let's head in first." Jessica smoothed things over and invited the entourage inside. After they took their seats, she asked, "Jayla, may I know what brings you to Swinton this time?"

"Jessica, in truth, I'm here regarding my brother's wedding." She drank a sip of tea and continued, "According to the marriage agreement, there are around 200 days left before the union between the Harmons and the Grants. I'm just wondering how the preparations are going."

"There is no need to worry. The Harmons' annual family gathering will be in a few days. We'll be making arrangements during the gathering," Jessica replied with a smile.

"That would be the best." Jayla nodded and changed the subject. "However, I've been hearing rumors lately that Natasha has a boyfriend. I wonder if they are true."

Jessica's expression froze slightly with her words before she dismissed the idea with a wave of her hand. "That's not true, of course. You shouldn't listen to gossip like that. Besides, who could compare to your brother in the entire seven provinces of Balerno?"

"That's good to hear. You should be aware that my brother is deeply devoted to Natasha, and he

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also has strict principles and doesn't tolerate betrayals. With his personality, if he heard about the rumors, there's no guarantee how he would retaliate." Her words carried a hint of threat as she

warned.

"Please don't worry. It is inevitable for our families to come together. I have faith the wedding will be held according to schedule." Jessica smiled reassuringly.

"Great!" Jayla raised her brows. "My brother will be back in two days. He will also be personally attending the Harmons' annual gathering to ask for the bride's hand. I'm here to inform you of this

in advance."

"No problem. We will make all the necessary arrangements." Jessica nodded with a smile.

While they were talking, Natasha, who had finally finished getting ready, walked out of her bedroom.

"Natasha, you're here. Sit down. We were just discussing your marriage with Tyler."

Natasha raised her hand and interrupted her. "I heard everything. Jayla, my apologies in advance. I'm afraid we won't be able to go through with this marriage."

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Everyone stood in shock at her words. No one could believe Natasha dared say that.

"Natasha? What nonsense are you spouting? Are you sleep talking?!" Jessica gave her a look.

Natasha said calmly, "I'm fully awake, and I am well aware of what I just said. It is regrettable, but

I need to express my feelings today. Tyler and I are unsuited for each other."

"Natasha, what do you mean by this?" Jayla's brow knitted. A slightly uneasy feeling crept up within her.

"I'm backing out of this marriage." Just like that, Natasha dropped the bomb.

"You're backing out?" Jayla's expression darkened at her words. She snapped at her. "Natasha Harmon, are you insane?! How dare you break off a union with the Grants? The audacity!" Jessica warned, "Natasha, stop your nonsense. You can't say those things lightly!"

The Grant family was part of the Tremendous Three. Whether it was their connections or their legacy, the Grants surpassed the Harmons in every aspect. Especially with Tyler, the exceptional genius, at the helm, the Grant family had been elevated to unparalleled heights. It wouldn't be too far off to say that they were very close to becoming the strongest among the Tremendous Three. Many affluent families could only dream of having an association with the Grant family. However, Natasha wanted to back out of the marriage instead. It was like slapping the Grants in the face.

"I am indeed the party at fault in this situation. I sincerely apologize. If you think this will deal a blow to your reputation, you can be the one to make the announcement. I'll take the blame. In any case, I will never marry Tyler," Natasha spoke calmly with a resolute gaze.

"Natasha Harmon, do you think you are the one who calls the shots here? Who do you think you are? This union is a joint decision between both families. You are not worthy of giving your opinion!" Jayla erupted in a fury.

Natasha responded coldly, "I can comply with everything else the family arranges, but marriage is out of the question!"

"Hah! I don't think you understand the situation. You should be honored that my brother is interested in you! As for calling off this marriage, your opinion doesn't matter. My brother is the one who calls the shots!" Jayla glared at her.

"Then, kindly inform your brother to call off the marriage."

“Dream on!” Jayla refused immediately. “My brother always gets what he wants. It doesn’t matter if you agree to it or not. This wedding is going ahead as planned!”

“I will not marry Tyler.” Natasha shook her head again. She refused to destroy her chance at happiness for a marriage of convenience.

“Natasha, as the daughter of a prominent family, you should be aware that there are certain matters beyond your control. You should think about the entire Harmon family, not just yourself. If you dare to break off this marriage, you will be making an enemy out of the Grants!

“Even if my brother won’t touch you, your enemies will definitely not let you go easily. They have

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restrained themselves thus far because of our support. How long do you think your family can last without our protection? I recall that your father is in conflict with the Dark Lord. Without my brother, do you think you guys can fend him off by yourselves?

“Think carefully about it! In seven days, we will be attending the Harmons’ annual family gathering. Whether we end up friends or foes depends entirely on your decision!

“We’re leaving.” After leaving them with those harsh words, Jayla stormed off with her entourage.

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“Natasha Harmon! What’s wrong with you? Who gave you the green light to call off the marriage?” Once Jayla left, Jessica finally unleashed her temper. The marriage concerned the fate of their family, and she would not allow Natasha to do as she wished.

“Natasha, do you know how lucky you are to be able to marry Tyler Grant? What are you doing? Calling off the marriage?” Quentin felt like he was staring at a fool. Tyler Grant was the cream of the crop of the Southern province, and t

he hope of Dragonmarsh. Before he hit thirty, he had been appointed as a general who led tens of thousands of men. Young and talented, he was deemed the best bachelor, and women fell on his feet in admiration.

To their dismay, Natasha had no interest in Tyler at all, which everyone thought was dumb.

“I will have the final say in my marriage. I have no feelings for Tyler, and I won’t marry him,” she replied calmly. In the past, she would have accepted an arranged marriage in the interest of the Harmon Family, especially when Tyler was an impeccable candidate in terms of family background, talent, and potential. He was literally perfect. She would meet everyone’s expectations by marrying Tyler, but now, she only had eyes for Dustin.

“You can develop your feelings for him over time. No matter what, you’re marrying him!” Jessica declared firmly. “This is the only way you’ll be happy, and we will be safe. If you call off the marriage, you’ll put your family in trouble!”

“Right, Natasha! You better not forget about the existence of the Dark Lord. He’s a looming threat to our family. Without the Grant Family’s backing, the Dark Lord might come for us at any time!”

Quentin warned her sternly.

But she replied with a frown, “I will think of a way to deal with the Dark Lord.”

“Deal with him? How?! It’s been ten years. Every year, one of us Harmons would be killed for no good reason. Even after your dad and your uncle hired experts and gave their best efforts, they have no way to stop the Dark Lord, so what makes you think you can take him down?” Jessica

retorted.

“Give me some time. I can do it.” Natasha had a determined look in her eyes.

Jessica shook her head. “There’s no time. In seven days, Tyler will show up at our annual family gathering to ask for your hand in marriage. If you turn him down, our family might as well be

ruined.”

Natasha fell into a heavy silence. She only had seven days left, and she had no idea what her fate would be if she could not come up with a solution.

Meanwhile, Dustin was at the Nicholson Villa, where he handed Dahlia a check. "Here you go. These are the investments I got for you."

"Investments?" She took a better look and froze up. "One billion dollars? Where did you get that money from?"

"I have a friend who works at a bank. I got him to issue me an interest-free loan. This will tide you

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over," Dustin explained. Technically, he wasn't lying because Roderick Brooks indeed owned a few private banks.

"When did you have a friend in the bank?" Dahlia looked at him curiously. The friend practically lost out on the deal if it was an interest-free loan, and that was a pretty huge favor for Dustin to

return.

"I'm a doctor, after all. I save lives all day, so it's not weird for me to make friends along the way."

He shrugged.

"That's true." She nodded and beamed at the sight of the check in her hands. "I have to say, you really helped me a lot this time. With this one billion check, I will secure my position as the chairman of Cardinal Group."

"A billion-dollar check? What are you talking about?" Florence and James wandered into the room

at that moment.

“Mom, look at this!” Dahlia handed Florence the check. The latter was overjoyed when she saw the figure on the check. “D–d–did I see wrongly? This is a check worth one billion!”

“One billion?” James’ eyes bulged in shock. He had never seen that insane amount of money in his life.

“How’s that? It’s a surprise, isn’t it? Dustin brought me the check,” Dahlia showed off proudly.

“Dustin?” Florence furrowed her brows and examined him from head to toe with doubt. “Are you sure he’s capable of this? Is the check a fake?”

“Of course not. I verified it multiple times. It’s a real check!” Dahlia looked serious.

“This can’t be right! He’s dirt poor. Since when is he loaded?” James remained suspicious.

“I might be poor, but I have a couple of rich friends. If you don’t trust me, just hand the check back to me.” Dustin gestured for the check.

“We trust you! Of course, we do!” Florence hurriedly stuffed the check into her pocket and squeezed a smile at him. “Oh, Dustin, you’ve changed in such a short time! I never thought you’d have a billionaire friend! When are you going to introduce him to us?”

An extra connection would open up paths. A man who could lend a billion dollars in one go was definitely someone remarkable. If the Nicholsons could get on his good side, they would benefit immensely from this relationship in the future.

James protested with displeasure, “Mom, are you seriously falling for all his garbage?”

“You’re the garbage!” Florence spat at him and gave him a good slap on the back of her head. She chided him, “You little brat! Watch your manners when you speak to your brother-in-law! Speak nicely!”

“Huh?” James was caught off-guard by the sudden change in his mom’s attitude. She had been haughtily pointing fingers at Dustin, but in a matter of seconds, she was smiling and groveling at him.

James thought, “It’s shocking how she changes in a blink of an eye! What a skil!”

“Dustin, are you hungry? Do you want me to cook you some food? By the way, don’t forget to share the contact details of that friend with me. I need to ask him for advice on personal finance matters.

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“Florence was practically glowing with a level of enthusiasm unseen before.

“It’s alright. I’m not hungry.” Dustin shook his head. This was the first time he received such warm treatment from Florence in his three years of marriage, and he wondered if that was the

power of money.

“Mom, you should go get the groceries. I need to go somewhere with Dustin, and we’ll come home for a meal later,” Dahlia suddenly suggested.

“Where are you going?” Florence questioned.

“Of course, we’re on our way to make Madam Gloria fulfill her promise. We now have a billion dollars worth of investments. They have nothing to say, even if they’re unwilling to make me the chairman!” Dahlia smiled brightly.

“Okay! Go now and have that chairman position secured!” Florence urged her daughter to leave with excitement.

Once Dahlia secured the position as the chairman of Cardinal Group, she would be one step closer to becoming the head of the Nicholson Family, and the rest of them would be elevated to a higher

status as a result too.

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A Mercedes–Benz rolled to a stop in front of a villa with a great riverside view.

“Dahlia, I won’t go with you. I splashed tea on Madam Gloria yesterday. I bet she won’t be glad to see me.” Dustin chuckled.

“That’s fine. Wait for me here. I’ll be back soon.” Dahlia gave him a firm nod and marched into the villa alone.

At that time, Gloria was having her tea leisurely, with Dakota seated right beside her, massaging her shoulders and legs with great care.

“Madam, Dahlia asks to meet you.” An elderly lady came up and announced respectfully.

“Why is she here? Is she begging for mercy because she knows that she’s incapable?” Dakota sounded puzzled.

Gloria put her teacup on the table and replied calmly, “Let her in.”

“Yes, Madam.” The elderly servant shuffled away and led Dahlia into the villa.

“You have something to ask from me?” Gloria looked up at the sudden visitor.

“Madam Gloria, I have completed your request. Here’s a check for one billion dollars. Please take a look.” While speaking, Dahlia handed Gloria the check.

“A check of one billion? Are you joking?” Dakota snatched the check away, but her expression fell when she saw the figure on it. “T–there’s a billion here!”

“Let me have a look.” Gloria took the check and examined it. Her face scrunched up in displeasure. “Dahlia, it’s only been a day. Where did you get the money from?”

Gloria had looked into them and knew that Dahlia’s family was incapable of getting a billion dollars worth of investment in such a short timeframe. There was something fishy going on.

“You don’t have to be concerned about that. I have my connections.” Dahlia refused to offer a detailed explanation.

“Hmph! The Nicholson Family has always been upright and honest! If your money comes from a dirty source, it will not be counted!” Gloria reminded her coldly.

“That’s right! Who knows? The money might have come from a robbery or theft! If you don’t offer a clear explanation, we won’t let you off the hook!” Dakota echoed Gloria’s words.

“If you are dying to know, I shall tell you the truth. Dustin borrowed the money.” Dahlia did not bother to hide the fact from them.

“Dustin?” Dakota was first perplexed, followed by a look of disdain. “Oh, Dahlia, you have to make up a better lie than that! The good-for-nothing, Dustin Rhys, can never get his hands on a billion’s worth of investments!”

“Believe it or not, it’s up to you. At the end of the day, we got the money you asked for,” Dahlia remarked calmly.

“Sure, you did. But it’s not enough,” Gloria suddenly said. After the initial shock from the check,

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“Sure, you did. But it’s not enough,” Gloria suddenly said. After the initial shock from the check,

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she quickly recovered and came up with a plan.

“Excuse me?” Dahlia raised a brow. “Madam Gloria, you said you wanted one billion in

investments. Why are you now saying the amount is not enough?”

“I said that indeed. But the one billion dollars that you gave me is not for the investments. It’s for compensation,” Gloria went on with confidence.

“Dustin Rhys was rude enough to splash hot tea in my face. I was scalded because of that. Just think of the one billion as compensation for my medical bills.”

“What?” Dahlia’s expression changed when she heard the unreasonable demand. One billion to make up for scalding her with tea? That was too much!

“Madam Gloria, aren’t you asking for too much?” Frowning, Dahlia had expected Gloria to give her a difficult time, but the way Gloria went about it was ridiculous and shameless.

“Too much?” Gloria scoffed. “That beast, Dustin Rhys, has scalded my face. If we go by the book, I should have broken his legs. However, I will forgive him if I get that one billion as compensation.” “Yeah! One billion dollars in exchange for his legs. It’s a sweet deal for him!” Dakota agreed. She had been racking her brains to break the promise, but she was surprised that Gloria had come up with a solution in no time. Gloria was indeed a wily old fox!

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“Madam Gloria, you need to be fair. What you’re doing now is intentionally setting me up to fail!” Dahlia had a sour expression on her face. No sane person would sit still after being robbed of one billion dollars.

“Shut up! Where are your manners when you’re speaking to my grandma? You should know your place!” Dakota yelled at Dahlia.

“You need to pay up for what you’ve done. Dustin lashed out at people, and he should rightly pay for that. This is enough. I’ll be upfront with you. If you pull another one billion dollars, I’ll make you the chairman. If you can’t, you should get

lost.” Gloria waved impatiently in a confident manner, as though she had Dahlia in her grip.

“Why are you still standing there? Get lost now!” Dakota urged Dahlia to leave.

However, before leaving, Dahlia said, “Madam Gloria, since you’re being unfair, I will report this to the patriarch and make him the judge of this case.”

“Stop right there!” With a sullen face, Gloria bellowed, “You rascal! How dare you threaten me? The audacity! Someone give her a slap!”

“On it!” Dakota sneered and gave Dahlia two slaps on the face, leaving two clear marks on the cheeks. Dahlia cradled her face in shock and anger.

“Why? Are you dissatisfied? Slap her two more times!” Gloria roared.

“Yes, Madam!” Dakota slapped Dahlia hard on the face, twice. She had long harbored resentment for Dahlia, the countryside girl with good looks.

Dahlia bit her lips but did not say a word. Instead, she stared straight at Gloria.

“Is she still stubborn? Slap her harder!” Gloria was incensed at the defiant look in Dahlia’s eyes. Not many in the family had the guts to go up against her.

“Beat her up!” Dakota got two elderly servants to beat and kick Dahlia. Within minutes, the poor girl was badly scratched on the face and suffered from bruises all across her body.

“You shameless thing! How dare you talk back to my grandma? I’ll teach you a lesson today!” Dakota released her pent-up anger by hitting and cursing Dahlia. As a member of the direct line of descent, she was jealous at how Dahlia was chosen to be a candidate for the heir position instead. How could a country bumpkin and lowly slut outshine her in terms of looks and grace?

“Stop right there!” When Dakota and the rest of the women were in the middle of the assault, they heard an angry call coming from the entrance.

“Who’s yelling at our place?” Dakota looked up and was about to give the intruder a dressing down. But what greeted her was a hard kick in the face. She yelped helplessly and was thrown a good three feet away. Not only was her nose bent out of shape, but she also lost her front teeth. Her facial structure was slightly affected because of the injuries.

“Dustin Rhys! It’s you again! You animal!” Gloria’s anger reached its peak at the sight of Dustin. She rose up and attempted to hit him with her walking stick.

“Get lost!” Dustin slapped Gloria across the face, sending her collapsing onto the ground.

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“How dare you lay a finger on Madam Gloria? You crossed the line!” The elderly servants standing around were taken aback when they saw that Gloria had been slapped. Enraged, they flung themselves at Dustin and attacked him.

“A bunch of rude b*tches!” Dustin’s expression hardened, and he slapped the elderly servants out of his way without a word. Some fainted on the spot, some were bleeding from their noses and mouths, and some lost their teeth. Within a blink of an eye, those who assaulted Dahlia were lying on the floor, immobile.

“Dustin Rhys, how dare you hit us? You’re asking for trouble!” Dakota stood up, albeit staggering, with a look of menace and resentment on her face. She was the daughter of a wealthy family, and her grandma was one of the heads of the Nicholson Family. A good-for-nothing like Dustin had beaten them up—he clearly didn’t know his place!

“Not only am I beating you up, but I will also cripple you!” Dustin gave Dakota a heavy kick in the abdomen, sending her flying in the air into a wall, screaming in pain and bleeding from the mouth. “You animal! You’re dead meat! Your entire family is in deep shit! How dare you hurt the Nicholsons? We’ll make you pay for that!” Gloria, who got up from the floor, hissed evilly at Dustin. No one had the audacity to lay a finger on her in many years. This young man had so many balls! “Make me pay? Oh, you don’t have the right to.” He slapped her on t

he face again, and this time, her nose and mouth were hit, and even her fake tooth fell off. Almost instantly, she started convulsing and foaming at the mouth.

“Dustin, don’t hurt them!” Seeing that, Dahlia jumped in to stop him. She was worried that he might accidentally kill Madam Gloria in a fit.

“How are you feeling?” Dustin reined in his temper and helped her up from the floor.

“I only suffered from a few external injuries. It’s nothing.” She forced a smile at him.

“Your face is swollen. How is this ‘nothing’?” Frowning, he looked sulky, and the more he thought about the situation, the angrier he became, knowing they had been taken advantage of.

His temper rose, and he stomped hard on Dakota’s face. Her decent-looking face was instantly horrifically ruined and bruised. Dustin finally felt satisfied and pleased after taking the appropriate revenge.

“I didn’t know you were so vindictive.” Although Dahlia was speechless at the scene, she couldn’t help but feel joy in her heart. It felt good to have someone avenging her.

“If you don’t teach these rude b*tches a lesson, they will never learn.” He looked cross.

“Beating Dakota up is fine. But you also beat up the elderly, Madam Gloria. I’m worried that we can’t get ourselves out of this.” After the initial joy, she was burdened by new worries.

“I don’t care. If they want revenge, they can come at me.” Dustin sounded fearless.

“She’s an insolent and disrespectful old hag. If I didn’t slap her today, she would’ve really thought she was above everyone else.” With that, he took the check from Gloria’s pocket and left the villa with Dahlia.

Soon after, Gloria stirred awake, still lying on the ground. She was greeted by the mess in the room. Touching her swollen and red face, she bellowed with eyes bulging from anger, "That animal! I will tear both of them into pieces!"

Next, she called a number on her phone. "Hey! Get Tarragon and Cougar here! We're executing the house law!"

When they got back to the Peaceful Medical Center, Dustin immediately took out a tube of medication that he started applying to Dahlia's skin. Dakota and the elderly servants did not go easy on Dahlia at all. The poor victim was covered in bruises on her face, limbs, and across her body. He dared not imagine the outcome had he not intervened in time.

"Dahlia, do you want to learn a few moves from me? At least, you'll have some skills to defend yourself if you ever run into this kind of situation," Dustin suggested while applying the ointment. Her fair skin was as soft as silk to the touch.

"I'm not interested in fighting and killing. And I have you to protect me!" She smiled at him softly. In her opinion, one could not solve problems with violence—that would only lead to more trouble. At the end of the day, an individual would only be powerful because of his or her connections and influence, not their martial arts skills. Many of the big bosses were bad at fighting, but their existence was enough to stop anyone from stirring up trouble. The top dogs garnered respect because of their reputation and influence.

"I'd rather rely on myself. I am only truly strong because I train myself to be." He shook his head. "Take off your clothes. I need to apply the medication to your back."

"Huh?" Her expression froze with awkwardness. "Um, maybe get Caitlyn to help out on this?"

"She's out getting groceries. I'm not asking you to strip naked. Why do you make it sound like I'm taking advantage of you?" He rolled his eyes at her.

"Okay then." She pursed her lips and slowly took off her top to display the lovely curves of her back. Her milky skin was a sight to behold, a rare beauty indeed.

Dustin regained his composure and applied the medication to the bruises on her back. Then, he gave her a slow and soft massage.

“Ouch...” He seemed to have touched a sore area as she frowned and inhaled deeply.

“Just bear with it. I’ll be done in a while.” During the massage, he channeled some internal energy to clear up the blood clots. Soon, she felt the pain in her back go away, and her body was basking in a comfortable and warm sensation.

“Dear! I’m here!” They heard a singsong voice from the entrance. In the next moment, they found themselves staring blankly at Natasha and Caitlyn, who were standing quietly at the door with the fresh groceries in their hands.

“I saw nothing!” Caitlyn covered her face and turned around, her cheeks flushed in

embarrassment.

“What are you doing?” Natasha’s expression hardened, and her eyes filled with accusation. She was looking at a man and a woman in a room. The woman was stripped down to her

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undergarments, and the man was running his hand all over her. It looked suspicious no matter

what.

“Ahem, please ignore that. Dahlia has been injured, and I was applying some medication for her,” Dustin hastily explained himself, but he felt oddly guilty in doing so.

“Applying medication?” Natasha was green in envy as she scanned Dahlia from head to toe. “And does she need to take off her clothes for that? Do you need to sit close to each other? Look at you- you can’t even take your hands off her!”

“Eh?” Dustin turned around and saw his hands on Dahlia, and he immediately retracted his hands in shock. He believed his intention was pure, but why did he feel guilty after Natasha’s interrogation?

“Caitlyn, come take a look. I look like the bad guy now, don’t I?” Natasha asked with a straight face.

“Um, what? What’s going on?” Caitlyn was taken aback and baffled.

“Can’t you see? I’ve become a cuckquean!” Natasha crossed her arms over her chest and scoffed. Hmph! Dustin Rhys, why don’t you change your name instead? You should call yourself—Don Juan!”

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“Don Juan?” Dustin’s lips twitched in disbelief. What was going on? Why did he get labeled as a playboy just for applying some medication to his patient?

“Ms. Harmon, there’s a misunderstanding here. He’s in fact applying the medication to my injuries. “Dahlia could not suppress a tiny smile at the jealousy on Natasha’s face.

“Well, if you don’t trust my words, there’s nothing I can do about it.” Then, she slowly put on her clothes with a taunting look in her eyes.

“Hmph! I need some medication too!” Natasha sat down beside Dustin and started unbuttoning her clothes.

“Hey, what are you doing!” Shocked, he immediately stopped her.

She gave him a look of displeasure. “What? You can apply medication for her, but not for me?”

“That’s because you’re not hurt!” Dustin was helpless in the face of the young lady from a wealthy family who was acting like a child.

“Who said so? I am hurt in the heart, and it’s much worse than what she’s going through! Just touch it, and you’ll know!” A defiant Natasha puffed her chest, inviting him to touch it.

“Dustin, I feel some pain in the back. Can you apply more medication to it?” Dahlia did not back down and took off her top once more.

However, Dustin was suffering from a raging headache in the face of the two difficult beauties. They had always been passive—aggressive with each other every time they crossed paths, and it was tough to pacify them.

“Caitlyn! Help them out! I’ll get lunch ready!” His eyes lit up at the sight of his trusty assistant, and he grabbed the groceries from her hands and slid into the kitchen. One way of avoiding trouble was by escaping the scene.

“Hmph!” The women glared at each other and put on their clothes, finally putting the animosity to a temporary rest.

After a busy time in the kitchen, he served everyone a sumptuous lunch. It was a four-course dish with soup that smelled good and tasted equally great.

“Dear, have some grilled ribs. Look at you—you lost some weight!” Smiling, Natasha placed a piece of rib on his plate. He cautiously thanked her and quickly stuffed it into his mouth with a smile.

“What’s good about ribs? You should try some chicken Alfredo. I know you like this the best.” Dahlia, not backing down, placed the chicken on his plate.

“Grilled ribs are better, in my opinion. They’re succulent and chewy at the same time. Great

texture!” While speaking, Natasha put a second piece of rib on Dustin’s plate.

“To each his own! Dustin never gets tired of chicken Alfredo. You can’t compare it to ribs.” Dahlia flashed a faint smile and piled a piece of chicken on the growing hill of food on Dustin’s plate.

“Ribs are better!”

“The chicken Alfredo is nicer!”

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“Ribs!”

“Chicken!”

The women kept piling food on his plate while squabbling with barely concealed hostility. Soon, the lunch he prepared was gone, all going into his plate that was overflowing with food. He did not know where to get started.

Meanwhile, Caitlyn stared at the fight before her helplessly. She wanted to take her share of the meat, but she lost the chance to do so.

“Dustin, my darling, is the chicken or rib better?” After the fight, the women turned their sharp gazes onto him and directed the question to him. The scene was like déjà vu, but this time, it was more frightening.

“They’re both great!” He flashed a bitter smile and answered.

“No! You can only pick one!” They glared at him with a threatening air.

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“I can’t pick! They taste different, and the choice will depend on the time, the place, and the preference of the person.” Dustin bit the bullet and offered a neutral opinion.

“Hmph! You’re really good at talking yourself out of situations!” Dahlia rolled her eyes, but at least she stopped bugging him.

“No matter what, you have to pick the ribs!” However, Natasha was more aggressive, supported by the confidence that she had Dustin wrapped around her finger. He could only smile without saying a word as he was drenched in cold sweat.

“Dear, come with me. I have something to discuss with you.” After the heart-stopping lunch, Dustin was called to the side to talk by Natasha.

Dahlia pretended that she was out for a casual stroll to eavesdrop. However, Natasha immediately noticed her plans and dragged Dustin into her car, keeping everyone out of their private

discussion.

“Natasha, what do you want to discuss?” He was curious.

Natasha suddenly announced, “I’ll be honest with you— I might need to leave Swinton for a while.”

“Leaving Swinton? Where to?” He was taken aback,

“I’m going to my hometown in Millsburg.” Her expression dimmed at the thought. “I have some family matters to tend to. And I need to take care of it right a way.”

“What’s the important matter? Do you need my help?” He prodded cautiously. He knew that it must be a complicated matter because he rarely saw Natasha with a solemn face.

“It’s fine. Just a private matter. I can take care of it myself.” She squeezed a smile at him. She wanted to tell him the truth very badly, but she couldn’t do so. Despite Dustin’s outstanding martial arts skills, he was far from being able to take down the Grant Family.

As one of The Tremendous Three, the Grants were influential across the military, the government, and the business scene. One could say that they were invincible in the Southern province.

A single individual could never fight against a top dog like the Grants, and the last thing she wanted was to get him involved in the mess.

“Natasha, you must let me know if you are in trouble. Don’t put on a brave face and pretend that everything’s fine,” he assured her with a serious face.

“Don’t worry. I know what to do.” She beamed at him, looking relieved. It was worth taking the huge risk on her own after seeing him get nervous for her.

“How long do you plan to stay in Millsburg?” He asked her.

“I’m not sure. It could be as quick as three days, or as long as seven days.”

“Cool. I will call you in three days. If you haven’t settled the issue, I will head over to help.” He was being serious.

“No, it’s fine.” She shook her head and rejected his offer. But he cut her off and insisted. “You don’t have a say this time! Just listen to me!”

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“Alright.” She gave him a helpless nod, but her heart was bursting with joy.

At that moment, someone rapped on the car window. It was Dahlia, standing out there with a hostile look in her eyes. “What are you talking about? Are you not done yet? Shall I serve you tea?”

Dustin coughed awkwardly and smiled. “I’ll get out now.” Then, he opened the door to leave.

“Wait!” Natasha suddenly reached out and wrapped an arm around his neck. Then, she gave him a kiss with her red lips.

He let out a muffled moan and tasted the sweetness whirling in his mouth. His body stiffened, and his mind went blank. Did she pull the same trick again? This time, she was more bold and

passionate.

“You-

” Dahlia glared at them and dragged Dustin out of the car. Feeling humiliated and angered, she yelled, “Natasha Harmon, what are you doing?”

“Not bad. He’s getting better at kissing.” Natasha licked her red lips, looking as though she wanted more. Flashing a suggestive smile, she said to Dustin, “Stay home while I’m gone. I’ll be back in two days for you.”

With that, she stamped on the accelerator and sped away.

“She’s shameless!” Dahlia stomped furiously. Too bad she could never get herself to imitate Natasha’s coy behavior.

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As night descended, there was a commotion at the Nicholson Villa as the entrance door was busted down. Then, Gloria and her bodyguards from the Nicholson Family barged in pompously. Two men, who were more than six feet tall, were eye-

catching. The two guards shared some resemblance, and the muscles on their bodies were chiseled like rock cliffs. They stood there like two huge mountains that evoked fear.

“Dahlia Nicholson! Get out right now!” Gloria yelled at the top of her lungs when she stepped *foot* in the house. Her face was still bruised from Dustin’s beating in the morning, looking terrifying, especially with the awful scowl.

“Oh! If it isn’t Madam Gloria? What brings you here?” Florence emerged from the kitchen but jumped at the sight of the entourage.

“I’m asking you now. Where are Dahlia and Dustin?” Gloria hissed through gritted teeth.

“They haven’t been back since the morning. I have no idea where they went!” Florence replied

meekly.

“You have no idea? Are you trying to hide them?!” A woman with a bandaged face made her way

out of the crowd.

Florence was taken aback by the figure, whom she failed to recognize. "Um, who are you?"

"I'm Dakota!" The woman in bandages yelled.

"Oh, it's Dakota! What happened to your face? How did you get injured this badly?" Florence was

shocked

by the extent of Dakota's injuries. One couldn't tell her nose apart from her mouth, and it was harder to recognize her as she was all wrapped up in bandages.

"How dare you ask me that question? It's all thanks to your dearest daughter and son-in-law! They made me look like this!" Dakota grimaced. She was born pretty and used her looks to her

advantage, given that she was relatively talentless in other fields.

However, Dustin destroyed her face with all the kicking and beating. It was not surprising that she would be infuriated.

"What? Did they beat you up? That can't be true!" Florence gasped in disbelief.

"I am not the only victim. They also hurt Grandma! We must use the house law on those two treacherous jerks!" Dakota yelled again.

"Florence, get them here, or I'll make you regret it!" Gloria grew impatient.

"Madam Gloria, I have nothing to do with it! I really don't know where they went!" Looking nervous, Florence added, "My daughter is kind and innocent. She can't possibly hit anyone! I think this must be Dustin's doing. Just arrest him if you want!"

"Hmph! You and your sweet words! I want her slapped!" Gloria roared with rage.

"Yes, Madam!" The elderly servants that came with Gloria immediately went up and pinned Florence down. The biggest of them all slapped Florence hard on the face until she was seeing stars and bleeding from the nose.

“How dare you beat my mom? I’m not going easy on you!” James, who had descended the stairs, was furious at the sight and dashed over while yelling.

“Cougar!” Gloria gave one bulky bodyguard a look, and he went up to grab James by the collar, lifting the poor dude into the air like he was a puppy.

“Ugh...” James’ face turned a deep shade of red as he was suffocated. He struggled for his life, but he couldn’t free himself.

“Let go of my son!” A worried Florence butted against the elderly servants, grabbed a fruit knife from the table, and plunged it into Cougar’s abdomen.

They all heard a tiny clanking sound, but Cougar remained standing. The blade in Florence’s hand

broke into two.

“What?” She stared blankly at the knife.

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Was the bodyguard made of steel? Even a knife could not penetrate his skin!

“Hmph! Cougar is a martial artist who’s at the height of internal energy cultivation. Do you seriously think you can hurt him with that toy knife of yours?” Dakota scoffed in disdain. Gloria had called in the two martial arts experts who worked for her to make up for her loss of dignity earlier. No matter how powerful Dustin was, he was destined to be defeated.

“Get lost!” With a slap, Cougar subdued Florence. Gloria strutted up arrogantly and rested her walking stick on Florence’s face, saying, “I’m giving you a chance to get Dahlia and Dustin to come home. If you don’t, I’ll break the legs of your son!”

“Have mercy on me! I’ll make the call right now!” Florence frantically scrambled for her phone and called Dahlia, specifically reminding her daughter to bring Dustin home as well. However, she kept the reason from Dahlia, fearing that Dustin wouldn’t show up. That would only land the whole family in greater trouble.

“Madam Gloria, they’ll be here in no time. Please wait.” Florence was all smiles.

“I’ll allow 15 minutes, tops. With each minute that passes after that, I’ll crush one finger of your son!” Gloria threatened.

“What?” Florence was stunned. If Dahlia and Dustin were late for more than ten minutes, James would lose all fingers on both hands!

James felt aggrieved and helpless, for he didn’t ask to be part of this circus.

During the quiet wait, the door to the villa was busted open once more. A group of men marched in as though they were ready to kill.

“Sir Hummer?” Florence and James were shocked at the man in the lead. Edwin’s unannounced presence at midnight was quite unexpected.

“Who are you?” Gloria confronted the new visitors with a frosty tone.

“I’m here for these two.” Edwin pointed at Florence and James. “The rest of you better get out right now!”

“Oh, it looks like Florence has asked someone to help her out!” Gloria scanned the men with disdain. “What can a few men do? Tarragon and Cougar will easily annihilate you.”

“That’s right! You better beg for forgiveness if you don’t want trouble!” Dakota yelled at Edwin’s men, thinking that the few men were no match for Nicholson Family’s elite fighters.

“I shall repeat myself once more. Those who are unrelated to them— get lost right now!” Edwin warned them.

However, Gloria merely announced, “He needs to be put in his place! Someone beat him up!” “Yes, Madam!” The elderly servants chuckled menacingly and charged at Edwin. He was emotionless when he pulled a pistol with a silencer from his back and pointed it at the elderly

servants.

“Wait a minute! We can talk—

” The elderly servants looked alarmed and attempted to talk to him,

but what followed were muffled gunshots. The elderly servants fell to the floor, each with a gunshot wound in their foreheads. None were breathing.

Edwin blew on the pistol and asked coldly, “Who is next?”

The others stared at the scene with terror. No one expected Edwin to be as ruthless as to gun down lives without hesitation. His psychopathic behavior sent shivers down their backs.

“D—

do you know who I am? How dare you kill my people? You’re reckless!” Gloria gathered herself and grew furious. The elderly servants were her confidantes, and she was extremely angry to see them murdered.

“I’m uninterested in the names of the dead,” he said coolly, shooting Gloria.

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Edwin pulled the trigger, sending a bullet in Gloria's direction. At the life-or-death moment, the bulky Cougar positioned himself to shield her, arms crossed over his chest in a protective stance. At the same time, two heavy metal rings slid out of his sleeve.

The sound of metal clanking was accompanied by flying sparks as the bullet was sent flying astray after it came into contact with the metal rings. Cougar sneered as he stood in front of Gloria like a mountain. He clearly did not fear Edwin.

Bullets from an average pistol were not a threat when he was at the height of internal energy cultivation, thanks to his speedy response in comparison to that of an average shooter. He could either dodge the bullet or stop it with his weapons. It was impossible to hurt him as long as it wasn't an ambush from the back, and that was the power of a trained martial artist!

"D— did he stop the bullet?" Florence was shocked once more. At that point, they wondered if Cougar was even human for blocking both the fruit knife attack and the gunshot.

"Do you think you're invincible with that pistol? You bumpkin!" Gloria recovered from the initial scare and collected herself. With Tarragon and Cougar beside her, no one could hurt her.

"How dare you shoot at my grandma? You're asking for death! Cougar, I want him crippled!" Dakota gave out the orders.

"Roger that!" Cougar cackled and launched himself into the air by jumping lightly. He sailed across like an arrow from a bow as he crushed the tiles underneath his feet, and he barreled toward Edwin at a frightening speed.

"That's just a minor trick!" A short guy in a cap, who was standing behind Edwin, suddenly made his move and charged at Cougar. The two collided and set off an explosion. As the dust cleared, everyone could see that the short guy c

aught Cougar's fists in his hand. The impact of the collision had shattered the tiles underneath their feet into pieces.

Cougar's eyes wavered with shock as he grunted. He never thought that someone would have the power to stop his punch.

"Boss, he doesn't look like our target today." The short guy held his cap with one hand to prevent it from blowing it away. At the same time, he cast a cool look at Edwin. "If you want him killed, you need to top up."

"50 million for each person," Edwin replied, unperturbed.

"Haha! No problem!" The short guy grinned in excitement.

"You're asking for death!" Feeling belittled, Cougar was infuriated and lashed out with a punch. The punch was so heavy that it could break metal.

"You don't know your limits." The short guy shook his head and suddenly lurched at Cougar. He dodged the punch and hit Cougar hard in the abdomen.

A dull thud was heard. Cougar's abdomen, which had withstood the fruit knife stab, had a hole in it. The fist of the short guy penetrated through Cougar's flesh and emerged from the back. The scene was a horrifying, bloody mess.

1/2

Cougar froze up and stared at the fist that pierced through his abdomen in disbelief. Never in his wildest dream had he imagined that someone would put a fist through the steely body that he trained and built for years.

"How is that possible?" Gloria and the rest were terrified and shocked, especially knowing that Cougar was powerful enough to take down a hundred men. He could even defend himself against guns with ease. To their dismay and bewilderment, Cougar was taken down by a martial arts expert in one move.

"50 million pocketed."

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The short guy grinned as he flung Cougar's body against the wall, where the body left a bloody

trail.

"Cougar!" Tarragon hugged the body of his little brother and seethed in vengeance.

"How dare you kill my brother? I'll tear you into pieces!" Then, he lunged at the short guy like a crazed beast, only to have the short guy kick him in the chest.

Tarragon seemed to have been run over by a truck. He was flung aside and fell hard onto the ground, where he coughed up blood. His rib had collapsed.

The Nicholsons gasped at the second casualty. They knew that Tarragon was way stronger than Cougar, but even the elder brother was defeated after an attack from the short guy. That left them wondering about his origins.

"W—who exactly are you?" Tarragon pressed on his chest as blood oozed from his nose and mouth. He knew his opponent must have been a divine-level martial artist to win with just a move.

"I'm Hillcrest, a gold-tier assassin in the Bounty League." The short guy grinned widely.

"A gold-tier assassin in the Bounty League?" Tarragon appeared mortified by the answer. Although he was not acquainted with Hillcrest, he was well aware of the weight of the reputation. The Bounty League was full of martial arts experts.

Even the bronze-tier assassins were formidable on their own, and the silver-tier assassins were

practically invincible. Not to mention the rare gold-tier assassins, who were the elites with

expertise in their fields of choice and cost billions to hire!

Tarragon had thought that he was sent here to teach some rascals a lesson, but little did he know

that he would run into the gold-tier assassins of the Bounty League. Talk about unlucky!

“Old hag, it’s your turn now.” Edwin lifted his gun again.

“Quick! Protect her!” Dakota’s eyelids twitched as she yelled in panic.

“Go!” The group of loyal bodyguards from the Nicholson Family charged at Edwin, who started firing like crazy with high accuracy. Each bullet was fatal. In no time, he had taken out half of the

bodyguards.

The rest who came closer were taken down by Hillcrest without fuss. In the blink of an eye, the Nicholsons’ bodyguards suffered a huge loss and multiple casualties. No one was left standing.

Gloria and the others were gripped by fear and trembling incessantly upon witnessing the scene.

They had never thought that they’d lose all the expert bodyguards whom they had specifically

called in from Glenstead.

“Do you have any last words?” Edwin marched up to Gloria without expression.

“Wait! You’d better not do anything rash. I’m from the Nicholson Family of Glenstead. If you dare so much as to lay a finger on me, the family will come at you!” Gloria rebuked him sternly.

“Is that all? Time to meet your maker, then.” Edwin did not waste time conversing as he raised his

gun once more.

1/2

“Stop!” When he was about to pull the trigger, he heard a feminine and commanding voice from the entrance. He turned around and spotted two familiar faces—Dustin Rhys and Dahlia Nicholson.

“Oh! The real VIPs are here!” Edwin scrunched up his eyes with a murderous look. He had attempted to make use of Boulderthorn and Royal Valor to get rid of Dustin, but he did not succeed.

The bastards from Royal Valor had gone missing, and no one had heard from them so far. He had no choice but to take matters into his own hands and hired the gold-tier assassins to avenge his children. Now that he was face-to-face with the killer, he was overcome with vengeance.

“Edwin Hummer, you’d better not try anything funny! Release Madam Gloria now!” Dakota ordered.

“Oh, is she a madam from the family? This is great.” Edwin suddenly broke into a smile as he pointed the gun at Gloria’s temple. “I’ll give you a choice—either she or Dustin have to die. Pick one.”

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“What did you say?” Dahlia frowned at him.

“Was it not clear enough? I shall repeat myself then.” The smile disappeared from Edwin’s face. “I will only spare one person. Either that old woman or Dustin. Now, it’s your turn to decide who’s living and who’s dying.”

“Dahlia! Just let Dustin go! It’s your chance to redeem yourself!” Dakota started yelling.

“Right! If you save me today, I will forgive your wrongs and even help you secure the chairman position!” Gloria dangled a promise as well. She lost her min

d at that moment because of Edwin's mercilessness. He could not be reasoned with, and he would take any life without hesitation. She still had a lot to live for and refused to be sacrificed.

"Edwin Hummer! We do not have grudges against you! Why do you have to come after us?" Dahlia frowned deeply.

"You don't?" Edwin laughed maniacally, throwing his head back. "Oh, Dahlia Nicholson, why don't you ask the people around you about the grudges between us?"

After Edwin's son and daughter were both killed and his family went through a massacre, he developed a vendetta against Dustin Rhys. Dahlia was wrong to claim that there was nothing

between them.

"Edwin Hummer, just come at me if you want revenge. Why do you have to pull tricks?" Unfazed,

Dustin remarked.

"I would have killed you if I wanted to. But I will not make it an easy death for you. I want you to witness your family and friends dying in their pools of blood. I want to see anger, despair, and remorse in you. That way, you'll have a taste of the excruciating grief!" Edwin cackled like a

madman. He had nothing more to lose ever since he lost his children.

"Do you think you are capable of doing that?" Dustin had a calm look in his eyes. Many wanted

him dead, but he has been unharmed so far.

"Hah! I know you are powerful. It's hard to take revenge on my own. But today, I came prepared. I did not mind spending a fortune on hiring the three gold-tier assassins from the Bounty League just to take you down. With them here, you are destined to die, even if you are an invincible

monster."

As he was speaking, he made a gesture, and three people behind him took a step forward. The short guy

on the left was Hillcrest. Standing in the middle was a man with gray hair, who had oddly ape-like, lengthy arms that reached his knees. On the right was a lady wearing a mask. She was dressed in a bodycon suit, which flaunted her curvy figure. The two knives she held were sparkling dimly and were obviously dripping with poison.

“On the left is Hillcrest. Snow Monkey is the one in the middle. You’ll also see Scorpion on the right. They are all gold-tier assassins.” Edwin generously introduced the assassins to Dustin to instill fear and despair in him.

“You rascal! It’s your honor to die in our hands.” Hillcrest grinned.

1/2

“Let’s get this over with and bag the money.” Snow Monkey remained expressionless.

1

“Haha... It’s a pity that a handsome guy like you is meeting your end today. Fancy having fun with me before that?” Scorpion licked her lips greedily.

The air was filled with dread upon the entrance of the three assassins. The people in the room started trembling uncontrollably.

“My gosh! What is that guy doing, putting together three gold-tier assassins?” Tarragon was covered in a cold sweat. It was rare enough to come across a gold-tier assassin. It would be his

first time witnessing three of those working together, which was unheard of.

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To Tarragon, the fact that Edwin assembled the best to take down an average man like Dustin, was rather puzzling.

“After all the hoo—
ha, it turns out that their target is Dustin! Thank God.” Dakota let out a sigh of relief in secret. There was a saying: the enemy of my enemy is my friend. Since Edwin shared the same goal as the Nicholsons in wanting to get rid of Dustin, she believed they should not be stuck in a confrontation.

“Evil defeats evil. Dustin Rhys, you’ll be dead today!” Gloria chuckled gleefully. She had heard of the Bounty League and understood the severity of having a gold-tier assassin here. A humble doctor like Dustin would never defend himself against one.

“You really splurged to get me killed.” Dustin shook his head, appearing fearless at the threat.

“I’m willing to give up my family fortune as long as I get my revenge.” Edwin sniggered.

“I’m afraid you’ll be disappointed today. This bunch can’t kill me,” Dustin replied.

“Can’t they? Wow, you jerk. Look at you, facing death with that bold attitude!” Hillcrest smirked at him. “A small man like you does not understand the power of a gold-tier assassin. Killing you is like squishing an ant.”

“Is that so? Try me.” Dustin smiled at him.

“Alright! I shall show the difference in our powers!” Hillcrest grinned and launched himself at Dustin at the speed of a bullet. When he was near, he hurled a punch at Dustin’s chest. However, Dustin did not dodge the attack. Instead, he punched in Hillcrest’s direction as well, and their fists

came into contact.

The hard collision led to an explosive sound as their internal energy was unleashed, leading to strong gales blowing around. When their fists met, Hillcrest’s immediately cracked, and blood splattered everywhere. The bones in his arms shifted backward and pierced through his shoulder, and his flesh was twisted from the impact.

With a painful scream, Hillcrest was thrown against the wall. He vomited blood and lost consciousness right away. Meanwhile, Dustin stood firm in his original position with his fist

extended.

“What?” The people around them were dumbfounded. They could not believe that the proud Hillcrest, who had murdered Cougar with one move, was now taken out by Dustin’s punch. That was too ridiculous.

“You sure are something for being able to hurt Hillcrest. Too bad you’re still dying today!” Snow Monkey looked grim as he launched a quick attack at Dustin’s head with his long and girthy arms. He was much stronger than Hillcrest in terms of direct attacks. Still, Dustin stood there emotionlessly as he punched Snow Monkey in the chest at high speed.

Snow Monkey’s body stiffened before his chest dented inward. He slumped onto the ground lifelessly, heaving his last breath with his eyes open. Till death, he never expected Dustin to move at a lightning speed that he could not respond to.

1/2

“Die!” Right after Snow Monkey collapsed onto the ground, a prowling shadow emerged from his back. The figure held two blades that were shimmering with a gleam and plunged them into Dustin’s eyes. It was Scorpion’s ambush!

The attack was well-timed—she had used Snow Monkey to divert Dustin’s attention, just so she could fatally attack Dustin. However, Dustin seemed to have seen that coming. He grabbed the sharp blades with his bare hands and kicked her in the abdomen. That sent her screaming in pain, coughing up blood as she crashed into the tables and chairs. Then, she fainted on the ground.

Within seconds, the three gold-tier assassins laid motionless on the floor. Dustin dusted his hands coolly and remarked, “So, that’s the best a gold-tier assassin could do.”

As for the rest, they were gaping at him in shock.

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The Nicholsons stared at the three gold-tier assassins before shifting their gazes at the

expressionless Dustin with great alarm. No one had anticipated Dustin to be so powerful. If they had not witnessed the scene with their eyes, they would have laughed at the idea of a good-for-nothing person being talented in martial arts.

“Is there something wrong with my eyes? When did the trash become a hero?” James widened his eyes in disbelief. His impression of Dustin was that he was a kept man who only learned a few useless martial arts tricks that were no match for the top assassins. However, Dustin’s

performance shattered James’ preconception. He was shocked to learn that his ex-brother-in-law was a martial arts expert.

“Heavens! Is that really Dustin?” Florence was equally astonished. Even though she was clueless about the gold-tier assassins from the Bounty League, she was aware of the capabilities of Tarragon and Cougar. Logically, Dustin beat Hillcrest in terms of expertise, which would place him levels above Tarragon and Cougar.

“What the f*ck? Was that really their useless live-in son-in-law?” Dakota rubbed her eyes to make sure that she was seeing it right. Were the three gold-tier assassins from the Bounty League taken down? Did that happen due to Dustin’s prowess, or had the assassins been enjoying an undeserved

reputation?

“He’s a tough nut to crack. We need to get him out of the way soon.” After the shock, Gloria started plotting against Dustin. It was impossible to beat Dustin through a martial arts battle, and the only method left was to threaten him with

her authority. She believed that Dustin wouldn't dare to go against the Nichols on Family despite his outstanding martial arts skills.

At the same time, Dahlia was staring at the familiar face with surprise. She was not aware of Dustin's skills during their three-year marriage. His secret was indeed well hidden.

"Edwin Hummer, the assassins you hired didn't seem up for their jobs. I'm afraid you will walk away disappointed today." Dustin looked up slowly with an amused twinkle in his eyes.

"You hid your skills from us!" Edwin appeared grim. He had thought that getting revenge was easy with the help of three gold-tier assassins, only to learn that he had vastly underestimated

Dustin.

"Hid my skills?" Dustin smiled. "I have never attempted to do so. People like you do not require me to use my full strength yet."

"I admit that I have underestimated you. But don't be too glad about it! I'm still in the game," Edwin warned in a somber tone.

"Oh, why? Do you still believe that you can get out of this?" Dustin questioned him.

"Even if I can't, I will take everyone here with me!" While speaking, Edwin suddenly tore his shirt apart to reveal the bombs that were strapped underneath.

He cackled and said, "See this? Before I arrived, I made up my mind to die with everyone here. The number of bombs on me is enough to turn the villa into ashes!"

Everyone at the scene looked terrified and listless upon hearing the remark, Edwin Hummer was

1/2

a crazy one indeed!

"How? Dustin Rhys? Are you afraid now?" Edwin laughed loudly. "It doesn't matter if you are

skilled. You cannot survive a bombing.”

“What do you want?” Dustin went forward and shielded Dahlia.

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“Now! Kneel down immediately!” Edwin bellowed at Dustin.

Dustin narrowed his eyes. “What if I don’t?”

“No? Then I’ll take it out on her!” Edwin grabbed Gloria and pointed the gun at her temple. Knowing that Dustin was powerful, he needed to get himself a human shield.

“Edwin Hummer! You’d better be careful! That’s Madam Gloria from the Nicholson Family!” Dustin’s expression sank.

“Oh, she’s your Madam Gloria? Sounds like you care a lot about her, don’t you?” Edwin chuckled. “Listen to what I say if you don’t want her to die!”

“Dustin! What are you standing there for? Quick! Kneel!” Dakota urged him frantically.

“You punk! Kneel! Do you want me dead?” Gloria’s face paled.

“Madam Gloria, please be patient. I’ll save you real soon.” Dustin faked an angry expression and challenged Edwin, “Edwin Hummer, just come at me! If you lay a finger on her, I won’t let this slip!”

“Oh, you don’t know what it means to be desperate.” Enraged, Edwin shot Gloria in one of her knees. She yelped in pain, and her face contorted.

“That’s too much! Let her go! If not...” Dustin continued with his threats, but Edwin had already shot Gloria in the other knee. “Kneel!”

“You rascal. Quick ... Kneel, or we will make you pay!” Gloria was whimpering and wailing, drenched in sweat from the unbearable pain.

“Edwin Hummer! You need to stop! If you kill her, no one can save you from the consequences!” Dustin looked furious, and that only made Edwin chuckle harder.

“Is that so? If you care about her that much, I’ll give you a taste of losing your family!” Then, he pointed the gun at Gloria’s head and pulled the trigger. The bullet shot through her head.

“You animal-

” Gloria was gripped by fear, but it was too late for her to say anything. Eyes open with indignation, her cold body fell onto the floor.

“Edwin Hummer! Your enemy is me!” Dustin acted as though he was aggrieved.

“Great! I love seeing that face!” Edwin cackled and grabbed Dakota, who was frozen in a state of shock. “I have lots of hostages here. We can play this for as long as you want. I’ll ask you once

more—are you kneeling or not?”

“Edwin Hummer, you’re being unreasonable!” Dustin chided him. Edwin did not waste time. shooting Dakota in the leg. “Are you going to kneel or not?”

Dakota finally realized the trouble she was in, and she wailed and yelled. Tears and snot covered her face as she cursed, “Dustin Rhys! I want you to kneel right now! I’m the precious daughter of the Nicholson Family. They won’t go easy on you if I’m hurt! Kneel, now!”

“Dakota, you have to embody the spirit of a proud and upright Nicholson. You have to be an outstanding person in this life and the afterlife! We need to fight against threats without ruining the family’s reputation!”

1/2

“Oh, you motherf*cker! Quit the nonsense. We’re in an emergency. Do you want me dead?” Dakota screamed at Dustin but was immediately shot in the leg again. She rolled on the floor, wailing and screaming in pain.

“I’m warning you now! You’ll make yourself a public enemy if you kill Dakota Nicholson!” Dustin hissed in anger while Dakota’s face contorted in rage. She w

as about to yell at him when she noticed the muzzle that was aiming at her. A bullet traveled through the middle of her forehead with a bang.

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Dakota grunted as her body trembled and came to a stop, just like her voice that died down. The darkness within the muzzle and Edwin's cruel face started blurring as she lost consciousness. Finally, she collapsed flatly onto the ground with a thud. Everything happened too fast, and she had not expected herself to die in such a manner.

"Is she dead?" Florence and the rest of the people were shaking in fear when they stared at Gloria and Dakota's bodies. It felt so surreal to see the two arrogant ladies killed.

Meanwhile, Dustin glanced at the scene without much emotion. Evil defeats evil. Dakota and Gloria had always been impudent bullies who did not reflect on their actions even after being taught a lesson. Not only that, they came to him to seek revenge. Their deaths meant nothing to him, partly because he was never a merciful person to start with. He saw no issue with getting rid of the trouble by pulling some tricks.

"Hah! How does that feel? Are you feeling the rage and pain? You must be dying to kill me right

now!" Edwin laughed evilly. "To be honest with you, this is just the beginning. I have a few more

hostages in my hands. I can play this game with you."

Then, he walked up to James and pointed the muzzle at James' head. "Your brother-in-law is the

next in the firing line. Kneel or don't—the choice is yours."

“Sir Hummer! I’m not involved in this! Please don’t shoot me!” James’ legs turned to jelly. He fell

onto his knees and wailed, “You need to get the right person! If you are looking for your revenge, just kill Dustin! I’m innocent!”

“That’s right, Sir Hummer! We have never done anything to you. If you want to kill Dustin, go

ahead and do it. Don’t involve my son!” Florence begged in desperation.

“Dustin Rhys is your son—in-law. The family will be dragged down by his actions. No one should

dream of getting out of this unscathed. Well, the fate of your son is now in Dustin’s hands.” Edwin

flashed her a mocking smile.

“Dustin Rhys, you bring bad luck! Look how much trouble you got us into! Kneel to Sir Hummer and beg for his forgiveness. If you don’t, I will not let this slide!” a furious and panicked Florence

scolded Dustin.

“What are you standing there for? Kneel! I’m going to die if you don’t!” James glowered, his eyes

red, as he screamed at Dustin. His body was shaking violently due to fear. He had witnessed the

cruelty of Edwin in the killings of Gloria and Dakota. Edwin would shoot without as much as

blinking an eye once he was riled up. James didn’t want to suffer a meaningless death like Dakota.

“Edwin Hummer, I shall spare your life if you let them go,” Dustin remarked calmly.

“Spare my life?” Edwin broke into a laugh. “Oh, Dustin, you still have not figured out the situation! I have the upper hand now because I determine who gets

to live or die! What else can you do to me if I shoot your brother-in-law in the head?"

As he was speaking, he placed a finger on the trigger and was close to pulling it, but Dustin.

flicked his fingers and sent a silver needle pricking into Edwin's wrist. Edwin let out a dull grunt when his arm was paralyzed.

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"Get moving! Run!" Dustin reminded the others in the room. "Run! Quick!"

Florence and James finally collected themselves and fled from the scene. While running, James toppled over a few times because his legs had lost their strength. Dustin frowned disapprovingly at the sight, thinking, "What a loser!" The quick-witted Dahlia had to lift her brother from the ground and help him escape from the villa. None of them wanted to die with Edwin, who had bombs strapped on his body.

"Edwin Hummer, it's just you and me now. It's time to put this to an end." Dustin inched closer to Edwin with murderous intent in his eyes. Edwin had long been on his hit list. He had made a mistake by letting Edwin live.

"Die!" Edwin roared and picked up the gun from the floor, shooting Dustin in the chest twice.

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Two shots were fired, but the bullets came to a halt one inch before Dustin's body. A protective energy sphere crystallized in the air, forming a shield against the bullet.

"What?" Edwin's pupils wavered in shock. He was mentally prepared for Dustin's prowess but was greatly taken aback at how Dustin stopped the bullets in the air.

“Did you believe that you could hurt me with bullets?” Dustin shook his head.

“If I can’t hurt you with a gun, I’ll die with you!” Suddenly, Edwin pulled out the remote control for the bomb and laughed deliriously. “Dustin Rhys, see you in hell!”

With that, he pressed the button on the control.

Meanwhile, Dahlia was on the run with James. They were some distance away from the villa before hearing the two gunshots. They spun around and realized that Dustin had not followed after them.

“Dustin?” Losing her composure, Dahlia frantically clambered toward the villa.

“Hey! Why are you turning back? Do you want to die?” Florence quickly pulled her daughter back. “Mom! Dustin is still in there! He might be in danger. I need to help him!” Dahlia’s heart was in her mouth.

“And what good will that be? Sir Hummer has a gun and bombs with him. You’re running toward your death!” Florence grabbed Dahlia tightly, refusing to let go.

“What do we do about Dustin?” Dahlia was a mess at that moment.

“He’s the one who started the trouble, so he deserves what’s coming for him! It’s none of our business!” Florence reminded Dahlia sternly.

“Mom! What’s that nonsense? Dustin saved James just now! Can you stop being selfish?” Dahlia furiously shook off Florence’s grip and sprinted toward the villa. At the same time, they heard a huge explosive sound that shook the terrain. An explosion tore the villa into rubble, filling the surroundings with billowing black smoke and blinding fires.

“Dustin?” She stared blankly at the ruins of the villa, clueless about what to do next. Could a human possibly survive the explosion if the entire villa was reduced to rubble?

“How did that happen? How?” Dahlia, ashen-faced, looked like she was struck by lightning. Finally, she collapsed onto the ground, wailing and crying her heart out.

“Hey, why are you howling here?” She heard a familiar voice that sent a chill down her spine. When she looked up in astonishment, she found Dustin standing in front of her. He emerged from the rubble unhurt.

“Are you not dead? How could that be?” Bewildered, she looked at him blankly. The impact and heat from the explosion had melted steel. She could not figure out how a human survived the incident.

“Why are you shocked that I’m alive?” He gave her a funny look.

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“You’re alive! That’s great!” Sobbing in joy, she threw herself into his embrace, wrapping her arms tightly around his waist and refusing to let go, as though she feared he might vanish.

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Chapter 400

Dustin felt the softness in his arms and the familiar scent tingling his nose. He broke into a smile. He could tell from her uncontrolled crying that she cared greatly about him.

“Okay, now. Stop crying. Your tears are wetting this new shirt I bought two days ago.” After some hugging, Dustin finally opened his mouth.

“What’s the big deal? I’ll just pay for the shirt.” She let go of him and didn’t forget to give him a pinch in the waist, sending him grimacing in pain. “And what was that just now? Why didn’t you escape sooner?” she confronted him.

“He’s a ticking time bomb—no pun intended. Of course, I had to subdue him before I left,” he answered matter-of-factly.

“I know you’re great at fighting, but you have to care about your safety. He had bombs strapped on his body. What if he got you killed in an explosion?” she protested.

He grinned and replied, "But I'm all well."

"It's all because of your dumb luck. You'd better not push your luck the next time!" she warned him.

"Okay. I'll act like a loser and think of my safety first." He nodded furiously.

"That's more like it!" She nodded with satisfaction. It was all great being a glorious hero, but that was also how people got themselves killed in a slip-up. She'd rather Dustin stay a loser.

"Dustin Rhys, do you have nine lives? Why weren't you dead from that huge explosion?" James and Florence cautiously made their way up to the rubble.

"I need to thank my lucky stars for surviving the bombing," Dustin dropped a casual remark.

"Oh my god! My villa!" Florence suddenly started howling at the sight of the rubble when she realized the extent of the damage done. "Oh, Edwin Hummer, you asshole! I'm fine with him wanting to die. How could he ruin my villa while he was at it? This is unforgivable!"

"Mom, this all happened because of Dustin. I think you can ask him for compensation." James was thinking fast and came up with an idea.

"That's right!" Florence nodded and grabbed Dustin by the sleeve. "Dustin Rhys, it's all your fault! You need to pay up for ruining my villa!"

"Mom, a villa is nothing compared to a life. Dustin has saved us. Do you think it's fair to ask him for compensation?" Dahlia frowned at her mother.

"Why is that unfair? He got us into this trouble. Don't you ever think of leaving if you don't pay up!" Florence started acting like a Karen.

"Alright, then. How much?" Dustin did not want to quarrel with her.

"Eight million... No! Ten!" Florence was thinking on her feet and inflated the price at the very last minute.

"Mom! We bought this villa for five million. Aren't you scamming Dustin by asking for ten million?" Dahlia grew increasingly annoyed.

Chapter 400

“That was in the past. Don’t you know that housing prices are climbing like crazy? I won’t let this slide if I don’t receive the ten million!” Florence put her hands on her waist.

“You-” Dahlia was about to go off, but Dustin pressed a hand against hers.

“Whatever. Ten million it is. I’ll transfer it to your account tomorrow.”

“Hmph! That’s more like it!” She gleefully let go of him.

“Hey! Are you mad? Where are you going to get the money when you’re running a tiny medical center?” Dahlia glared at him.

“You shouldn’t underestimate me. I provided the Harmon family with my prescription, and I will receive 50% of the sales of the pills they manufactured. Ten million is nothing.” Dustin appeared unbothered. Be it the profits from Hillview Hotel or his 50% ownership of the proceeds from Immortunol, he was guaranteed a huge amount of bonus monthly, which could add up to at least tens of millions per month.

“At the end of the day, you’re still Natasha Harmon’s kept man.” Dahlia was dripping with jealousy.

“Look at the way you put it. I am only her business partner. How could you call me a kept man?” Dustin objected.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 401 -

Chapter 401

“Hmph!” Dahlia refused to talk to him. Before leaving, she made sure to stomp hard on his foot.

Thus, the brutal and unfortunate episode came to an end. The authorities arrived soon after the explosion. The fire brigade helped to clear the scene and put out the fire. At the end of the day, the authorities publicly announced the cause of the explosion, blaming it on a gas explosion.

Three days went by in the blink of an eye. During this time, Dahlia and her family returned to the Nicholson family home to keep Henry Nicholson company.

The Glenstead Nicholsons, meanwhile, sent a team to investigate Gloria and Dakota’s deaths, but after learning that the murderer, Edwin Hummer, had died in a suicide bombing, they had no choice but to close the case.

Notably, Regulus Nicholson made the decision to confirm Dahlia’s role as the chairman of the Cardinal Group. It was only time before she was officially acting in the chairman’s capacity.

During the three days, Dustin received surprising news as well. He heard that the 900-year green lotus that

Jayla Grant won in a bid was purchased by the Stoneray Order at a high price. Rumors had it that the Stoneray

Order was the owner of a secret formula to speed up the ripening process of the lotus, turning it into a

thousand-year green lotus in a short **time**. However, the veracity of the rumors remained to be confirmed.

In order not to miss out on the treasured herb, Dustin specifically sent Roderick back to Millsburg to carefully

gather information. If the formula were real, Dustin would have to pay Stoneray Order a visit.

He was also worried about Natasha, who had been out of contact for three days since she departed for

Millsburg. She did not reply to texts or pick up calls. Even Park Place was empty, with only a few servants

standing guard.

At noon on the third day, an increasingly concerned Dustin spotted a silver Bentley parked in front of the

medical center. Overjoyed, he rushed out to take a look, only to find Ruth stepping out from the car.

“Ruth, why are you here? Where’s your sister?” He was perplexed.

“Natasha will not be back for a while.” Ruth lost her usual **rigor** and appeared grim.

“What is that supposed to mean?” Dustin furrowed his brows.

“Something’s happened at home, and she **had** to take care of it. She sends me to you because she doesn’t

want to worry you.”

“What happened exactly?” he questioned. Based on his understanding of Natasha, she wouldn’t have missed his calls if she hadn’t run into grave problems

“Stop asking for the details and wait for her updates. If she returns to Swinton after a few days, that means the problem has been resolved. If she doesn’t return, you should forget about her.” Ruth was ready to leave.

“Wait a moment!” He grabbed her arm with a stern look on his face. “Tell me, is she in danger? If she is, I’ll immediately rescue her!”

Chapter 401

“Natasha is safe and sound. She’s unharmed.” Ruth shook her head woefully.

“But what was all that just now? Did Natasha run into trouble?” he asked in a firm tone.

“Dustin, let this go. You can’t sort out this matter on your own. It’ll only implicate you. Natasha doesn’t want to drag you into the mess.” Ruth let out a heavy sigh.

“How will we know if we don’t give it a try? I believe that we can overcome all the difficulties!” However, Dustin’s expression hardened when Ruth refused to open up. “Ruth Harmon, if you don’t tell me, I’ll travel to Millsburg and get to the bottom of it! Do not blame me for wreaking havoc in the Harmon family!”

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 402 -

Chapter 402

“Hey, how can you be so stubborn?” Dustin’s one-track mind made Ruth blow her top. “My sister didn’t tell you for your own sake. Otherwise, you’d always be at risk of a fatal disaster!”

“Hmph, I’ve been through rain and fire for years. Is there anything I haven’t encountered before? I stand by my words—if you don’t say it, I’ll go ask myself!” Dustin said resolutely.

“You” Ruth stamped her feet in fury, but she didn’t know how to rebut. After a moment, she shook her head helplessly. “It seems like my sister was right: you won’t give it a rest. I really don’t know if this is a blessing or a curse. Didn’t you say you want to go to Millsburg to see my sister? Fine. I can take you there, but you have to listen to me. You can’t act rashly! Or else my sister and I will also get dragged down with you. Got it?”

“Alright!” Dustin agreed. Right now, he only wanted to **see** for himself that Natasha was fine.

“Tidy up. I’ll wait for you in the car,” Ruth said, then went straight to the car,

At that moment, Maximus, who'd heard the commotion, walked over. "Dustin, you're going out?"

"Yeah, I'm going to Millsburg to get something done. I'll probably be there for about five days. Please help take

care of the home in the meantime." Dustin patted his shoulder.

"No problem! If there's anything, just ring me anytime!" Maximus patted his chest.

"Okay." Dustin nodded. He picked up his bags, turned around, and got into the car.

With Maximus—who'd already achieved divinity—around, things should be fine in Swinton.

The car moved out quickly, making its way to Millsburg. After half a day, the car finally came to a stop in an urban village in the evening. They arrived at a small villa with a garden.

The door opened, and Ruth and Dustin alighted.

"Ms. Ruth, you've arrived." At that moment, a kind-looking middle-aged man walked out of the villa.

"Mr. Robinson, this is Dustin Rhys. Over the next few days, you are in charge of his meals and

accommodations," Ruth said in lieu of an introduction.

"Hello, Mr. Rhys." Mr. Robinson bowed respectfully.

"Ruth, what kind of place did you bring me to?" Dustin was taken aback.

"This is the temporary lodging I arranged for you. Mr. Robinson used to work for the Harmon family and can be trusted. If you need anything, just let him know," Ruth explained.

"I'm not talking about that. Where's your sister?" Dustin pressed.

"My sister can't meet you yet. Just stay here for a few days, and when the time is right, I'll arrange for you two

to meet,” Ruth replied.

“Then you have to at least tell **me** what happened.” Dustin frowned.

“Water won’t boil if you watch it. The situation right now is unfavorable. Knowing too much won’t do you any good, either. If you trust my sister, then wait a couple of days.” Ruth looked serious.

“But Dustin started, but Ruth interrupted him.

“Before **we** came, we already agreed that you would listen to me. Otherwise, please go home!”

“Fine, I’ll wait!” Dustin took a deep breath. In the end, he chose to give in. After all, he was already in Millsburg.

If trouble really arose, he could lend his support anytime.

“Great. Just wait here, and I’ll contact you in case of anything.”

With that, Ruth got in the car and left. She’d snuck out, so she couldn’t stay for long.

“Mr. Rhys, please have some tea.” Mr. Robinson handed him a cup.

“Thank you.”

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Chapter 403

Dustin accepted the cup with both hands and said, “Mr. Robinson, I’m afraid I’ll have to trouble you for the next

few days.”

“It’s no trouble. It’s what I should do.” Edmund Robinson smiled. “Ms. Harmon saved

me before, and my family is hugely grateful for her. Any opportunity to repay Ms. Harmon is my honor.”

“Really? I didn’t know Natasha was so beloved,” Dustin said with a chuckle.

“Why, of course!” Edmund said, his voice tinged with pride. “I watched Ms. Harmon grow up. No one can say anything about her character—no one in Millsburg can measure up to her!”

“I can tell.” Dustin nodded, smiling.

“Mr. Rhys, look at me. I was all focused on chatting that I almost forgot to do my job. Have you eaten? Please wait a moment while I whip something up.” Edmund said, hurrying into the kitchen and getting to work.

He looked like a proper househusband.

Dustin smiled softly. Sipping at the tea in his hand, he surveyed his surroundings.

The villa consisted of two floors, complete with furniture and electrical appliances. Although it wasn’t the most luxurious, it was immaculate. It looked rather homey.

“Hey, who are you? Who let you in here?!” At that moment, a high-pitched scream came from the door.

Dustin turned around to find a young girl wearing a short skirt watching him carefully. She looked to be about eighteen years old. Her features were very delicate, and she wore some light makeup. Her hair was dyed a bright blue, and she was chewing gum in her mouth, giving off a cool girl impression.

“I’m talking to you. Are you mute!” the blue-haired girl shouted.

“Abigail, don’t be rude!” When Edmund heard the commotion, he immediately ran out and smiled apologetically. “Mr. Rhys, this is my daughter, Abigail Robinson. I spoil her too much, so please don’t hold it

against her.”

"It's nothing. This is a normal reaction to seeing a stranger in your house," Dustin said with a slight smile.

"Hmph, I don't know where you picked up this random person from!" Abigail said with a cold expression,

disgust evident in her eyes.

"Silly girl, what are you saying? This is Mr. Rhys, a respected guest of the Harmons!" Edmund glared.

"Fine, fine. I'm too lazy to deal with your bullshit. I'm **going** out with my friends later, so give me some money!" Abigail stretched out her hand demandingly.

"You're going out again?" Edmund frowned. "Abigail, your exams are right around the corner. How can you go out every night?"

"It's not like I'll get into a good college anyway. Does it matter if I have some fun?" Abigail said indifferently.

"It's not a matter of whether you get into a good college, but it's a matter of your attitude. Can't you let me

worry less?" Edmund said, exasperated.

"h, you're so annoying. Every time I **ask** for some money, you give me this non sense. If you want to give me money, then give it to me. If you don't, then forget it!" Abigail said impatiently. She slammed the door shut and stormed off.

"That girl Edmund said angrily, but he couldn't do anything. "Mr. Rhys, I'm sorry you had to see that." "It's alright. She's in her teens—it's understandable that she's a bit rebellious," Dustin said understandingly.

"Oh no, my pan!" Edmund suddenly remembered what he'd forgotten and dashed into the kitchen.

After half an hour, a scrumptious feast was served. Dustin took a bite. The flavor was amazing.

"Mr. Rhys, do you mind if I put some food aside? Abigail will probably be hungry when she gets home tonight," Edmund said tentatively.

“Of course, it’s no problem.” Dustin smiled, “Mr. Robinson, you don’t have to be so reserved. You’re the host: do whatever you want. Don’t mind me.”

“Thank you, Mr. Rhys!” Edmund said gratefully. Then, he set aside a bit of every dish. He didn’t dare take out too big of a portion. Afterward, he wrapped it in cling wrap carefully.

At that moment, a neighbor suddenly bolted inside in a panic, screaming, “Edmund, it’s bad! Something happened to your daughter!”

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Chapter 404

“Something happened? What happened?” Edmund was stunned, unable to react.

“My daughter just called to tell me that Abigail got into a conflict at the karaoke bar, and both sides fight! You should hurry over and check on her!” the neighbor urged.

got into a

“What? A fight?!” Edmund was startled. He immediately threw down his cutlery and ran to the door, but then, he turned around suddenly and said, “Mr. Rhys, I truly apologize, but something happened to my daughter, and I need to go handle it.”

“I’ll go with you.” Dustin stood. It wasn’t good to just mooch off someone in their house. If he could lend a hand in any way, he naturally wouldn’t be stingy.

“Well...” Edmund was a bit conflicted.

“Don’t worry. I won’t make things worse.” Dustin smiled.

“Edmund, don’t dawdle any longer. More people means more power. Hurry!” the neighbor prompted again.

“Alright —

” Edmund nodded. Without another word, he **got** in his Mazda and drove off. He couldn’t care about

anything else right now. His daughter's safety was the most important.

Twenty minutes later, he stopped in front of the karaoke bar.

Dustin followed Edmund inside. He found a few burly men standing outside a particular room. Among them, the leader was a young man dressed in a Versace suit. His face **was** flushed, and he reeked of alcohol. He yelled and kicked the door. Meanwhile, Abigail and a few other female students were hiding in the room, not daring to come out.

"Fuck, it should be an honor that I touched your butt. How dare you hit me? I'm going to teach you a lesson **today!**"

After a series of hard kicks, the door suddenly fell with a resounding bang.

The girls inside the room instantly screamed in terror, except Abigail, who stood in front, unyielding. With stubborn eyes, she said, "Hold right there! I'm warning you not to do something rash. I've already asked for backup. Once my friends come, there'll be a good show!"

"Backup?" the man in the suit chuckled coldly. "To tell you the truth, this is my territory. It doesn't matter who you call over. I'm going to f*ck you tonight!"

With that, he reached out to grab her.

"Stop!" At that moment, Edmund suddenly ran over and stood in front of his daughter protectively. "Young man, let's use our words, not our hands."

"What are you doing here?" Abigail frowned, not the least bit grateful.

"Old geezer, where did you come from?" The man in the suit looked him up and down with an unkind gaze.

"Young man, this is my daughter. She's young and doesn't know better. If she's offended you in some way, I'll apologize on her behalf," Edmund said with an apologetic smile, bowing profusely.

1/2

"That b*tch slapped me and broke my watch. Do you think an apology can fix this?" The man sniffed.

Right then, a girl with short hair beside Abigail suddenly said, “You’re the one who behaved obscenely first! If you didn’t grope her, you wouldn’t have gotten slapped!”

“She should thank her lucky stars that I touched her. Don’t be f*cking shameless!” The man glared.

Edmund’s face froze. In the end, he still forced a smile and said, “Young man, I think this is just a misunderstanding. There’s no need to make this bigger than it is. Why don’t we all take a step back, okay?”

“Don’t think it’s over just because you said so!” The man slapped Edmund harshly, cursing. “Who the f*ck are you? Are you even worthy of negotiating with me?”

Edmund staggered backward from the blow, almost falling.

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Chapter 405

“How **dare** you hit my father?” Abigail flew into a rage. She picked up a beer bottle, about to swing it, but

Edmund stopped her.

“Abigail, don’t be impulsive!”

“What, are you going to hit me again? Why don’t you try? If you as much as harm a hair on my head, not a

single person in this room will walk out of here tonight!” The man in the suit laughed icily.

“Young man, it’s just a misunderstanding. Once you cool down, we can talk nicely.” Edmund said, smiling

apologetically.

“Talk? Hmph, what right do you have to talk to me?” The man lifted his broken watch and said disdainfully. “Do

you know what watch this is? It's a limited edition Patek watch that costs eight hundred thousand dollars!

Now, your daughter broke it. Tell me, how will you handle it?"

"Eight hundred thousand dollars? That expensive?" Edmund was thunderstruck. He only earned a few

thousand dollars a month. He didn't know how many years it'd take to save up eight hundred thousand dollars.

"What, didn't you want to talk? Then pay up. If you can fork out eight hundred thousand dollars tonight, I'll

consider letting your daughter off the hook," the man responded haughtily.

"Well..." Edmund's eye twitched. He didn't know what to do.

"I can tell you can't afford it. Fine, I won't make things hard for you. So long as your daughter sleeps with me

for a **night**. I'll let the eight hundred thousand dollars slide. How does that sound?" The man grinned wickedly.

"In your dreams!" Abigail glowered.

"Young man, give **me** a few days. I'll definitely come up with the money," Edmund said.

"I want it now! If you don't have the money, then get lost. Don't get in the way of my fun!" Getting impatient, the man in the suit pushed Edmund to the floor.

"Old geezer, consider it a blessing of a lifetime that I **have** my eyes on your daughter. Even a **small**-time celebrity doesn't have the price tag of eight hundred thousand

dollars. You should be happy!"

"You've crossed the line!" Watching her father get pushed over, Abigail couldn't hold back anymore. She

smashed the beer bottle over the man's head.

There was a loud sound of glass breaking as the bottle shattered into pieces, drenching the man in beer.

“Huh?” The smash sent the man into a daze, and he was in disbelief. Subconsciously, he reached for his head.

and his hand came **away** full of blood.

“H—
how dare you hit me?!” After staring blankly for a brief moment, the man instantly flew off the handle.

Bitch, I’m **going** to kill you!”

“Let’s see who has the guts to move!”

A group of boys wielding baseball bats stormed in aggressively. The leader was 6’2” with a buff **figure** and a handsome face. These boys brought a threatening aura with them when they barged in.

“Great. Mike is here!”

When Abigail and the other girls saw the men, they lit up. All of them looked at him with admiration, as if he was their savior.

Mike Horton was a popular figure at school. Not only was he from an established family, but he was also handsome and the captain of the school’s basketball team. He usually responded to people’s cries for help. No matter what the trouble was, he could easily handle it.

“Abigail, are you okay?” Mike asked as soon as he appeared, looking like the classic gentleman.

“I’m fine.” Abigail shook her head, her eyes bright. Naturally, she had some feelings for the school hunk, Mike. They hung out together a lot too.

“Mike, thank goodness you came in time, or we would have been harassed by these people!” the short-haired girl said, terrified.

“Don’t worry. With me here, no one would dare lay a finger on you!” Mike raised the baseball bat, shooting daggers at the man in the suit. “Are you the one bullying my friends? Get on your knees and apologize now, and I may let you go. Otherwise, I’ll break both your f*cking legs!”

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Chapter 406

Mike assumed an aggressive stance, his eyes sharp. With his tall, buff body, he did look rather threatening. The girls standing behind him stared at him with sparkling eyes; their hearts pounding.

What young woman wasn't a romantic at heart? They had fantasized about being a damsel in distress saved by prince charming more than once.

"Punk, do you know who the f*ck I am? How dare you stick your nose in my business?!" The man in the suit cupped his bleeding head, his eyes dark.

"I don't care who you are. If you don't kneel and apologize today, don't blame me if I shatter your legs!" Mike waved his bat.

"That's right, apologize!" his group of buddies crowed. Boys at their age naturally had no fear.

"**Great!** A group of prepubescent boys dares behave so arrogantly in front of me? Just you wait!" the man spat harshly as he attempted to slip away.

"Fuck, who said you could go?" Furious, Mike swung the bat at the man's legs. The latter stumbled and almost crashed to the floor. "Boys, get him!"

Seeing the leader of their pack get physical, the other boys picked up their bats, ready to start swinging.

"Don't fight!" Edmund quickly stood in front of them. He **said** placatingly, "You're all still in school, so don't make this a big issue. Just let it go."

"Who are you?" Mike frowned.

"Mike, that's Abigail's father," the short-haired girl said with a scornful and disdainful laugh.

Abigail lowered her head in shame. It was really embarrassing to have such a **weak** dad.

“So you’re Uncle Robinson. In that case, for your sake, I’ll let them off,” Mike said, acting magnanimous. Although he looked down on people like that, since he was Abigail’s father, he still had to show him some respect.

“Thank you.” Edmund beamed.

“What are you still standing there for? Get lost!” Mike roared at the man.

“Hmph, if you have what it takes, then don’t run off!” The man in the suit gritted his teeth before leaving with his two lackeys.

“Mike, are you going to let them off just like that? What if they get backup and come back for payback?” the girl with short hair suddenly asked.

“Payback? Do they dare?” Mike laughed with confidence. “Do **you** know whose territory this is? I’m not afraid to tell you that this place belongs to Lord Horst of the Flame Dragon Gang! Anyone who causes trouble here has a death wish!”

“Lord Horst of the Flame Dragon Gang?!”

1/2

Chapter 406

Everyone’s expressions changed.

The Flame Dragon Gang were tyrants in this area. No one dared to get on their bad side. As the assistant leader, Lord Horst held a frightening amount of power. He even had connections to several wealthy families. If one angered him, they would die an unpredictable death.

“Don’t be nervous. My father has a close relationship with Lord Horst. In this area, no one has dared to pick a fight with me yet!” Mike boasted.

“As expected of Mike! I never thought he would even know the Lord Horst. It’s impressive.”

“Of course! With Mike’s protection, no one would dare touch us.”

Everyone began to lavish praises on him. The girls especially developed a deeper sense of adoration for him.

Mike was delighted. He enjoyed having everyone's eyes on him and the feeling of being admired. However, he soon realized something was amiss.

There was one person who'd kept a straight face throughout the entire ordeal, not showing him any respect. "And who are you?"

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Chapter 407

Mike turned his attention to Dustin, who was standing next to Mr. Robinson. He couldn't help feeling threatened by Dustin's calm demeanor and good looks.

"This is Mr. Rhys, our family's honored guest. He came over to help out." Mr. Robinson explained.

"Help out?" Abigail humphed disdainfully. "He hasn't said a single **thing** since he arrived. You call that helping out?"

"She's right! Although he has good looks, it's embarrassing **how** much of a scaredy-cat he is." The short-haired girl shook her head.

While none of the other girls spoke, it was clear that they were all secretly looking down on Dustin. What was the point of being so handsome if he was going to run at the first sign of trouble? He was nothing but an utterly unreliable man.

"A man should act like one, buddy. You shouldn't try to break up a fight if you're scared, or you might get hurt." Mike sniggered **and** patted Dustin's shoulder.

Dustin smiled without saying anything, unbothered by those measly words.

"Well, since everything's over, let's go back." Mr. Robinson smoothed things over before turning his attention to his daughter. "Abigail, I've told you many times not to run around at night, especially in places like these. It's dangerous! Hurry up. We're going home now." He grabbed her wrist.

"Let me go!" Abigail flung his hand away, annoyed. "You can go back alone! What I do is none of your business!"

“What are you doing? I’m just worried about you.” Mr. Robinson frowned.

“Worried about me? What’s the point?” Abigail snorted. “Even if I run into trouble, what can you do? It was their fault, yet you kept apologizing! You might not feel embarrassed, but I do!”

“I’m just locking out for you. Your safety comes first. And there was no need to make things worse,” Mr. Robinson reasoned.

“Does that mean I’m supposed to put up with everything?” Abigail was disappointed. “You always get treated like this. Do **you** know why I hate you? Because you’re a coward! I’m begging you. Don’t ever show up in front of my friends ever again. Having a father like you is the biggest embarrassment of my life!”

Mr. Robinson froze. He opened his mouth, but nothing came out. He didn’t know what to say. All he wanted was for his daughter to be safe and sound.

“What are you **waiting** for? Bri

at the door,

“Abigail-”

your guest and leave! I don’t want to see you guys anymore!” Abigail pointed

“Go away!” Abigail fumed, ashamed. Why was her father a mere servant who constantly had to be careful around others, while other people’s fathers were successful and famous?

1/2

“You guys should head back first, Uncle Robinson. Don’t worry. Abigail will be fine. I’ll protect her,” Mike said with a smile. It was rare to see a father being chewed out by their daughters like this.

“Thank you.” Mr. Robinson forced out a smile and turned to leave.

Just then, they heard some noise coming from the entrance of the karaoke bar, and the man in a suit who had just left came barging in violently with a few dozen men.

“There! Gather them up!” the suited man yelled.

The fierce men drew out their blades and surrounded the room, their vicious gazes frightening those inside. As students, how could they ever win against knives?

“Wait!” Mike stomped forward. “I’m warning you. This place belongs to Lord Horst, who is a friend of my dad. You’re dead meat if you touch us!”

“Are you f*cking threatening me right now?” With a mighty slap, the man sent Mike tumbling to the floor. “So what? I’m his f*cking brother!!”

His words immediately caused an uproar.

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Chapter 408

“Lord Horst’s brother?” Everyone was aghast to hear that, especially Mike, whose face had gone as white as a sheet.

He never expected the man to have that identity. Although his father and Lord Horst knew each other, they **were** merely acquaintances. However, the man before them was Lord Horst’s brother, so it **was** clear who mattered more.

He was doomed!

“Weren’t you showing off just now? Why don’t you do it one more time?” The man in a suit planted his foot into Mike’s chest, kicking him to the floor. “How dare you meddle with what I do! You must have a death wish!”

With that, he gave Mike another two **more** blows. Mike gritted his teeth from the pain but couldn’t say anything.

“You bunch of stupid cunts! What makes you think you can boss me around? Get on your f*cking knees. All of you! Break the legs of anyone who disobeys!” the man yelled, brandishing his blade.

“On your knees!” His lackeys spat, their blades instantly resting on the students’ necks. Shaking in terror, the students who had never experienced something like this frantically knelt.

“Hey! Why aren’t you kneeling?” One of the lackeys spotted Dustin.

“You **guys** are getting this wrong. I don’t know them. I’m just here to watch the show.” Dustin shrugged.

The students immediately glared at him, disgusted. He sure was a scaredy-cat.

The man in the suit glanced at Dustin but decided to ignore him, turning his attention to Mike instead. “Hey. punk! Weren’t you going to break my legs? Well, I’m giving you that chance right now. Go ahead.” The man tossed his baton, which landed beside Mike’s feet.

“That was

a misunderstanding.” Mike smiled apologetically. “I was stupid. How about this? I’ll set up a small dinner party tomorrow at Empress Hotel as an apology.”

“Fuck you!” The man slapped Mike across the face. “As if that’s enough to appease me! Who the f*ck do you think I am?”

“O—
of course, that’s not the only thing. I’ll also visit you with a grand present!” Mike forced a smile, looking rather pitiful.

Everyone couldn’t believe their eyes. The man they looked up to was groveling at someone else’s feet.

The man humphed. “I would have killed you already if you weren’t my brother’s acquaintance!” He kicked Mike aside before turning his gaze to Abigail. “Babe, it’s your turn now. I’ll let this matter go if you sleep with me. tonight.”

“In your dream!” Abigail spat.

“**I’ve** given you a chance!” The man’s expression darkened, and his palm flew to Abigail’s cheek.

“Don’t hit her.” Edmund hurriedly put himself in front of his daughter. “I’ll pay for your watch. Just give me two **days**. I’ll definitely bring you 800 thousand dollars!”

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“I’ve got no time to wait, old man! I need someone to f*ck right now, so no matter what, your daughter will be mine tonight!” The man signaled for two of his lackeys to tie Abigail up.

Edmund tried to stop them but was pinned to the ground by another man.

“Let me go!” Starting to panic, Abigail struggled and flailed around. She quickly looked toward Mike for help, expecting him to be her knight in shining armor as usual.

“Let’s talk about this. She is my friend. Can’t you do me a favor and let her go?” Unable to stand it any longer, Mike began to plead.

“Fuck off!” The man gave Mike another slap and swore. “Who the f*ck do you think you are? Why the hell

should I do someone like you a favor? Fuck off, or I’ll kill you!”

Mike immediately fell silent, swallowing the words he was about to say. Similarly, the rest of the male students kept their heads down without a word, terrified of offending the younger brother of Lord Horst from

the Flame Dragon Gang.

“Take her away!” Not wanting to waste any more time, the man grabbed the tied-up Abigail and turned to

leave.

“Stop!” Edmund sprang up and grabbed one of the knives. He slid it against the suited man’s neck shakily and threatened. “Nobody move! My blade might accidentally slip!”

“Do you have any idea what you’re doing, old man?” The other man’s face darkened.

“I don’t care about that. Let my daughter go!” Edmund yelled, the blade digging into the other man’s skin.

“Let her go!” Flustered, the suited man was scared he might agitate Edmund.

“Abigail, run!” Edmund urged as soon as his daughter was released.

“But what about you?” Abigail frowned.

“I’ll be fine. You go ahead. I’ll be right behind you.” Edmund forced a smile, not noticing when someone snuck up behind him. That person sent him sprawling to the ground with a blow.

“Dad!” Abigail paled and rushed toward her father but was pulled back.

“How dare you threaten me!” The suited man touched the cut on his neck, infuriated. “Your family should be honored that I want to f*ck your daughter. I’ll kill you if you refuse!” He grabbed one of his lackey’s blades and swung it toward Edmund’s arm.

There was a soft hum as the blade cut through the air, but the noise halted when someone reached out to grab the blade in midair. The suited man struggled, but his knife didn’t move an inch.

“That’s enough,” Dustin ordered.

“How dare you stop me!” The other man was flabbergasted.

“I don’t care if you want to kill everyone else, but you aren’t allowed to touch Mr. Robinson,” Dustin warned.

“And if that’s what I want to do?” The other man narrowed his eyes.

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“Then don’t blame me for beating you up.” Dustin answered with a straight face.

“Beat me up?” Surprised, the other man burst out laughing. He sneered. “Hey, punk! Do you even know what you’re saying? Look around you. These are all my men. You’ll be cut into pieces if you touch even a strand of my hair.”

“Even a strand of your hair, you say?” Abruptly, Dustin reached out and plucked a strand of the other man’s hair. “Here you go.”

“What?” The corner of the other man’s eye twitched. Feeling humiliated, he roared. “Kill him!”

Immediately, there was a loud bang as he flew backward, crashing into the wall astonishing everyone in the room.

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Chapter 409

“Um....

Everyone **was** shocked to see the man had been batted away. They never thought Dustin had the balls to hit someone. Besides having control over many men and being Lord Horst’s younger brother, the man in the suit

was well **known** for being a pompous devil. Even Mike, who came from a distinguished family, **had** to grovel

before that man, yet Dustin dared to talk back against him and even beat him up. Where did he find the

confidence to do that?

“How could he hit Lord Horst’s brother? Is he crazy?”

“Offending Lord Horst is the same as offending Flame Dragon Gang. He’s dead meat!”

“What a fool! He probably doesn’t even know who he just crossed.”

Everyone looked at Dustin like he was waiting to die.

“H—

how dare you hit me!” The suited man staggered to his feet, one side of his face swollen. As he spoke, two

of his teeth fell out.

“Didn’t I tell you? I’ll beat you up if you try to touch Mr. Robinson. Did you think I was joking?” Dustin responded nonchalantly.

“You’re **dead** meat!” the other man shrieked. “What are you guys waiting for? Get him!”

“Let’s go!” His lackeys charged toward Dustin ferociously.

Instead of retreating, Dustin slowly but steadily made his way through the **crowd**. Like a whirlwind, he slapped

away anyone who got too close. In just a few minutes, all twenty–three men were sprawled over the floor, moaning and wailing in pain from fractured limbs.

“What?”

Everyone couldn’t help gaping speechlessly at Dustin, who won the battle empty–handed. In fact, he hadn’t just won the fight; he’d completely annihilated them!

Was Dustin **even** human?

“Holy shit! Who knew the skinny kid had moves like that?”

“I judged him wrongly. He isn’t **a** coward. He’s just an introvert.”

“He’s good–looking and fights well. That’s so cool! Oh, I wish he was my boyfriend.”

After **seeing** Dustin’s moves, the students’ attitudes toward him immediately shifted, especially the girls, who now looked at him with adoring gazes,

“W–w– who the f*ck **are you?**” The suited man stumbled backward, terrified. His men were seasoned fighters, but Dustin had taken care of them so effortlessly it was terrifying.

“It doesn’t matter who I am. Right **now**, you have two choices. Either you let me cripple you, or you apologize

to Mr. Robinson,” Dustin replied calmly.

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“You better not think too highly of yourself! I’m telling you, my brother is Lord Horst from Flame Dragon Gang! You’re challenging the gang by hurting me!” the other man yelled. Although he was shocked by Dustin’s skills, he quickly regained his confidence when he remembered his brother.

Not wasting more time, Dustin began to slap the suited man again.

“Arrogant, aren’t you?”

Dustin slapped him again.

“Flame Dragon Gang, you say?”

Another slap rang out.

“And Lord Horst?”

And another.

“I’m hitting you right now. What are you going to do about it?”

Dustin struck the man and dished out questions alternately. Soon, the latter’s face completely swelled up. The girls in the room couldn’t control their fluttering hearts at the sight.

Even Abigail’s attitude towards him has changed. At first, she thought he was going to be a coward like her father, so she was taken aback to see him beat up Lord Horst’s brother.

This was what a real man was supposed to be like.

“Answer me. What are you going to do about this?” Dustin grabbed the other man’s collar and lifted him up. His frosty gaze sending shivers down the man’s spine.

“Who the f*ck dares to attack my brother?” someone bellowed.

Everyone spun around to see an imposing figure striding toward them commandingly. A few bodyguards donning suits followed closely behind him.

“Lord Horst?”

The students were shocked to see the new arrival. They quickly huddled together at one side, anxious. Lord Horst was the assistant leader of the Flame Dragon Gang and had control over hundreds of men. They would never dare cross this man who hardly cared about the law.

“It’s over, brat! Now that my brother’s here, no one can save you!” The injured man started cackling gleefully.

“Oh, shit! Even Lord Horst’s here?”

“I hope nothing happens to that hot dude.”

The girls began to fear for Dustin’s safety.

Mike silently humphed and silently sneered. “Serves **you** right for acting so recklessly. Let’s see how you suffer after offending Lord Horst!”

He felt humiliated after seeing how bold Dustin **was**, and those feelings only became stronger when he realized that all the girls were now attracted to Dustin. Fortunately, Lord Horst had arrived. No matter how

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powerful Dustin might be, he was still doomed. Mike couldn’t wait to see Dustin groveling for forgiveness.

“You came right on time, Brother! This asshole hit me. You have to help me get even!” the suited man immediately complained.

“Did you tell him my name?” Lord Horst asked.

“Of course I did! But all it did was make him hit me harder. He even insulted you!” The suited man’s words only

served to stoke the flame.

Lord Horst's face darkened instantly. "You've got balls, kid. Who do you think you are, causing trouble on my turf? Do you have any idea what the consequences are?"

"Nope." Dustin shook his head.

"Well, let me tell you right **now**. I might chop off your arms and legs, or I might just kill you!" Lord Horst spat with narrowed eyes.

"Really? I don't believe you." Dustin wore a small smile.

"You sure are naive and foolish!" Lord Horst **sneered**, his gaze turning menacing. "It seems like you still don't

understand how serious this issue is. I hope you **don't** piss your pants when your limbs get chopped off." He

waved to some of his men. "Clear this place out, boys!"

The students became visibly paler after hearing that. Whenever Lord Horst told his men to clear a place out,

someone would end up bleeding, sometimes even dying!

After all, with Lord Horst's power and background, it **wasn't** hard for him to make people disappear.

Dustin **had** landed himself in hot water!

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Chapter 410

After Lord Horst **issued** his **command**, the entire room was quickly emptied, and all the surveillance **cameras** were turned off. Mike **and** some of the students were huddled together in a corner, shaking and not daring to

move. They were well aware that things were getting serious.

“You seem quite calm, kid. Don’t you know you’re in deep shit?” Lord Horst **was** surprised. Usually, people would be quaking in **fear** after hearing him order his men to clear out a place, but Dustin was oddly indifferent

about this.

He couldn’t tell if Dustin was brave or just foolish.

“Really? I can’t tell.” Dustin shrugged.

“I might consider letting you live if you chop off one of your hands **and** beg for forgiveness, so you better not whine that I never gave you a chance, kid.” Lord Horst drew out a knife and tossed it. The blade landed next to

Dustin with a clang.

“I’m also giving you a chance to scam with your idiot of a brother before I beat you two up,” Dustin replied calmly.

The room fell silent instantly. Some of the students were wide-eyed as they questioned their ears.

Had Dustin just threatened Lord Horst?

What the hell?

This **was** the assistant leader of Flame Dragon Gang they were talking about. The person who decided

someone’s fate!

How could

Dustin not beg for forgiveness, much less spew insults? Did he have a death wish?

“You do have guts, kiddo. I guess I’ll have to teach you a lesson today.” With a chilling glare, Lord Horst signaled to his men. “You lot! Teach him a lesson!”

“**Yes, sir!**”

Exchanging glances, several of the bodyguards began inching toward Dustin. They were the elites of Flame Dragon Gang. After enduring all the training, they had all become low-

level martial artists, so they assumed that taking Dustin down with their fists alone should be a simple task.

“He’s got skills, brother. Are you sure your men will be able to handle him?” the suited man asked hesitantly. He could still vividly remember what Dustin had done earlier.

“So what if he’s got skills?” Lord Horst humphed disdainfully. “My guards are elites that I handpicked. Getting rid of that punk will be a piece of cake!”

“I didn’t **know** they were so strong. That’s **great!**” The other man let out a breath of relief.

Flame Dragon Gang was one of the strongest gangs in South City. They had thousands of men of varying skills and strengths, as well as the Four **Guardians**, so these men shouldn’t find this task difficult.

“Just watch. They’ll **defeat** that brat in seconds.” Lord Horst announced confidently.

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Just then, groans and screams of pain rang out as someone flew past them and slammed into the wall.

“Huh?” Exchanging glances, the brothers turned around at the same time. The bodyguard who had been closest to Dustin was now lying on the **floor**, unable to move.

“What’s going on?” Lord Horst was astonished. Before he could process everything, more miserable wails rang out as the bodyguards all went flying before ending up sprawled over the floor.

Lord Horst and his brother were shocked. They never imagined that Dustin was strong enough to defeat the elites so easily.

“Damn! Those from Flame Dragon Gang couldn’t even withstand his attacks. That man’s a beast!”

The students began whispering, astounded.

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Chapter 411

“Your men seem to be quite useless. Isn’t it my turn to attack now?” Dustin yawned lazily.

Lord Horst’s countenance grew somber, his expression turning grave. He knew almost every skilled fighter

there **was** in Millsburg but was coming up blank when it came to Dustin.

Could Dustin be from somewhere else?

“I admire your fighting skills, kid, but I doubt you’re skilled enough to stop a bullet.” Lord Horst recovered from his shock and turned serious. “I’ve met people like you before, thinking they could cause trouble just because they had some skills. But in the end, all of them got shot to death. In this society, skills alone aren’t enough. You still need power and family backgrounds. Would you like to make a bet with me? With just a few words, I

can send you to prison.”

Edmund and the others began worrying for Dustin, who may be a good fighter but was still no match for Lord

Horst.

Putting the man’s family connections aside, the men under his control alone should be more than Dustin can

handle. After all, how could one man possibly win against thousands?

“Humph! So what if you can fight? You’re still losing to Lord Horst!” Mike spat scornfully, seeming to have forgotten how pitiful he’d looked earlier.

“You’re Lord Horst, right? I suggest you don’t try to provoke me. I’m not worried about the consequences, but

you might not even **have** the time to regret it if I end up killing you.”

“You-

” Lord Horst’s face twitched. Although he was adept in situations like these, **nothing good** would come

out of butting heads with someone as foolhardy **as** Dustin.

“Alright. Enough with the chitchat. Let Mr. Robinson and the rest go for now. We’ll settle our differences then.” Dustin’s expression was indifferent, but inside, he was already

plotting their deaths. Should Lord Horst and his men continue to press him, Dustin didn’t mind getting rid of them once and for all. After all, he’d be doing

society a huge **favor**.

“Fine. I’ll let them go this time.” Lord Horst thought about it and agreed.

“What the hell are you guys waiting for? Scram!” the suited **man roared**.

“**O**—of course! Right away!” Mike hurriedly led the students out of the **place**.

“What about you?” Abigail

suddenly asked Dustin. She had changed her mind about him after witnessing his

unwavering bravery.

“I’ll be fine. Go with your father. I’ll be fine.” Dustin gave her a **small** smile.

“Mr. Rhys...” Edmund **wanted** to **say** something, but Dustin raised his hand to silence the older man.

“**You** guys will only distract me. Go home.”

Edmund still looked conflicted

but eventually left with his daughter. As Dustin said, they wouldn’t be able to help him anyway. Still, Edmund could ask the Harmon family for help. He believed that, with Ruth’s support,

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Lord Horst wouldn’t trouble Dustin too much.

“Hey, kid. Your friends are all gone. Isn’t it time to settle our score?” Lord Horst finally spoke.

“How do you propose we do that? Dustin **wore** a mask of a smile on his face.

“You seem to have pretty good moves. Why don’t you work for me? I promise to let this matter go, and you’ll live a wealthy life from now on!” Lord Horst suggested.

“Hmm I thought you were going to see this issue to the end.” Dustin was surprised.

“I’ve got nothing against you. There’s no need for us to take things so far for something so minor. I’ve been through this before. All I’m interested in now is money, not excitement.” Lord Horst lit himself a cigarette.

“Interesting.” Dustin smiled. “To tell you the truth, I was ready to kill all of you, but I’ve changed my mind.”

Lord Horst froze, startled, and the cigarette in his mouth fell to the floor.

Damn it! Dustin was one of those hotheaded fools!

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Chapter 412

It was fortunate that Lord Horst hadn’t taken things too far, or the consequences would have been dire.

“So, you agree to join my gang?” Lord Horst asked, lighting another cigarette after calming down.

“I don’t mind joining, but I **want** to be the gang leader.” Dustin shocked everyone with his words, causing Lord Horst’s second cigarette to fall out of his mouth.

Couldn’t Dustin say something normal?

“Are you nuts? Even my brother is only the assistant leader. What gives you the right to be the gang leader?” the suited man argued, displeased.

Lord Horst took a deep breath and stuck another cigarette into his mouth before asking. “Do you have any idea how big Flame Dragon Gang is? People all over Millsburg are dying to get in, so what gives you, someone with no power or strong family background, the right to say something like that?”

“This.”

With a flick of Dustin’s finger, a beam of light shot towards the wall. An ear-splitting boom broke out as a meter-wide hole appeared in the wall made of steel and concrete. The force that created the hole had to be

stronger than a cannon.

“What?” The Horst brothers gaped incredulously at the hole, and Lord Horst’s cigarette fell out of his mouth

once more.

Was Dustin even human? How could he be so powerful?

“Divinity Aura? You’re a Divine-level martial artist?” Lord Horst was flabbergasted and began sweating profusely. If Dustin was truly a Divine-level martial artist, bullets were nothing to him. In other words, whatever Lord Horst had said earlier **was** utter bullshit.

However, Dustin **was** only in his twenties. It was extremely rare to find someone so strong at this age, even in Millsburg. It was a good thing Lord Horst hadn’t gone through with his earlier threat, or he’d be dead by now

“With your strength, being the gang leader shouldn’t be a problem. However, people might not be willing to follow you.” Lord Horst unconsciously reached for another cigarette but thought better of it.

“It’s fine. I’ll beat up anyone who defies me.” Dustin replied nonchalantly. “Since I’m new to the city, I needed someone to run errands for me anyway. Your gang is lucky I bumped into you guys.”

Lord Horst forced himself to smile, silently muttering. “Curse my rotten luck!”

“Right, what’s your name?” Dustin suddenly remembered.”

“Nelson Horst.” Lord Horst answered truthfully.

“Lesson Horse?” Dustin raised an eyebrow. “Whatever. Just remember to talk to your gang leader when **you get** back and tell him to step down. If he doesn’t like the sound of that, feel free to challenge me anytime.”

“Sir Rhys, our gang leader is no ordinary man. He **has a** powerful family backing him up. It’ll be difficult to force him to step down.” Nelson shook **his** head.

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“Don’t worry. Just do as I say. Let’s meet up within the next two days. I’ll know what to say then.” Dustin instructed.

“Alright. As you command.” Nelson answered obediently, well aware of how strong Dustin was. Dustin was not someone Nelson wanted to cross.

“What should we do now, Nels?”

The look on the suited man’s face was odd as he watched Dustin walk **away**.

“How dare you f*cking ask!” Fuming, Nelson slapped his brother. “This is **all** your fault. If it weren’t for you, I wouldn’t have gotten into trouble with **that** nuisance! And now, the entire gang is going to suffer!”

The other man held his burning cheek, devastated.

How was he supposed to know he’d get in trouble with a man like Dustin when all he wanted to do was to have some fun with a female student? His luck sure was rotten as hell.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 413 -

Chapter 413

In a coffee shop across the street, Mike and his group hadn’t left. Instead, they’d made themselves comfortable in the shop to enjoy the show.

“Abigail, was that man your relative? He’s so handsome and brave! He even dared to boss Lord Horst around.”

“She’s right. With his looks and moves, he makes me feel so safe.”

The girls gathered together and **gossiped**, their voices turning into adoration when talking about Dustin.

“So what if he can fight? In this day and age, the only things that matter are brains, connections, and family backgrounds.” Mike humphed begrudgingly. “Besides, we don’t even know if he can make it out of the place alive after offending Lord Horst, so what’s there to brag about?”

“He’s right! That guy beat up Lord Horst’s men and embarrassed Flame Dragon Gang. It doesn’t matter how strong he is; he’s still dead meat.”

“He’s just a foolish brat who likes to show off.”

The boys grumbled unhappily in return, making the girls worry again.

Dustin may be strong, but the person he upset was the omnipotent Lord Horst of Flame Dragon Gang. Fighting skills alone were useless against the latter.

“Mike, didn’t you say that your dad is friends with Lord Horst? Could you please ask for your dad’s help so that Lord Horst lets Dustin go?” Abigail implored, her eyes glued to the karaoke bar, worried that something might happen.

“Abigail, even if my dad is friends with Lord Horst, you can’t expect me to ask my dad to help a stranger, right?” Mike looked troubled.

“Can’t you do it **as a favor for me**, Mike? He helped me just now, so I can’t leave him like this.” Abigail begged.

“But-

” Mike hesitated before nodding. “Alright. I’ll give it a go for you, but no promises. You know how Lord Horst is. No one can stop him if he’s angry.”

“Thanks.” Abigail forced a smile.

“I’ll do my best.”

Mike pulled out his phone and walked to a corner before pretending to make a

call. He may have promised Abigail to help, but he didn't **say** anything about succeeding. After all his father was still way below Nelson, so there was no way the latter would do his father a favor..

All Mike **was** doing now was putting on **a show** to win Abigail's favor. He couldn't care less about Dustin's safety.

"Done. My dad said he'll put in the **request**, but the final decision lies with Lord Horst." Mike made sure to give himself an out.

"Thanks, Mike." Abigail smiled.

"You're welcome! Aren't we friends? Of course I'd help you when you're in trouble." Mike **boasted**.

"You're spoiling her, Mike. Why don't you two start dating?" the short-haired girl said.

"That depends on Abigail. I don't mind." Mike answered half-jokingly.

"Stop fooling around, Nina." Abigail glared at the other girl bashfully, her reaction leading Mike to think that he might have a chance.

"Look. That guy got out!" One of the girls suddenly pointed at the karaoke bar.

Everyone turned their heads and saw Dustin walk out of the building, seemingly unharmed.

"Holy shit! Mike got him out with a phone call. That's so cool!"

"That was quick! You're amazing. Mike!"

Everyone was shocked to see Dustin walk out, and the boys immediately began praising Mike.

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“He actually got out?” Mike was stunned. He **never** expected Dustin to leave that place safely. He only made a casual call to his dad without expecting much.

Since when **had** his father gotten so authoritative?

“Um, are you all right?” Abigail was the first to walk out of the coffee shop and approach Dustin, the rest of the students following behind her.

“What could’ve happened?” Dustin splayed out his hands. “And why haven’t you gone home yet?”

“Abigail was worried you were going to be chopped up, so she wouldn’t leave.” Nina interjected. “Still, to think you managed to get out of there safely after upsetting Lord Horst. You sure are lucky. I’ll give you that.”

“Is he very powerful? I went easy on him just now and didn’t give him a beating.” Dustin responded indifferently.

“What? You wanted to give him a beating?” Nina rolled her eyes. “**Are** you crazy? Lord Horst is the assistant leader of Flame Dragon Gang, and he’s got hundreds of men at his beck and call. No one could **save** you!”

“Dude, word of **advice**? Don’t think you’re invincible just because you’re a decent fighter. There are countless people out there who are stronger than you. You better lay low.” Mike grumbled.

“He’s right. You’re new to this place, so you don’t have any idea how dangerous Millsburg can be. Do you think you could’ve safely escaped if Mike hadn’t made a call to help you?” One of the boys snorted.

“Mike? Which Mike?” Dustin was puzzled.

“This one, of course!” The boy waved at Mike proudly, being the perfect lackey.

“Him?” Dustin shook his head, smiling. “First of all, I left using my **own** skills. It had nothing to do with others. Secondly, what makes you think that a person who cowered in fear because of Lord Horst could save me?”

“You’re a stubborn brat!” Nina was displeased. “It’s bad enough that you aren’t thanking Mike for saving you, but aren’t you being rude by insulting him instead?”

“Exactly! **We** shouldn’t have asked Mike to help **you** if we knew you would be so arrogant!” the **boys** agreed.

“Forget it. Since he isn’t **grateful** for my help, let him **stay** in his bubble. Sooner or later, someone will teach

him a lesson.” Mike waved their words **away**, feigning generosity.

“See? This is how a kind and generous person should act.” Nina gave Mike a thumbs up.

“You’ve still got a lot to learn before you can reach Mike’s level.” the boys **sneered**.

Even the girls couldn’t help **frowning**. Although they were attracted by Dustin’s good **looks** and brave attitude,

his disgusting character put them off.

“Fine. If you think that he helped **me**, then so be it.” Dustin couldn’t be bothered to **argue**. After lagging down a taxi, he turned and asked Abigail, “Since we’re traveling in the same direction, would you like to share a **ride**?”

“Mike, Nina, I’ll be on my way. Let me **know** if anything comes up,” Abigail said her goodbyes before leaving

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Chapter 414

with Dustin.

As soon as the two left, Nelson and his brother emerged from the karaoke bar, looking displeased.

“Hey, isn’t that Lord Horst? He looks pissed. Do you think he’s going to hunt that guy down?” someone pointed

out.

“Hunt him down?” A mischievous twinkle lit up Mike’s eyes. He quickly approached the two men with a sneaky smile. “Lord Horst, are you trying to find the **guy** who fought you just now? I can bring you to him. I know where he is.”

“What?” Nelson exclaimed, his features contorting in rage.

Not noticing the other man’s shift in expression, Mike continued gushing. “Lord Horst, you should teach that arrogant brat a lesson. Please don’t worry about offending me. **You** can rough him up as much as you want!”

“Rough him up? I’ll f*cking rough you up!” Nelson roared, landing a firm slap on Mike’s face. “You f*cking moron! Leave me out of your goddamn suicide mission! Fuck off!”

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Chapter 415

Located in an urban village was Enchanting Villa.

As soon as Dustin and Abigail got out of the car, they spotted Edmund anxiously pacing the entrance.

“Are you alright, Mr. Rhys?” Edmund was delighted when he saw them. “I called Ms. Ruth for help, but I’m surprised at how quickly she got you out of there.”

“Thanks. Mr. Robinson, but it wasn’t necessary to bother the Harmon family with something so minor.” Dustin smiled.

“Minor?” Edmund’s eye twitched. If crossing Nelson **was** a minor issue, then what would Dustin consider a major one?

“How about you, Abigail?” Edmund turned his attention to his daughter.

“It’s none **of** your business. Don’t ever show **up in** front of my classmates ever again!” Abigail spat, heading straight into the house. She was clearly still holding a grudge over how cowardly her father **was**.

Edmund signed. He was completely clueless about how to mend the relationship with his daughter.

“Don’t worry, Mr. Robinson. She’ll understand you one of these days.” Dustin reassured the older man,

Although there was a rift between the father–daughter duo, both parties clearly cared for each other. Abigail might look tough on the outside, but whenever her father was in trouble, **she’d** be the first to jump out and

protect him.

“I hope so.” Edmund forced a smile. “Please follow me, Mr. Rhys. Your room is ready.” He led Dustin to a guest

room.

The room was cleaned and fully furnished with branded goods. It was obvious that a lot of effort had gone into

preparing this room.

“Thanks, Mr. Robinson. It’s lovely.” Dustin was satisfied.

“Great to hear that you’re happy. Mr. Rhys. I’ll attend to other matters now.” Edmund **gave** Dustin a **nod** before

turning around and leaving.

After a moment, someone knocked on the door. When Dustin opened it, he saw **Abigail** standing there, dressed in pajamas with cartoon designs. She had removed her makeup and now looked much kinder **and more**

sensible.

“What’s **up?**” Dustin asked.

“Um... could I come in?” Abigail asked **awkwardly**.

“I don’t think it’s a **good** idea for a man and a woman to be alone in a room.” Dustin wore an odd expression

on his face.

“I’m not even being that fussy about it.” Abigail **rolled** her eyes and walked into his room. “**Close** the door. !

don’t want my **dad** to see us.”

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“Huh?” Dustin was surprised.

What was she up to?

“What are you waiting for? Come here. Abigail plopped onto Dustin’s bed and patted the spot beside her.

Her pale, exposed, crossed legs seemed exceptionally distracting under the light. It was a fact that Abigail was a beautiful girl with perfect features and a voluptuous and alluring figure.

“You better not mess around. I’m not interested in minors.” Dustin was alarmed.

“What are you talking about?” Abigail sneered. “Excuse me, but I’m not here because I’m interested in you. I

just have a favor to ask.”

“I see. Thank God.” Dustin let out a breath of relief. Currently, he was also a mess when it came to s*xual

relationships.

“Do guys only think about those kinds of things? Abigail was baffled.

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Dustin was rendered speechless. What else was he supposed to think when a girl willingly approached him at night?

Too lazy to argue, Dustin merely asked, “What do you need?”

“Judging from today’s battle, you seem like a good fighter. How did you do that?” Abigail asked.

“Ever heard of Elder-level martial artists? I’m one of them, so I can easily handle over three hundred opponents.” Dustin answered nonchalantly.

“Yeah, right. I doubt it.” Abigail clearly didn’t believe him.

“Whatever. You probably can’t comprehend what I’m telling you anyway. All you need to know is that I’m very powerful.” Dustin summarised. Most ordinary citizens didn’t know about martial artists, so even if they met one, they wouldn’t be able to tell.

“Fine. Can you teach me some moves? I’m not asking for much. I just want to be able to defeat a dozen men.” Abigail looked at Dustin with hopeful eyes.

“You want me to take you in as my disciple?” Dustin raised an eyebrow.

“Ugh, you’re so old-fashioned. Who does that these days? Just teach me a few moves as a friend,” Abigail responded.

“I guess that’s fine. But to learn my moves, you have to have a solid foundation, or it’ll be useless. This means that you’ll **have** to start by building your internal energy.” Dustin told her.

“What’s internal energy?” Abigail stared at him dumbly.

“You can understand it as mana.”

“Oh, I get it. It’s what allows those people to become human anvils and all.” Abigail realized.

“Um... I guess so.” Dustin’s smile faltered before he continued. “It takes talent for someone to cultivate mana. After all, effort pales in comparison to actual talent. Those who are meant to become martial artists will easily understand this, while those who aren’t won’t see the results no matter how hard they work.”

“I see. Then do I have that talent?” Abigail asked eagerly.

“Give me your hand.”

“**Okay.**”

“I’ll pass some of my true energy to you. If you can feel it, that means you’ve got the potential to become a martial artist; if you don’t, then you’re just not cut out for it.” Dustin explained, holding her wrist and channeling some of his energy into her.

“Huh? I can feel it! It’s warm and tingly!” Abigail lit up.

“Not bad. You passed the first level.” Dustin nodded. Before he could say anything else, his brows furrowed as he realized the energy he had just channeled into her had miraculously disappeared. It was as if something

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had swallowed his energy completely.

“How is this possible?”

Puzzled, Dustin channeled another burst of energy into Abigail, which was quickly absorbed again. However, he had felt it this time. There was a seal inside her body, and the **seal** was so strong that his true energy

wasn’t enough to affect it.

Fortunately, it was a protective seal that was harmless to Abigail’s body and would only come into effect when she was in danger. Thinking that the energy he channeled earlier was a threat, the seal automatically

absorbed it.

The seal had been done by someone who was either a Grandmaster martial artist or stronger and an expert in seal making. In other words, Abigail was under the protection of someone powerful.

“What’s wrong? Is there a problem?” Abigail asked after seeing Dustin’s reaction.

“It’s nothing.” Dustin smiled. “I’ll pass you the training technique, but your success depends on you.” He wrote down the training techniques for beginners and passed the paper to Abigail. “Study it back in your room. Find

me again once you’ve mastered your internal energy.”

“Okay!” Abigail took the paper and ran back to her room excitedly.

“Interesting.” Dustin smirked, staring at Abigail’s retreating figure.

The seal in her body **was** extremely rare, and only close family members would waste so much time and effort

to do something like that.

Dustin instantly became more interested in Abigail’s mother.

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Early the next morning. Dustin received a phone call from Nelson when he woke up.

“Hi, Mr. Rys. Are you up yet?”

“I just woke up. What’s up? Any results?” Dustin asked.

“Our gang leader would like to meet you. We can slowly chat then.” Nelson smiled apologetically.

“Sure. Where?” Dustin responded bluntly.

“At the Flame Dragon Dojo.”

“Alright. I’ll be there soon.” Dustin hung up, did a simple freshening up, and left in a taxi. He had already

expected that the gang wouldn’t give in so easily, and since he had some spare time on his hands, he didn’t

mind having some fun with them.

After thirty minutes, his taxi pulled up in front of Flame Dragon Dojo.

Dustin got out of the car, and Nelson immediately brought his men over to greet him with a smile. "Welcome.

Mr. Rhys. This way, **please.**"

Dustin hummed and nodded in response, walking straight in.

Hundreds of the gang's elites had gathered inside the dojo, each of them sturdily built and with ferocious attitudes. As soon as Dustin entered, everyone turned their piercing glares toward him, as if they were staring

at a prey.

"Hey, kid. You're the one who wants to challenge my gang?" A paunchy, fat man emerged from the crowd, holding some beads. Following behind him were four large, bald men whose black singlets did nothing to hide

their toned, rippling muscles.

"I guess. I'm just interested in the gang leader's seat." Dustin nodded.

"How dare you!" The elites of **the** gang immediately cried out indignantly, **dyin**g to flay Dustin alive for **saying**

such nonsense.

"You've got balls, kid." The bald **man** signaled for his **men** to quiet down before continuing. "It took me over a decade to get to where I am now, so why should I let you take my position?"

"Nelson asked the same thing yesterday, and I've already given him my answer," Dustin replied,

"I know you've got some skills, but that **doesn't** mean you can treat our gang however you want." Harry Hall said with a smile that didn't reach his eyes. "You'll have to prove yourself if you want to be the gang **leader**. I'll **give** you a chance right now. If you can defeat our **Four** Guardians,

I'll step down willingly! Similarly, if you lose to them, you'll serve our gang for ten years. How **about that?**"

The Four Guardians were all High-level martial artists who had impeccable skills. When fighting together, they were as strong as a Divine-level martial artist, which meant taking care of a young **man** would be a piece of cake.

"Sure. I like doing things the simple **way** too." Dustin agreed.

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"Great. Sign the papers, then." Harry waved for his men to bring out a liability waiver form, which Dustin signed.

without hesitation.

"Things seem to be fun in here."

Right before the battle began, a young, suave man walked in casually with beautiful ladies hanging off him,

"Mr. Hill?" Harry immediately greeted the other man with a smile. "What brings you here today?"

"I heard that someone challenged Flame Dragon Gang, so I thought I'd enjoy the show." Patrick Hill replied

with a smile.

"We get idiots who challenge us every year. They eventually end up crippled or dead, so this is nothing new."

Harry shook his head.

"I'm curious, Sir Hall. Who would dare to challenge your gang?" Patrick looked around.

“It’s him.” Harry pointed at Dustin. “He’s talking big just because he has some skills, **and** now he even wants

my position. How foolish.”

Patrick was surprised when he saw Dustin. “Sir Hall isn’t an easy opponent, young man. You should just spar

for fun. It’ll be unfortunate if you die because of this.”

“Thanks for the advice, but I’m confident I can win, or I wouldn’t have come in the first place.” Dustin smiled

softly.

“Being confident is a good thing, but you shouldn’t be too arrogant. There are always people stronger than you.

“Patrick advised.

“Maybe.” Dustin responded.

“Whatever. I won’t stop you if you insist.” Patrick shook his head.

“You shouldn’t waste your time on foolish people.”

“She’s right. Some people are just too arrogant. He’ll have time to cry when he’s crippled.”

The girls in his embrace sneered, looking down on Dustin, who they thought was acting all high and mighty.

Dustin had it coming if he ended up dead anyway.

“Have a seat, Mr. Hill, Enjoy the show.” Harry smiled before leading Patrick and his companions to the seats in

front. Then, he turned toward Dustin with a cold attitude. “Please step into the battle ring.”

“Sure.” Dustin smiled and walked toward the platform.

“**You** four can deal with him. Don’t hold back, and be careful of cheap tricks.” Harry instructed the Four

Guardians.

“Yes, sir!” the four men answered in unison before heading toward the battle ring as well.

“How many blows do you think **that** punk can stand?” one of the women asked Patrick.

“The battle will most likely end within after ten rounds,” Patrick answered calmly.

The Four Guardians were quite famous in South City. Alone, they weren’t the strongest, but once they worked together, their strength increased tremendously. Besides, as martial artists with impenetrable skin, their **body** was incredibly strong, so Dustin was bound to struggle against them.

“You think too highly of them. Look at how skinny he is. I bet he’ll be defeated with five blows.”

“I say three.”

The ladies jeered.

Everyone knew how powerful the Four Guardians were, so there was no way a young man in his twenties could withstand their attacks.

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“You must have a death wish for challenging the four of **us**, kid!”

On the platform, the four **bald** men stared at Dustin intently with cold smiles. They’ve met countless skilled martial artists in Millsburg, but they had defeated all of those who challenged them. Dustin was not going to be any different.

“Cut the chit–
chat. Let’s fight.” Dustin kept his left hand behind his back and stretched out his **right**.

“Since you’re determined to die, let me help you!” One of the bald men couldn’t wait any longer and dashed toward Dustin, throwing a punch at the man. The force and speed of his attack produced an audible whoosh,

“What a powerful punch! It could kill someone easily!”

“I take back what I said. He won’t even **last** one punch!”

The ladies were stunned by the **bald** man’s strength.

While Patrick didn’t say much, he was secretly shaking his head. Each of the Four Guardians **was** a High–level martial artist, and a strike from any of them was enough to crush stones. Not many could withstand their

attacks.

“Foolish boy!” Harry sneered, confident that this was the end of the battle.

Nelson merely stood silently at the side, not saying a word.

Under everyone’s watchful gaze, the bald man’s fist landed heavily on Dustin’s chest with a thud.

Shockingly, Dustin seemed completely unaffected. Instead, the man who had attacked him staggered back, nearly tripping. The bones in his fist had shattered, and he could no longer **raise** his arm.

“How can this be?” The bald man was astonished. He had used his full power, which could have punched through walls. Yet, punching Dustin had been like punching **a** mountain. Instead of hurting him, the bald man

only hurt himself.

How terrifying!

“What?”

Everyone was shocked to see the bald man stumbled backward. They had all assumed the punch was enough

to end Dustin, who turned out unharmed.

“Stop playing around and end this.” The eldest of the four brothers spoke.

The youngest brother gritted his teeth and raised **his** uninjured left arm, throwing another punch, He couldn't stand the thought of—

No, he couldn't believe someone could end up unscathed after suffering his punch.

Another thwack sounded **as** the bald man punched Dustin at full force again, but the results were the same. Dustin was uninjured, while the other man staggered back from the force, the bones in his fists shattered.

“Brother, there's something weird about him! The bald man's face had contorted in pain as he sweated profusely. His punches had completely destroyed his arms, and there was nothing else he could do.

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“Let's attack together!” Realizing the severity of the situation, the eldest brother stopped holding back.

Under his order, the four of them launched themselves at Dustin at the same time. Some used their fists, while others used their legs, attacking Dustin from all directions.

Like a statue, Dustin didn't move an inch.

The Four Guardian's attacks rained down on him ceaselessly, yet the results were the same. Dustin remained unbothered and unharmed, while the four brothers were forced to stumble backward, infuriated.

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For a moment, the room fell into an eerie silence, stunned by what **had** transpired.

“You should give up if that’s all you’ve got.” Dustin stretched, bored.

“You’re dead meat!” Pissed, the Four Guardians exchanged glances before launching themselves at Dustin

again.

This time, they gave it their all aiming for his vital or vulnerable spots with firm attacks.

“Humph!”

With a mighty stomp, the ground beneath them gave way, forming a large pit. The commotion shook the entire dojo, and at the same time, extreme Divine Aura whirled **around** before heading straight toward the four

brothers.

Like they were being hit by a truck, the four men were thrown into the air, blood gushing out of their mouths and noses, before they landed on the floor heavily, passing out instantly.

“Um

The crowd gaped at the fallen men in disbelief. They couldn’t believe that the Four Guardians of Flame Dragon Gang, who were all High-level martial artists who had never lost any battles, had been utterly crushed by Dustin.

Just how monstrously strong was Dustin?

“H—he won?”

The ladies covered their mouths in shock. They’d thought that Dustin was no match for the Four Guardians and that they could defeat Dustin easily. Instead, Dustin got rid of them with a single stomp. If they hadn’t personally witnessed the entire ordeal, they might have thought that this was a scene from a movie.

“How is that possible?” Harry sprung up, incredulous. The Four Guardians had been the ace up his sleeve and Flame Dragon Gang’s pillar of strength, but Dustin had defeated them effortlessly.

Harry felt extremely vulnerable after seeing the aftermath.

“**Was** that Divine Aura?” Patrick was shocked as well.

Only Divine–level martial artists could let out internal energy like that. When martial artists achieved divinity, their internal energy would then be called Divine Aura. The latter was over a hundred times stronger than ordinary internal energy.

Since it had been revealed that Dustin **was a** Divine–level martial artist, they no longer needed to wonder why he acted so fearlessly.

It was extremely rare to find Divine–level martial artists so young.

“I was right. He’s a monster.” Nelson gulped, utterly impressed.

Among the people in the dojo, he was the only one who knew how strong Dustin was, but he’d held out hope

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since he’d been confident in the Four Guardian’s skills, which had turned out to be useless.

“Who **wants** to try next?” Dustin surveyed the place calmly.

Flame Dragon Gang’s elites exchanged nervous glances with **each** other, but no one spoke up. They knew, they’d only embarrass themselves by challenging someone who **had** defeated the Four Guardians.

“What now, Sir Hall?” Dustin turned his attention to Harry.

“I didn’t know you were so strong. I accept my defeat.” Harry sighed, looking conflicted. “I will step down. From today onward, you shall be the new **leader** of Flame Dragon Gang.”

“An honorable man indeed.” Dustin smiled. “But don’t worry. I’ll merely be the gang leader in name. I won’t

interfere with the gang matters, so you **still** have your authority.”

"Thank you, sir!"

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Harry's face lit up, and he hurriedly saluted. **"All** hail, Sir Rhys, **our** new leader!"

"All hail, Sir Rhys!" The crowd quickly saluted **as** well.

In the martial world, strength is paramount, and since Dustin had proven his strength, he now had the right to

lead them.

"Congrats, bro. What's your name?" Patrick stood up and saluted, wanting to befriend this young talented man.

"Dustin Rhys." Dustin saluted back.

"My name's Patrick Hill. Today's show was mind-boggling. Would you be interested in visiting the Hill family residence?" Patrick offered.

"I'll be sure to visit when I'm free." Dustin returned the pleasantries, feeling quite fond of the other man.

"Sir, why don't we take this opportunity to **have** a drink together? High Point Building next door is quite **a** nice place." Harry invited.

"Sure." Dustin nodded and turned to look at Patrick. "Care to join us?"

"It'd be my pleasure." Patrick answered with a smile.

Thus, Harry led the group of people to the building next door.

High Point Building was a Victorian-style restaurant with three beautifully decorated floors. Harry, who was a regular, led them straight to the Sky Lounge.

"You're here again, Harry?" A beautiful woman in her thirties entered the room, carrying two bottles of wine. Her voluptuous figure was extremely alluring and could tempt any man.

"Roxy, meet our new gang leader, Sir Rhys. He'll be in charge of Flame Dragon Gang from now on." Harry gestured towards Dustin.

"Nice to meet you, Sir Rhys." Roxy lowered her body, her breasts nearly popping out of her shirt.

Dustin nodded without saying much.

"Put the bottles down and bring out your signature dishes. We're going to celebrate." Harry told her with a

smile.

"Sure thing. **Please** give me a moment." Roxy smiled invitingly and left the room, swaying her hips provocatively.

Dustin turned his head for another look. He had to admit that Roxy had a wonderful body.

"I'd like to offer you a toast with this fine vodka, Sir Rhys!" Smiling, Harry poured Dustin a glass. Instantly, the pleasant aroma of the liquor filled the room.

"The woman who just came in. Is she yours?" Dustin suddenly asked.

"Yep. She's been with me for years." Harry answered truthfully with a nod.

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"She's a locker for sure." Dustin smiled.

His words caused the ladies beside Patrick to frown. How could he tease someone else's woman the moment

they meet?

"She was much prettier when she was younger. Harry forced a smile.

"I don't think so. Her body looks so mature. I'm sure no man can resist her." Dustin commented with a mask of

a smile.

Harry's smile stiffened, but he couldn't **say** anything back.

Dustin pressed. "At her age, I bet she has a lot of needs."

"**Yeah**, uh, it's been getting harder to handle her these days. I take supplements regularly now." Harry put on a forced grin.

"Since you're struggling, why don't I help you?" Dustin smiled. "I've got a strong body, after all."

His words made the whole room go silent. No one could have expected him to make such a vulgar request about f*cking someone else's woman in front of them.

He had taken things too far!

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“Sir Rhys, you’re taking things too far.” Harry’s smile slowly turned cold. No one could stand taunts like that.

no matter how well-mannered they were.

“Aren’t we friends? Shouldn’t I help you in times of trouble? After all, helping others makes me happy.” Dustin’s

smile was still happy as ever.

“I don’t need your help on this, Sir Rhys. I can take care of it myself. Let’s drink. Harry struggled to keep the smile on his face and quickly changed the subject.

Still, Dustin didn’t let go of the topic. “Why don’t you ask her what she thinks? Who knows? She might agree.”

“Hey! That’s enough!”

The ladies could no longer hold back.

“Who knew you’re such a disgusting man under that nice-looking face? How could you keep your eye on

someone else’s woman?”

“Exactly. Just because you’re powerful doesn’t mean that you can humiliate others like this. You’re crossing

the line!”

*Search for a prostitute elsewhere instead of putting us off.”

As women, they felt utterly disgusted by Dustin’s attitude.

Patrick merely narrowed his eyes without saying much. He has only known Dustin for a short time, so he couldn’t firmly identify Dustin’s personality. However

r, if this was Dustin's true colors, it'd be best for Patrick to stay away from the other man. He didn't have any cuckolding fetishes.

"Why are you ladies getting so worked up? He hasn't even said anything yet," Dustin responded indifferently.

"You're shameless!"

The ladies were livid. They've never met someone as sick as him.

"Ahem, if she's your type, I'll definitely get someone to serve you tonight." Nelson tried to smooth things over.

"He's right. There are so many women out there. This is your lucky day. Let's have a good time. I hope you pardon me for anything I've said to offend you earlier. To pay my respects, I take the first shot!" Harry lifted his glass and downed the drink.

"Why, your tolerance is impeccable. Very impressive." Dustin smiled teasingly.

"I see. So you were joking." Understanding dawned on Nelson.

"You shouldn't play pranks like this on your friends, Sir Rhys." Harry let out a breath of relief, sweat unknowingly beading his forehead.

"Who said I was joking?" Dustin's **expression** turned ruthless. "You have two choices right now.

me f*ck your woman or die **here**."

Everyone's expression darkened straight away. **Was** he threatening Harry?

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"Don't you think you're being unreasonable? Harry frowned unhappily.

"So what? I'll count to three. If you don't make up your mind, I'll do it for you." Dustin held out three fingers.

*Sir! I never did anything wrong. Why are you doing this to me?" Harry's fists clenched.

“Three ...”

“I know you’re a powerful man, but you shouldn’t be so unreasonable!”

“Two...”

“The martial world has its own rules. Your actions will cause backlash!”

“One”

“Sir, you-”

“Time’s up.”

Dustin grabbed a fork from the table and stabbed it into Harry’s throat in one fluid motion. Blood instantly began trickling down the length of the fork, dyeing the man’s shirt red.

“Ugh!” Harry froze, his face showing his disbelief, never expecting Dustin to act so mercilessly.

Harry’s sudden death shocked the entire room, and they remained rooted to their seats, unable to process

what had just transpired. Dustin decided to kill someone merely because the latter refused to let him sleep with his woman. He must be crazy!

“Y-y—you crazy bastard! How could you kill him?”

After a pause, all hell broke loose.

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The ladies shrank away from the table in terror. Nelson, looking as though he’d seen a ghost, immediately

pulled away, worried that Dustin might suddenly kill **him** as well. The only one left calmly sitting in his seat was Patrick.

“Can I know what you have against Harry?” Patrick asked coolly.

“Nothing.” Dustin shook his head.

“Then, do you have a grudge against him?”

“Nope.”

“Then, why did you kill him?”

“Because he deserved to die.”

“And the reason?” Patrick pressed. He despised people who killed others without reason. No matter how

powerful those people might be, they didn’t deserve to be his friends.

“Mr. Hill, doesn’t the vodka smell wonderful?” Instead of answering Patrick’s question, Dustin countered with a question of his own.

“Why does that matter?” Patrick frowned.

“It smells extremely delicious. Too delicious, in fact.” Dustin pulled out a silver needle and stuck it into the

glass. When he drew the needle back out, the tip had already turned black!

“It’s poisoned?” Patrick paled. The needle didn’t **just** prove that there was poison in the vodka but that the

poison was extremely potent!

“How could that be?” The crowd exchanged fearful looks. They had nearly drunk the same vodka.

“This is why I killed **him**,” Dustin responded calmly. “He puts on a facade of flattery but was secretly plotting such a deadly plan. Should I have kept a man like him alive?”

“I **see** ...” Patrick quickly understood. So Dustin had already seen through Harry’s plan. No wonder he killed the latter with such certainty, while Patrick **was** still kept in the dark.

“Even if the drink **was** poisoned, you can’t prove that Harry was the one who did it.” One of the ladies humphed

stubbornly, unable to accept Dustin’s reckless action.

How could he kill someone without proof?

“Both the **vodka** and the woman belong to him. Do you **really** think that he had nothing to do with this?” Dustin reasoned. “I **was** testing **him** earlier, but he endured it and kept changing the topic, trying to make me drink.

What else could this **mean**?”

His words rendered the ladies speechless. Now that they thought about it, things did seem odd. After all, no

ordinary man would be able to tolerate someone else humiliating their woman.

“You’re so observant, Dustin. I’m impressed!” Patrick’s smile returned. It was rare to see a young man as

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strong and observant as Dustin.

“Do you agree with what I said, Nelson?” Dustin turned his attention to the man in the corner of the room.

“Huh?” Startled, Nelson threw himself onto his knees before Dustin, sweating profusely. “It had nothing to do with me, sir! I had no idea! Harry planned this on his own! Please don’t kill me!”

“Why are you so nervous? I never said I was going to kill you.” Dustin helped Nelson to his feet before

continuing. “I know an honest man like you would never do something like this.”

“Thank you, sir! Thank you so much!” Nelson thanked repeatedly, tears streaming down his cheeks. He was absolutely terrified. Harry’s corpse lay next to him, his lifeless eyes staring at Nelson, creeping the man out.

*Take care of this. You're in charge of the gang from now on." Dustin instructed, patting Nelson's shoulder.

Nelson's knees went weak, and he sank to the floor. To think that the mighty Lord Horst of Flame Dragon Gang was shaking in fear.

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Now that Harry was dead, Nelson, the assistant leader, successfully took over and replaced him as the one in

charge of the Flame Dragon **Gang**. With thousands of disciples and hundreds of elite members, the Flame

Dragon Gang **was** a significant force in the entire Millsburg. It would be easier for Dustin to do things in Millsburg with the Flame Dragon Gang backing him up.

"Dustin, although you **are now** the leader of Flame Dragon Gang, you might still face some troubles ahead," Patrick reminded him as they walked out of High Point Building.

"Troubles? What do you mean?" Dustin asked curiously.

"Harry didn't rise to power from nothing. He always had someone backing him up. By killing Harry, you'll definitely offend that person," Patrick said.

"Oh? Who is this person?" Dustin asked.

"Terry Doyle, the eldest son of the Doyle family."

"Terry Doyle? I haven't heard of him." Dustin shook his head.

"I can tell that you're not local. Everyone here knows Terry, but I must tell you, that man is not simple." Harry's face carried a hint of seriousness. "The Doyle family is an ancient martial arts family and is one of the Fabulous Five. They hold significant influence in the martial arts world of Balerno. Terry is the heir of the Doyle family and is in his early thirties. He is already one of the Heavenly Immortals! Only a few among the younger generation in Millsburg can match

him! If you encounter **Terry**, you must be extremely careful. This person seeks revenge for the smallest grievances, and anyone who offends him doesn't have a good ending."

Upon hearing that, Dustin couldn't help but smile. "Thank you for the reminder, Patrick. I will be cautious."

"Of course, nothing in this world is absolute. If you can find a backer in Millsburg, such as the Hills family, I believe Terry wouldn't dare to act rashly."

Patrick's tone changed as he began to coax, "The Hill family still holds considerable influence in Millsburg. With your talent and strength, you can become our consultant. I'm just not sure if you're interested."

"Thank you for your kind offer, Patrick, but I haven't considered it for now. Let's discuss it if there's an opportunity," Dustin politely declined with a smile. He was accustomed to freedom and didn't want to be bound by others.

"Hey! Do you even know what you're saying?"

At this moment, a glamorous woman next to them spoke unhappily. "Becoming a consultant of the Hill family is a dream sought after by countless people. Mr. Hill values you and wants to win you over, I didn't expect you to be so ungrateful!"

"Shut up! Don't be disrespectful!" Patrick turned around and glared at her before apologizing to Dustin. "Dustin, I apologize. It was my failure to discipline her. Please forgive me."

"It's alright." Dustin waved his hand, not wanting to dwell on it.

"Since you **have** other aspirations, I won't force you. But you can come find me anytime if you change your

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mind." Patrick smiled.

"Sure." Dustin nodded slightly.

Just as they were exchanging pleasantries, Patrick's phone suddenly rang. His face instantly changed upon answering the call.

"What? Grandfather old injury has relapsed, and he fainted? How did this happen? Alright! I'll go home immediately. You quickly go and fetch the doctor!"

Patrick's face fell after hanging up the phone. "Dustin, something urgent happened at home. I have to take my leave."

"Is someone in your family sick?" Dustin asked tentatively.

"Yes, my grandfather exerted himself too much during his cultivation, and his old injury acted up. The situation

is not good." Patrick looked solemn.

"If it's an internal injury. I have a pill that works exceptionally well." Dustin took a black pill and said, "It's called the Gemiphen. It can invigorate blood circulation, dispel stasis, and strengthen the body. It may be

helpful for your grandfather's chronic internal injury."

"Thank you, Dustin!" Patrick expressed **his** gratitude and accepted the pill. Although he didn't believe this pill could heal his grandfather's injury, it was still a gesture from Dustin, and he didn't want to refuse it.

After watching Patrick leave hurriedly, Dustin hailed a taxi by the roadside and returned to the villa in the

urban village.

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Just as he entered the house, Abigail ran toward him and shouted excitedly, "Uncle! I did it. I did it!"

"What do you mean?" Dustin was shocked. "Are you pregnant?"

How could she get pregnant at such a young age? This girl was too wild.

“Gosh! Of course not! I’m still a **virgin!**” Abigail retorted, rolling her eyes.

“Why are you so excited if you’re not pregnant?” Dustin was speechless. She shocked him for a second.

“Didn’t you teach me the cultivation technique last **night**? Well, I’m thrilled to announce that I have successfully cultivated my internal energy!” Abigail said, beaming with joy.

“What? So soon?” Surprised, Dustin frowned.

Usually, it would take an average martial artist at least a year or more to cultivate internal energy. Even for exceptionally talented individuals, it would still take several months to grasp the basics. Yet, Abigail claimed to have achieved it overnight. Did she master it that fast?

Dustin **was** skeptical and reached out to feel her pulse. Indeed, he felt a faint flow of energy circulating in her core. Although the energy was very subtle, she indeed had internal energy.

In other words, Abigail really succeeded!

In just one night, she had achieved what ordinary martial artists would take a year or more of arduous training to accomplish. Her talent was truly exceptional!

Just imagine, while others struggled for ten years, Abigail could achieve the same level of mastery in just a day of leisurely practice. How could anyone compete with that?

Hard work paled in comparison to natural talent.

“So, what do you think? I succeeded, didn’t I? I told you I’m not lying!” Abigail boasted.

“I have to admit you do have remarkable talent. It takes ordinary individuals a year to reach the same level, but

you managed it in just one day. You are truly a rare martial arts prodigy,” Dustin praised with a smile.

“Hahaha... I knew it!” Abigail laughed triumphantly. “Even though I may not be the sharpest tool in the shed.

I’ve never lost a fight.”

“Hmm. Are you saying you’re stupid?” Dustin asked.

“Pffft! No way! You’re the stupid one!” **Abigail** retorted. She narrowed her **eyes** and said, “I **mean**, I may not be good at studying, but I’m excellent at fighting. There’s a saying, how does it go? Everyone is born to succeed!”

“Girl, honestly, with your martial arts talent, you’ll be in high demand wherever you go. All the major sects will compete to recruit you. So, from now on, you need to think about where you want to develop yourself,” Dustin suddenly said

“Well, I don’t really **know** yet.”

Abigail scratched her head and said, “Forget it. Let’s not worry about that for now. Since I’m just starting out,

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you can teach me first. Consider it a favor to you.”

“A favor to me? That sounds odd.” Dustin raised an eyebrow.

“Think about it. I’m a martial arts prodigy. When I become famous and renowned, won’t you benefit too?” Abigail raised her chin.

“I guess I’ll have to wait for that.” Dustin shook his head.

“Hey! Are you underestimating me? You just said it yourself. I’m a prodigy. One day of practice for me is equivalent to one year for others. As long as I casually train, I’ll soon dominate the martial arts world!” Abigail **was** quite proud.

“It’s not that simple. Even if you have great talent, you still need to hone your skills.” Dustin chuckled.

“Hmph! That’s just how you mortals see it. You don’t understand the world of geniuses.” Abigail shook her head and asked proudly. “By the way, how long did it take you to achieve the basic level of internal energy? One **year** or two years?”

Dustin didn’t say anything but instead raised three fingers.

“No way? It actually took you three years?” Surprised, Abigail said, “Gosh, you’re really behind. I finished it in only one night, and you spent that much time?”

“Don’t judge others based on your own limited perspective.” Dustin said unkindly. “It took me three minutes to achieve the basic level of internal energy.”

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Chapter 425

“What? Three minutes?” Upon hearing that, Abigail was dumbfounded.

Didn’t he say it took ordinary martial artists a year or more to achieve the basic level? Even she, a once-in-a-

century genius, took a day to cultivate her internal energy. To achieve it in a day was already worthy of **being** called a prodigy. Yet Dustin achieved it in three minutes? What should she call him

A monster?

A freak?

At this moment, she felt deeply shocked. Her earlier bit of pride evaporated into thin **air**.

“Are you... kidding me?” Abigail couldn’t accept it..

“Why would I lie to you? I gain nothing **from** it.” Dustin shrugged and said calmly. “Besides, it’s just talent. It doesn’t represent strength. This world is never lacking in geniuses. The path of martial arts is arduous and long. To become a true powerhouse, both talent and effort are indispensable.”

"I understand! I'll work hard and catch up to you soon! Abigail clenched her fist. Then she decisively ran upstairs and began her intense training.

Dustin laughed. He saw a familiar figure in Abigail.

Abigail was exactly like that girl from the Spanner family ten years ago.

At that moment, knocks rang out from the door. Dustin opened the door and found Ruth standing outside.

"Ruth, how is your sister? Does she want to see me?" Dustin's eyes lit up.

Ruth remained silent. She lowered her head and glanced behind her with a hesitant expression. Only then did

Dustin notice two people standing in the courtyard behind her.

It was **a** man and a woman.

With **a tall** and imposing figure, the man seemed to be in his forties and fifties. He exuded a compelling aura

from head to toe.

Dustin felt somewhat intimidated.

As for the woman, she had taken great care of her appearance. She had fair and tender skin, a well-

proportioned **figure**, delicate features, and **a** lingering charm.

She was none other than Ruth's mother, Jessica!

"So, you're Dustin?" the man spoke first. His tone was **calm** and emotionless but carried a tinge of domination.

"Yes, that's me." Dustin nodded.

"I am Hector, Natasha's father." The man got straight to the point.

"Oh, Mr. Harmon. Please come inside." Dustin smiled faintly and immediately extended his

hand in a welcoming gesture. From the moment he saw Jessica, he had guessed the identity of the visitors.

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“There’s no need for that. I came here today to have a few words with you,” Hector said calmly. “Natasha is already engaged to someone, and by the end of this month, she will be married. So I hope you won’t meet my daughter anymore.”

“Married?” Dustin frowned. “Why didn’t she tell me?”

“What difference would it make if she told you? This decision was made by two prominent families, and no one can change that.” Hector continued expressionlessly. “Young man, I don’t know if you truly love my daughter or are attracted to her family background. It doesn’t matter. In **any** case, the bottom line is to stay away from my daughter.”

As he spoke, he made a gesture. Soon, several bodyguards entered the courtyard, carrying two large boxes. When the boxes were opened, they revealed stacks of gold inside!

“Young man, this gold is a gift from me. Take it and leave the capital. From now on, don’t appear before my daughter,” Hector said.

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“The gold is indeed tempting, but I don’t like it. So I can’t accept the conditions you just mentioned.” Dustin shook his head.

“If you don’t like gold, then name your price.” Hector raised **his** chin.

“Mr. Harmon, forgive me for speaking frankly, but Natasha should decide her marriage herself. As her parent, you shouldn’t forcefully interfere with such matters,” Dustin said.

“What?” Hector frowned. “Are you teaching me how to do things?”

“I’m just speaking the truth.” Dustin remained composed. “As parents, shouldn’t you want your children’s marriages to be happy?”

“Hmph! What do you even know?”

At this moment, Jessica couldn’t hold back any longer. “Do you know who Natasha’s fiancé is? He is Tyler Grant, a natural-born genius and the future rising star of the Dragonmarsh! Only by marrying him can Natasha have a good future!”

“That should be up to Natasha to decide. If she doesn’t want to marry him, you can’t force her.” Dustin argued reasonably.

“Are you implying a challenge to the authority of the Harmon family?” Hector’s expression turned grim.

“Mr. Harmon, I don’t want to be enemies with the Harmon family, but I’m willing to take this risk for Natasha’s

sake. I’ll repeat myself. As long as she doesn’t want to marry, no one can force her!” Dustin’s tone became

assertive.

“Hmph! What an arrogant youngster!” Hector’s eyes turned cold. “I’ve tried to speak nicely to you for Natasha’s sake, but if you insist on being stubborn, **don’t** blame me for turning my back on you!”

“Dustin! Don’t provoke my father. It’ll bring you no good.” Ruth desperately tried to hint at Dustin.

Her father was the head of the Harmon family. He wielded great power and was known for his resolute decisions. Although Dustin had some ability, he was clearly far from being able to contend with the Harmon

family.

“Mr. Harmon, you’re the one being stubborn, not me.” Dustin remained undaunted.

“Fine! Very well!” Upon hearing that, Hector smirked. “Young man, you surely are fearless! I’ll give you three days. If you’re willing to leave Millsburg within three days, I won’t hold it against you. But if you persist in going your way, you’ll have to bear the consequences!”

After saying that, he turned and left.

“Wait!” Dustin suddenly called out.

“What? Did you change your mind?” Hector turned back, his eyes filled with disdain.

If Dustin were to resist to the end, Hector **would** hold some respect for him. At least Dustin was a persistent person. However, he would look down on Dustin even more if he gave in just like **that**.

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“Mr. Harmon, it seems your health is **in** a bad condition. You probably won’t last three days.” Dustin dropped a bombshell.

“What are you talking about?” Hector furrowed his brow.

“You have a dark complexion, yellowing pupils, and the breath you exhale carries a hint of a foul odor. If I’m not mistaken, you’ve been poisoned with voodoo!” Dustin said.

“Nonsense!” Hector snorted. “Do you think you can scare me just like that? You’re underestimating me!”

“Mr. Harmon, I’m sincerely warning you. The voodoo you’ve been afflicted with is not ordinary. It will inevitably flare up within three days, and by then, you might lose your life!” Dustin sounded solemn.

“Stop bullshitting!” Hector couldn’t bother to argue with him. He directly turned away and left.

He could eat and drink normally and could even run and jump. He didn’t feel any signs of poisoning. Moreover, his meals were strictly monitored by trusted individuals. It was simply impossible for anyone to poison him!

As Hector and the others got into their car, Dustin made no attempt to stop them. Instead, he turned to Ruth and asked, "Is your sister being held captive? Where is she now? Can I meet her?"

"L" Ruth opened her mouth, but Jessica's voice rang out before she could explain. "Ruth! What are you **waiting** for? Let's go home!"

"Coming!" Ruth responded and hurriedly said, "Dustin, my sister is temporarily safe. She will find a way to contact you. Also, be careful!"

After saying that, she quickly left.

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"Natasha is engaged to Tyler Grant?"

As Dustin watched the departing vehicle, he couldn't help but narrow his eyes. Clearly, this was **a** strategic alliance between two prominent families, and Natasha was the sacrificial pawn in this alliance. Born into a prestigious family, she enjoyed wealth and luxury but lost her freedom. At certain moments, she even had to make sacrifices for the sake of their family's interests.

Of course, Dustin would never allow such a thing to happen. With that in mind, he took out his phone and dialed **a** particular number.

"Hello, Nelson. Help me investigate someone."

"No problem. May I ask who you want me to investigate, Sir Rhys?" Nelson **asked**.

"Tyler Grant."

"Tyler Grant?" Nelson raised his voice upon hearing Dustin's words. "Sir Rhys, why do you want to investigate him?"

"Of course, to deal with him. Do you think I'm inviting him out for a meal?" Dustin replied impatiently.

“What?” Nelson froze in place, his voice trembling. “Sir Rhys, please don’t scare me like that. I’m easily frightened. I can’t handle this!”

“What’s the matter? Is Tyler that formidable?” Dustin asked in response.

“He’s way more than that. Sir Rhys, this person is like the living King of Hell. We can’t afford to provoke him! He can easily wipe out the Flame Dragon Gang if we offend him!” Nelson sounded like he was tearing up.

What kind of person was he working for? His first task as the new gang leader was to deal with Tyler. Weren’t they seeking their own death?

Known as a once-in-a-century genius, Tyler was the future head of the Grant family. Despite being only in his thirties, he had fought on many battlefields and achieved various victories. He earned the title of General Tiger with a third-ranking official position.

Not only was he tremendously powerful and exceptionally talented, but he also commanded an army of tens of thousands.

Anyone who provoked such a formidable individual would be doomed!

“Why are you panicking? I didn’t ask you to assassinate him. I only want you to gather information about him,” Dustin said calmly.

“Sir Rhys, if you have any ill intentions, it’s best to forget about them. It would be wiser to jump off a building than to **provoke** Tyler, Nelson said, his voice filled with fear.

“Stop the nonsense! Just do as I say!” Dustin shouted.

“Yes, yes... I’ll do it immediately.” Nelson didn’t dare to **say** more and quickly complied. However, deep inside, he silently prayed that Dustin wouldn’t act recklessly. Or else the Flame Dragon Gang would suffer the

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consequences.

Meanwhile, in the Hill family’s house, an elderly man with a white beard and eyebrows lay on the **bed**. His face was pale, and his body was weak. Bloody phlegm filled the copper **basin** under the **bed**.

A group of Hill family descendants gathered anxiously around the bed..

Paul Hill, the patriarch of the Hill family, had four sons named Spring, Summer, Autumn, **and** Winter. Besides that, he had dozens of grandchildren. He had a big family.

“Spring! Wasn’t Father doing well yesterday? How did his internal injuries relapse?” Autumn paced back and forth, his expression filled with anxiety. Among the four brothers, he was known for his impatience.

“Autumn, you know about Father’s chronic ailment. None of the doctors could cure it.”

Spring shook his head and sighed. “If he had watched out more usually, it wouldn’t have been a big problem. But he almost went astray to push his cultivation to the limit this time. He was too impulsive!”

“Gosh...” Autumn grumbled, “Why is he pushing himself so hard at his age?”

“Enough talk. Let’s go to Stoneray Valley and bring Dr. Linden here to treat Father,” Summer suddenly said.

“Dr. Linden is currently in seclusion and cannot come, but I have already called Mr. Turner to come. There shouldn’t be any problems with him here.” Spring replied.

“Then quickly call and urge them! Why haven’t they arrived yet?” Autumn was becoming increasingly anxious.

“Oh no! Grandfather is coughing up blood again!”

At that moment, a muscular young man exclaimed in shock.

He was Autumn’s son, Torben Hill. He had tan skin **and** a robust figure.

“What should we **do**? He keeps coughing up blood. Is there something wrong with Father?” Autumn was

shocked,

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“Stop talking nonsense!” Autumn glared at him.

“Uncle, I have a healing pill here. Shall we let Grandfather try it?” Patrick suddenly stepped forward from the crowd, holding a Gemiphen. He wouldn’t take such a risk if his grandfather’s condition weren’t critical.

“A healing pill?” Torben furrowed his brow. “This thing looks suspicious. Where did you get it from?”

“A friend gave it to me,” Patrick answered truthfully.

“Hah! Your friends? They’re a bunch of useless people.” Torben sneered. “Take that pill away quickly, and stop embarrassing yourself here.”

“Grandfather’s condition is not looking good right now. I want to give it a try. What if it actually works?” Patrick

insisted.

“I said it’s not going to work! Take it away!” Torben slapped the Gemiphen out of Patrick’s hand.

“You-” Patrick frowned.

“What? You got a problem? Should we settle it with a fight?” Torben clenched his fist, displaying his robust

muscles. Patrick was known to be a weakling in their family. Torben could easily knock him out with a single

punch.

“I can’t be bothered to talk to you!” Patrick took a deep breath and finally held himself back. As he was about to pick up the Gemiphen from the ground, a foot suddenly appeared **and** crushed the pill.

“What **are** you doing?” Patrick’s face darkened.

“Hmph! What’s the use of keeping such a worthless pill? What if it upsets grandfather’s stomach?” Torben said arrogantly. While saying that, he stepped on the pill even harder, grinding it into powder.

“Torben! You’ve gone too far!” Patrick clenched his fists.

“Disrespectful brat! How dare you talk to your older cousin like that?” Spring glared at Patrick and immediately began protecting Torben.

“Uncle, he was the one being unreasonable!” Patrick furrowed his brow.

“Nonsense! My son is just concerned about his grandfather’s safety. Who knows if that pill of yours is

poisonous?” Autumn spoke arrogantly.

“That’s right! What if you’re trying to harm grandfather?” Torben said haughtily. With his father backing him up, they could easily bully Patrick.

“That’s enough! Father is sick, and you’re still bickering here and there. What do you think you’re doing?”

Spring spoke sternly. Instantly, the guys shut up.

As the eldest brother, he still carried some authority.

“They’re here! Mr. Turner from Stoneray Valley has arrived!”

Suddenly, a voice rang out from the entrance. Soon after, a thin man in a black robe slowly walked in with a

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medicine box.

“Mr. Turner, you’ve come just in time. Please hurry up and take a look at my father!” Spring quickly led the man to the bedside.

“Everyone, please remain calm. Allow me to examine him first.” Nicholas sat down slowly and began feeling Paul’s pulse. After a while, his eyebrows furrowed. “Everyone, the patriarch’s situation is grim. The internal injuries have accu

mulated too long and suddenly erupted with great force. His meridians are shattered, and his vital energy is in disorder. With my abilities, I'm afraid I can't do much to help."

"What?" Spring panicked.

"Mr. Turner, you're an elder of Stoneray Valley. If even you can't treat him, who else can?"

"Unless my master comes out of seclusion. Otherwise..." Mr. Turner shook his head.

"My father would have passed away by the time he comes out of seclusion!" Autumn frowned.

"Wait!" Suddenly, Nicholas sniffed and said, "What a fragrant medicinal scent. Do you have any miraculous panacea here?"

"What do you mean by panacea? We would have let Grandfather take them if we had any." Torben replied rudely.

However, Nicholas ignored him. Like a hunting dog, he kept sniffing and tried to search for the smell. Soon, he fixated his gaze on the crushed Gemiphen, and his face fell immediately.

"What... Who did this? Such a waste! Such a terrible waste!"

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Looking at the crushed Gemiphen, Nicholas was heartbroken and furious. He didn't care about his Image anymore and immediately threw himself to the ground, collecting the powder bit by bit.

It left everyone dumbfounded. Was it **necessary** to make such a fuss over a broken pill?

"Mr. Turner, what's going on?" Spring was perplexed. People from Stoneray Valley were usually proud and arrogant. They **had** never lost their composure like that.

“What’s going on? How dare you ask me such a question?” Nicholas angrily retorted, “How can you destroy **a** panacea? This is a very rare pill. Such a waste! Who is the idiot who did this?!”

“Mr. Turner, are you mistaken? How could this black broken thing be a panacea? Torben looked skeptical.

“You’re such a fool!” Nicholas stared at him like he was an idiot. “What you call a broken thing is the Golden Crow Pill, a holy medicine for healing! It specializes in treating various internal injuries **and** chronic ailments. Your grandfather’s life could have been **saved!**”

“What?”

Everyone’s faces changed upon hearing that. Although they didn’t know what Gemephin was. The fact that it

could treat their father’s internal injuries and that Nicholas held it in such high regard indicated that it was no

ordinary item.

“You wastrels! You bunch of wastrels! To think that such a miraculous healing tablet was treated like **garbage**

by all of you. How foolish!” Feeling his heart aching. Nicholas pounded his chest **and** stomped his feet.

As an elder of **Stoneray** Valley, he held precious tablets in higher regard than anything **else**. His heart was

bleeding to see the Gemiphen get destroyed.

“Torben! Look at the mess you’ve caused! You destroyed a medicine that could save Grandfather. **How** will you explain yourself to everyone?” Patrick shouted sternly.

“I... I didn’t know this thing could save a life.” Torben stammered, feeling guilty. “Besides, this wouldn’t have happened if **you** had explained it clearly earlier.”

“You make a mistake, and now you’re trying to blame me?” Patrick’s face turned cold.

“Enough, enough! It’s just a pill. If it’s destroyed, then it’s destroyed. Just get another one. Why make such a **fuss?**” Autumn continued to defend Torben.

“Uncle, do you think this **is a** common cabbage? Do you think we can just conjure another one out of thin air? It was a gift from my friend. Who knows if there’s another one?” Patrick frowned. Not only did Torben make a

mistake, but he also remained stubborn. It was truly unreasonable.

“Patrick, let’s not dwell on this for now. Saving Grandfather is the priority. Contact your friend immediately and

have them deliver the Gemiphen as soon as possible!” Spring **urged**.

“Alright, I’ll try to ask. Knowing how urgent the situation was, Patrick didn’t hesitate and immediately dialed

Dustin’s number. He briefly explained the situation to Dustin.

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Dustin didn’t refuse him. After asking for the address, he rushed over. Within half an hour, he arrived at the Hill family’s residence.

“Dustin, you’re finally here! Come on in!” Patrick **had** been waiting for him and immediately led him inside when he saw Dustin exiting the car. Before long, they reached Paul’s room.

“Hey! Is this your friend? Can he be trusted?” As soon **as** they entered, Torben blocked their way. He sized Dustin up and down, full of doubt.

He looked like **a** young boy. Could someone like him really treat illnesses?

“Don’t worry. He’s definitely more reliable than you!” Patrick said coldly.

“According to the rules, we need to frisk you before entering. Raise your hands and stand against the wall,” Torben ordered.

“Frisk me?” Dustin frowned and said in a displeased tone. “You invited me here to treat your grandfather, yet you treat me like a criminal. Is that appropriate?”

“These are our rules. Strangers must be thoroughly searched. Who knows if you’re carrying weapons?” Torben said condescendingly.

“Torben! Don’t go too far!”

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Patrick’s face darkened. “Dustin is my friend. I can vouch for him. If there’s any problem, I’ll take full responsibility!”

“Hey! What are you all dawdling for? Come in quickly!” Seeing the group **standing** at the doorway, Spring urged them from inside the room.

“Hmph! Kid, you better not play any tricks. I’ll be watching you closely!” Torben warned before stepping a side.

“Dustin, don’t bother with him. Please come in.” Patrick said, not wanting to waste any more time. He quickly led Dustin to the bedside.

“Young guy. I heard you have the Gemiphen?” Nicholas spoke first. His eager demeanor was like that of a person who had starved for three **days** and finally saw a delicious feast.

“I do have it, but not many. They were all passed down through my ancestors,” Dustin replied. He could tell from the emblem on their clothes that they were from the Stoneray Valley. To avoid trouble, he could only **give**

such an answer.

“So it’s an ancestral elixir? Young guy, how many pills do you have left? I’m willing to buy them at a high price!

Nicholas urgently asked.

“I had two pills before, but one got destroyed. Now I only have the last one.” Dustin replied.

“What? Only one pill left?” Nicholas frowned, looking regretful. He wanted to buy a few pills from Dustin **and** study them after returning to Stoneray Valley. What a pity.

“Mr. Turner, let’s cut the small talk. Since this guy still has one Gemiphen, let’s **save** the patient first.” Spring

urged from the side.

“Yes, yes. Please proceed,” Nicholas replied, maintaining a relatively polite attitude.

“Hey! Don’t blame me for not warning you. You better be able to cure my grandfather’s internal injuries. Otherwise, you will be doomed!” Torben suddenly interjected coldly.

About to start the treatment, Dustin suddenly stopped and said indifferently, “I’m a timid person and can’t handle such intimidation. If you’re going to **say** that, then I won’t treat him. You’d better find someone else.”

With that, he turned around and was about to leave.

“No, no, no... Young man, please don’t listen to his nonsense.” Spring panicked and quickly grabbed him. At the same time, he shouted at Torben, “You brat! Shut up if you don’t have anything nice to say!”

Torben felt somewhat displeased but didn’t say anything more.

“Dustin, this guy **has** a loose tongue. Please don’t stoop to his level, Patrick quickly reassured.

“Alright, if you want my Gemiphen, it’ll cost you, but you’ll have to pay extra,” Dustin said calmly.

“No problem. How much?” Spring asked eagerly.

Dustin didn’t answer directly. Instead, he held up one finger.

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“One million dollars?”

Torben furrowed his brow. “Kid! Don’t you think you’re being too greedy? How dare you ask for one million dollars for such a worthless thing?”

“Who said I want one million? I want 100 million!” Dustin said, astonishing everyone with his statement.

“What?”

“What? 100 million dollars?”

Torben was dumbfounded. “Are you out of your mind? Why don’t you just go and rob someone? What makes this dark thing worth so much money?!”

“Now, I’ve changed my mind. 200 million dollars.” Dustin extended two fingers casually, as if he was discussing an everyday matter.

“200 million? Are you intentionally messing with us?” Torben was so furious that he was on the verge of hitting someone.

“300 million,” Dustin couldn’t be bothered to argue with them. He extended three fingers. The more Torben shouted, the higher the price Dustin demanded. That was the cost of being rude.

“You...!”

Before

Torben could say anything. Spring’s face turned pale, and he slapped Torben across the face, shouting. “You beast! Shut your damn mouth!”

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Chapter 430

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With that, he turned around and was about to leave.

“No, no, no... Young man, please don’t listen to his nonsense.” Spring panicked and quickly grabbed him. At the same time, he shouted at Torben, “You brat! Shut up if you don’t have anything nice to say!”

Torben felt somewhat displeased but didn’t say anything more.

“Dustin, this guy **has** a loose tongue. Please don’t stoop to his level, Patrick quickly reassured.

“Alright, if you want my Gemiphen, it’ll cost you, but you’ll have to pay extra,” Dustin said calmly.

“No problem. How much?” Spring asked eagerly.

Dustin didn’t answer directly. Instead, he held up one finger.

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“One million dollars?”

Torben furrowed his brow. “Kid! Don’t you think you’re being too greedy? How dare you ask for one million dollars for such a worthless thing?”

“Who said I want one million? I want 100 million!” Dustin said, astonishing everyone with his statement.

“What?”

“What? 100 million dollars?”

Torben was dumbfounded. “Are you out of your mind? Why don’t you just go and rob someone? What makes this dark thing worth so much money?!”

“Now, I’ve changed my mind. 200 million dollars.” Dustin extended two fingers casually, as if he was discussing an everyday matter.

“200 million? Are you intentionally messing with us?” Torben was so furious that he was on the verge of hitting someone.

“300 million,” Dustin couldn’t be bothered to argue with them. He extended three fingers. The more Torben shouted, the higher the price Dustin demanded. That was the cost of being rude.

“You...!”

Before

Torben could say anything. Spring’s face turned pale, and he slapped Torben across the face, shouting. “You beast! Shut your damn mouth!”

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“What?”

Torben was stunned. Holding his face, he felt confused. Shouldn’t they be reprimanding Dustin at this moment? Why did his uncle slap him instead?

“You useless fool! Get the hell out if you can’t speak properly!” Spring’s face was stern. He was clearly angry.

It was supposed to be a situation where they didn’t have to spend any money, but this idiot had managed to raise the price of a pill to 300 million. Dustin would probably ask for even more if they let him continue.

Why punish him instead of this damned guy?

“Spring, you’ve gone too far.” Autumn frowned. Of course, he wasn’t happy about his son getting slapped.

“You shut up too!” Spring turned around and glowered. “Father’s life is hanging by a thread, and we urgently need the medicine to save him. Yet you people are still here arguing. If something happens to Father, can you afford the responsibility?”

Hearing that, the father and son exchanged glances and dared not say another word.

The Hill family was known for its martial prowess, and their patriarch, Paul, was a master of Balerno martial arts three years ago. Although he had retired now, he still commanded great respect and status in the martial world. Even the current leader would show deference to him.

The Hill family stood strong and was known as one of the top three families because of Paul’s towering presence. If the patriarch were to pass away, the entire Hill family would suffer a devastating blow.

“Young man, I apologize sincerely. I have failed to teach my people manners. Please don’t take it to heart. As long as you can save my father’s life, 300 million dollars is not a problem.” Spring agreed without hesitation.

“I’m glad you picked the right choice.” Dustin smiled faintly. “The Hill family has great wealth and influence-

300 million is nothing to you.”

Torben narrowed his eyes as a hint of killing intent flashed across them. Yet he controlled himself.

“Young man, please proceed.” Spring forced a smile.

“Alright.” Dustin didn’t say much. He took out a Gemiphen and stuffed it into Paul’s mouth. Then he lifted the old man’s clothes, took out a silver needle, **and** pierced three **key** acupoints: The posterior neck Acupoint, lower chest acupoint, and stomach acupoint. Then, he flicked his finger.

“Buzz...”

The three silver needles rapidly spun, and waves of true energy flowed into Paul’s body **through** the needles.

“What amazing acupuncture skills!” Witnessing **this** scene, Nicholas was greatly astonished. Although he specialized in alchemy, he also had considerable medical knowledge. With his discerning eyes, he could tell that Dustin’s acupuncture technique was extraordinary. Although his skills might not **surpass** Dr. Jeremy. Dustin was almost as **good** as him.

To possess such exquisite acupuncture skills at such a young age... Who exactly was this young man?

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After administering the needles, Dustin helped Paul up and delivered a strong palm strike to his back. A surge of true energy erupted in Paul’s body.

Paul tilted his head back and spewed out a mouthful of dark blood. Then his head slumped, and once again.

he lost consciousness.

“Alright, the patient is out of danger now. However, the internal injuries **have** accumulated for a long time. So it will take some time for a complete recovery. After I return, I will prepare some medicine for the patient. Drinking two cups every day for about ten days should lead to a full recovery.”

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“Oh, by the way, don’t remove the silver needles from the patient’s body for another three hours. That’s all. **Now**, you can pay up.”

After a series of instructions, Dustin directly asked for payment. He had come to treat Paul as a **favor** to Patrick, but he still expected to be compensated for his services. He didn’t want to make the trip for nothing.

“The matter of payment is not an issue, but we need to confirm my father’s condition first.” Spring signaled to Nicholas with his eyes.

Nicholas quickly approached and checked Paul’s pulse. Instantly, his eyes widened,

“How is he? Is there something wrong with my father?” Everyone felt anxious upon seeing this.

“No, no, no Mr. Hill’s pulse is very calm, and most of the stagnant blood in his body has been removed. The broken meridians were also remarkably repaired. It’s truly amazing!” Nicholas exclaimed with delight.

The combined effects of the Gemiphen and the miraculous acupuncture technique produced such astonishing results.

“Damn it! You scared me! Can’t you just finish your sentence?” Torben grumbled angrily. If anything happened

to his grandfather, he would **have** an excuse to execute Dustin on the spot and hold Patrick accountable.

“The experts from Stoneray Valley have confirmed it. Now, can you rest assured?” Dustin replied calmly.

“It’s all thanks to you, young man. We are extremely grateful!” Spring expressed his gratitude.

“You’re welcome. You pay me to treat your father anyway.” Dustin replied in response.

“Please go to the living room and have a cup of tea to get some **rest**.” Spring smiled. Then he turned around and said, “Autumn, go and withdraw the money for this young man here.”

“Yes.”

Autumn gave Dustin a deep look before turning to leave.

Meanwhile, Dustin followed the servant to the living room.

The Hill’s residence covered a vast area, enveloping a whole mountain. Tall walls surrounded the premises, and numerous villas dotted the landscape. A dozen guards patrolled around the clock. Their security was very strict. It would be nearly impossible for ordinary people to enter.

Ten minutes later, Autumn and Torben entered the living room with a check in hand.

“**Young** man, this **is** your **reward**.”

Dustin picked up the check and frowned. “Did you make a mistake? I asked for 300 million, not three million.”

“Of course not.” Torben answered arrogantly, “Even the experts of Stoneray **V alley** only charged us three million. You’re just an unknown doctor from god knows where. You should be grateful that we’re willing to pay you this much.”

“I don’t care **about** others, but since we agreed on 300 million, it must be 300 million, not a penny less,” Dustin

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said coldly.

“You little brat! Don’t push your luck!” Torben glared. “Three million is more **than enough** for someone like you to live a lavish life for years. If you have any sense, take the check, and get the hell out of here!”

“Are you planning to go against your word?” Dustin narrowed his eyes.

“So what if we are?” Torben sneered. “Open your eyes wide and see where you are!”

Torben thought to himself. “Do you think a nobody like you can take away 300 million dollars just like that?”

“I never expected the prestigious Hill family to be a bunch of untrustworthy people. It’s truly disappointing.”

“Shut the hell up!” Torben grabbed Dustin’s collar and threatened, “Kid, I’ll give you two options now: either take the three million and get lost, or I’ll break your legs and throw you out!”

“Three million... It’s barely enough to buy your coffin.” Picking up the check, Dustin threw it directly at Torben’s face.

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The check lightly landed on Torben’s face with a loud smack. It didn’t hurt him, but he felt utterly humiliated.

“You’re asking for death!” Torben instantly became furious and raised his fist to strike Dustin.

Yet before he could reach Dustin, he got kicked away and fell to the ground. He ended up in a pitiful state and coughed nonstop.

“I will kill you for sure!” Torben’s eyes widened in rage. He forcefully tore off his clothes, revealing his muscular body covered in body hair. Then, like a raging bull, he fiercely charged toward Dustin.

“Get lost!” Dustin raised his hand and slapped Torben, sending him flying.

Torben let out a miserable scream and crashed to the ground, struggling to get up.

“How dare you hit my son?” Autumn’s face turned dark as he witnessed the scene. “Guards! Take this guy down!”

With his command, a group of guards dressed in sturdy clothing quickly swarmed in and surrounded Dustin.

“You brat! How dare you act recklessly in the Hill family? You must be tired of living! I wanted to give you three million, but now, you won’t get a single penny! Not only that but your legs will be broken as a deterrent!” Autumn shouted.

“Attack!” He waved his hand, and the guards raised their weapons, preparing to strike.

“Stop!”

At that moment, Patrick rushed in urgently. “Uncle, what are you doing? Dustin is a benefactor of the Hill family. Aren’t you afraid of Grandfather’s rage if you act like this?”

“Mind your business! Get out of here, or I’ll beat you too!” Autumn remained obstinate.

“If you have any complaints, come at me, but I won’t let you lay a hand on Dustin!” Patrick spoke in a stern **voice**.

“You insolent brat! Today, I will teach you a lesson on behalf of your father!” Autumn grew furious.

Just as he was about to make a move, a servant rushed in, panic-stricken, and shouted, “Mr. Autumn! Something’s wrong! Mr. Hill **has** gone mad!”

“What? Gone mad?” Autumn **was** shocked. Not daring to linger, he hastily led the guards and left.

“You, brat, just you wait!” Leaving behind a harsh threat, Torben rushed out to o.

Paul was the pillar of the family, and they could not afford any mishap.

“What happened?”

Patrick **frowned**. “Dustin, didn’t you say that my grandfather was fine?”

“Your grandfather is indeed not in any life-threatening danger, but I didn’t expect him to go mad like this,” Dustin said, de

ep in thought. He had examined Paul's pulse earlier, and as **long** as he didn't forcefully cultivate

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his energy, there shouldn't have been any issues.

*Dustin, can you come with me to check on my grandfather?" Patrick proposed.

"Let's go. I also want to see what's going on." Without saying much, Dustin followed Patrick out of the living

room.

At this moment, the entire Hill residence was in chaos. Several armed guards rushed in various directions, heading towards the garden.

When Dustin and Patrick arrived at the garden and saw the scene, they couldn't help but be astonished. The once grand garden was now in complete disarray. An elderly man with white eyebrows and a white beard was rampaging through the garden in his pajamas.

Like a bulldozer, he destroyed the trees and flowers wherever he went.

The man was none other than Paul.

"Kill! Attack!" Paul's eyes were bloodshot, his expression ferocious and mad. He would even roar like a beast. Anyone who approached was sent flying by him. They didn't even have the chance to put up a fight.

Paul was once a master of Balerno martial arts. Although he was old now, he was still formidable. Especially after losing control, he couldn't recognize anyone and kept wanting to kill others. Anyone who approached him

would be in trouble.

"Quick! Stop Mr. Hill!" Spring shouted hoarsely.

The guards approached in groups, holding shields. However, as soon as they got close, they were sent flying by Paul's strong palm.

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Paul's rampage left the guards severely injured. They coughed up blood and screamed in agony, yet couldn't

stop him.

"Oh no! Grandfather has gone mad!" Torben exclaimed in shock. His gaze suddenly fell on **Dustin**, and he shouted, "Uncle! It's all that kid's doing! He caused Grandfather to go berserk. Quickly, capture him!"

"That's right! I've long seen through this kid's malicious intentions. He deliberately poisoned Father and caused Father to end up like this. He must be punished severely!" Autumn echoed.

"Don't accuse Dustin without evidence! I don't believe he would do such a thing!" Patrick shouted.

"Hmm..." Frowning. Spring quickly approached Dustin and asked, "Young man, what's happening? Didn't you say my father was fine? Why did he lose control?"

"Somebody tampered with my needles." Dustin carefully observed and quickly noticed something wrong.

"Tampered with your needles? What do you mean?" Spring was puzzled.

"I inserted three silver needles in the posterior neck, lower chest, and stomach acupoints to stabilize internal injuries. However, the needle in the lower chest acupoint is missing." Dustin explained.

"Hmm... He's right!" Spring carefully examined and noticed the silver needle on Paul's chest was really missing.

"Hmph! **Stop** spouting nonsense!" Torben sneered. "I can **see** right through you. You're clearly guilty and

making excuses!"

“Spring, this guy must have caused Father to become like this. Stop wasting time and just torture him until he confesses the truth!” Autumn said, brimming with hostility.

“Uncle Spring, Dustin is my friend, and I’m willing to guarantee with my life that he’s innocent!” Patrick argued

firmly..

“Both of you are obviously in cahoots!” Torben spat.

“Enough! Shut your mouths!” Spring furrowed his brow and turned to Dustin. “Young man, you have

exceptional medical skills. Is there anything you can do to help my father regain control?”

“As long as you can restrain your father, I have a method to **bring** him to normal” Dustin replied calmly.

“Restrain my grandfather? That’s utter nonsense!” Torben was displeased. “Do you **even** know who my grandfather is? He was a master of Balerno martial arts, a towering figure in the martial arts world! Nobody can restrain my grandfather in Millsburg.”

“That’s right, young man. You just witnessed it. None of the armed guards could get close to my father. How can we restrain him?” Spring also looked troubled.

“Hmph! I think someone is deliberately looking for trouble!” Autumn’s gaze turned cold.

“This is surely tricky.” Patrick sighed.

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Paul was a master of Balerno martial arts. Only Jonas Hill, Spring’s oldest son, could compete with his grandfather in martial arts. However, Jonas was currently far away in Choux. He couldn’t come back in time.

“Run! Grandfather is coming this way!” Torben suddenly yelled.

Everyone looked up and saw Paul changing direction and charging toward them furiously. In an instant, everyone panicked and scattered in fear.

“Dustin! What are you waiting for? Run now!” Patrick turned his head and saw Dustin still standing in place.

“If you can’t stop him, then let me handle it.” Dustin replied calmly without evading.

“Dustin! Are you out of your mind? Come here quickly!” Patrick’s face fell upon witnessing the scene.

“Hmph! Ignorant fool!” Torben sneered repeatedly.

“Young people are so ignorant! Do you really think you can withstand my grandfather?” Autumn also looked gleeful wishing Dustin would die in his father’s hand.

“Young man, don’t be impulsive! You can’t stop my father!” Spring shouted.

Unfazed by the warnings, Dustin walked straight ahead.

“Kill! Attack!” Paul’s eyes were bloodshot as he shouted madly. Seeing someone blocking his path, he threw a

powerful punch.

In an instant, the world seemed to be in chaos. The surrounding plants and trees collapsed one after another.

The atmosphere itself seemed to distort.

A tremendous boom echoed as Dustin effortlessly caught Paul’s earth-shattering punch.

The whole area fell into complete silence.

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The entire garden fell eerily silent. Everyone **was** stunned by the scene before them. No one had expected Dustin to be able to block Paul's punch.

Not only did he block it, he didn't suffer any harm.

After all, Paul **was** once a master of the Balerno martial arts, a grandmaster. His punches **and** kicks carried the power to shatter mountains and split the earth. How many people in the Hill family could contend with such a terrifying existence?

"Did... Did he just block the punch?" Torben was so shocked that his **eyes** widened in disbelief. In their eyes, Paul represented the pinnacle of power in Millsburg. He could kill a divine-level martial artist with a casual move.

How could a doctor who came out of nowhere block a grandmaster's punch?

What was going on?

"Oh my god! Someone actually blocked Mr. Hill's punch! Am I seeing things?"

Cholas's mouth hung open, his jaw almost dropping to the ground. He had thought Dustin was only a genius in medicine, but he never

expected Dustin to be so good at martial arts too.

"Damn it! I didn't know Dustin **was so** good!" Patrick almost jumped up. Opening his mouth wide, he

completely disregarded his image.

"Who exactly is this guy?" Spring was shocked and suspicious. Sweat rolled down his forehead. He thought

Dustin **was** seeking death when he approached Paul just now, but he ended up blocking Paul's attack.

None of the elite guards from the Hill family **could** accomplish what the person did. His strength was evident.

"No... Impossible!"

Shocked. Autumn shook his **head** frantically, denying the truth. “This kid is in his twenties. How could he block

Father’s punch? It must be because Father’s power **has** greatly diminished due to his condition. That was why

he had the opportunity.”

“That’s right! Grandfather is physically weak and in a state of madness. His strength has greatly declined. Otherwise, **how** could this kid withstand him?” Torben echoed.

Upon hearing that, everyone nodded in agreement.

Indeed, if it wasn’t for the fact that Paul was physically weak and severely ill, he could definitely do better than

that. In the end, Dustin got lucky and found **a** loophole to block the punch.

Thinking of this, the crowd calmed **down**.

“Mr. Hill, sleep well.” Dustin paid no attention to the expressions of the **people** around him. Immediately after blocking Paul’s punch, he retrieved a silver needle and pierced it into the lower chest acupoint. **Instantly**.

Paul’s body went limp, and he fainted on the spot.

“**Young** man, how is it? Is my father okay?” Spring approached with a group of people.

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“He’s out of danger, just a bit weak. He’ll be fine after a nap,” Dustin shook his head.

“That’s good.” Spring sighed in relief.

“Dustin, you’re truly amazing! You actually went head-to-**head** with my grandfather. I’m impressed!” Patrick

gave him a thumbs up.

“Hmph! What’s so impressive about it? If it weren’t for Grandfather’s weakened state, he wouldn’t have been

able to withstand it. It’s just dumb luck, Torben said, feeling somewhat dissatisfied.

“Then why didn’t you step up earlier? You ran away like a rabbit,” Patrick taunted.

“You...” Torben was at a loss for words. Paul’s power was unquestionable. Who would dare to confront him?

“Alright, let’s help Mr. Hill back to rest.” Spring gestured, and soon the guards stepped forward and carried Paul into the room.

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“Young man, we will need your help again,” Spring said.

“Treating your father and saving his life is not a problem, but I hope you Hills can uphold your promise and pay me the full amount of money instead of resorting to coercion, intimidation, and taking advantage of your position,” Dustin said calmly.

“Coercion, intimidation, taking advantage of our position? What are you talking about, young man?” Spring was puzzled.

“Perhaps you should ask the two people next to you what they have done,” Dustin hinted.

“Autumn, what’s going on?” Spring frowned.

“Well...” Autumn hesitated to speak. He couldn’t openly bring up such embezzlement of funds.

“Uncle Spring, I know what’s going on. Uncle Autumn and the others took it upon themselves to change. Dustin’s 300 million remunerations into three million without permission **and** even went so far as to **threaten** him!” Patrick said seriously.

“Autumn! Have you lost your mind?” Spring’s face darkened. “Dustin saved our father’s life. He is the Hill family’s benefactor. How can you treat him like this? Who **gave you** the audacity? Do you think our father’s life is only worth a mere three million?!”

“Spring. I just feel that this kid doesn’t deserve so much money.” Autumn muttered.

“Nonsense!” Spring glared at Autumn. “Dustin has the skills. Why doesn’t he deserve the money? You’ve made **a** mistake yet show no signs of remorse. Immediately go to the shrine and kneel! Reflect on yourself!”

*Spring...”

“Get out!”

Autumn was about to say something, but Spring angrily interrupted him. Left with no choice, he could only

obediently kneel at the shrine.

“And you!” Spring glared at Torben.

The man shrank his neck and dared not defy him. Before leaving, Torben cast a resentful look at Dustin.

“Dustin, I apologize sincerely. I failed to teach them their manners. Please forgive **me**.” Spring said, looking

ashamed.

“It’s alright, **as** long as I get the money.” Dustin waved his hand. After all, he didn’t suffer any losses, **and** it

wasn’t a big deal.

“Patrick, go and personally withdraw the money for Dustin. Make sure you don’t make any mistakes, Spring instructed.

“No problem.” Patrick nodded and quickly left.

In no time, a 380 million check **was** handed over to Dustin.

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“Dustin, we owe you a great debt today.” Spring took out a silver waist token and presented it with both hands. “This is the Hill family’s guest token. With this, you will be an esteemed guest of the Hill family. Not only can you freely enter all the places of the Hill family, but if you encounter any trouble, you can also seek help from the Hill family through this token.”

“Dustin, you have to accept it. The token **is** a precious item. You can solve many problems with it,” Patrick said eagerly.

The guest token of the Hill family was something countless people dreamed of possessing. It meant having the support of the Hill family, almost allowing one to act recklessly within the boundaries of the entire South City.

“Well, since it’s a precious item, I’ll take it.” Dustin smiled and directly put it away.

As one of the Tremendous Three, the Hill family had tremendous influence in the seven provinces of Balerno. Dustin might need the Hill family’s help if he encountered any problems.

“If there’s nothing else, I will take my leave.” Dustin didn’t intend to stay any longer.

“Patrick, help me see Dustin off,” Spring said with a smile.

“Dustin, this way, please.” Patrick gestured with one hand, quickly leading Dustin away.

As Spring watched the two figures depart, his smile gradually faded and was replaced by a cold expression.

“He’s good in both medicine and martial arts. Not bad. He accidentally disrupted my plans. As he spoke, he flipped his palm, revealing a silver needle.

It **was** the same needle that **was** extracted from Paul’s body!

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It was evening, and Dustin was sitting in the living room of Enchanting Villa, engrossed in a book, when

Abigail suddenly rushed down the stairs.

“Uncle! I need your help with something urgent! Will you accompany me somewhere? Abigail leaned in, acting secretive.

“Where do you want to go?” Dustin’s curiosity was piqued.

“It’s a secret. You’ll find out once we get there.” Abigail playfully dodged the question.

“If you don’t tell me, I won’t **go**.” Dustin firmly declined.

“Well will you come with me if I tell you?” Abigail frowned.

“It depends on the situation.” Dustin shrugged.

“Alright, I’ll tell you. My friend is celebrating her birthday tonight, and we’ve planned to have some fun together,

Abigail **revealed** with a mischievous smile.

“What does your friend’s birthday have to do with me? I’m not going.” Dustin rolled his eyes.

“Hey! You’re not keeping your word! You just promised me earlier!” Abigail became a bit anxious.

“I said it depends on the situation. I didn’t promise you anything.”

“You, you, you... you’re being unfair!” Abigail stomped her **foot** in frustration.

“Listen, young lady. I’d rather quietly read my book than join you youngsters.” Dustin waved his hand dismissively.

“I’m giving **you** an opportunity here! Do you know that my friend is a celebrity? She’s gorgeous.” Abigail tried to tempt him.

“I’ve seen plenty of beautiful girls. I’m not interested.” Dustin shook **his head**.

“Hey! Are you even a man? You’re not interested in women at all?” Abigail bit her lip and snatched the book from Dustin’s hand. “Uncle, please, can’t you do it for me? If you don’t **go**, I won’t be able to go either!”

“Wait. **Why** does it matter if I go or not? You can go without me.” Dustin **was** speechless.

“You don’t believe me, huh? Follow me then.” Without waiting for a response, Abigail grabbed Dustin’s hand and pulled him towards the exit. However, when they reached the front door, Edmund suddenly appeared and blocked their way with a somewhat menacing look.

“You see that now?” Abigail turned her gaze toward Dustin as if saying, “See, this is why I can’t leave.”

Whenever she wanted to go out at night, her father would appear like a ghost, and there was no escaping him.

“Um...” Dustin was momentarily speechless.

“Abigail, you’re going out **again** at this late hour? Wasn’t the lesson from **last** time enough?” Edmund said sternly.

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“Hey, hold on! Get it straight! It’s not me who wants to go out. It’s this guy here, and I’m just accompanying him,” Abigail lied without batting an eye.

“Mr. Rhys, are you going somewhere?” Edmund was slightly stunned, but soon, his expression softened.

“Sort of.” Dustin forced a smile.

“Did you hear that? Uncle said he’s feeling bored at home and wants me to take him out for a stroll. Are you going to stop him?” Abigail spoke coldly. With that arrogant demeanor, she seemed to be leveraging Dustin’s presence.

“It Mr. Rhys wants to go out, of course, I won’t stop him. But please be careful and avoid crowded places.” Edmund squeezed a smile.

“Understood. You can step aside now, and don’t dampen Uncle’s mood.”

With that, Abigail forcefully dragged Dustin away.

She immediately showed her true colors once they were out of Edmund’s sight. “Uncle, I didn’t expect you to be so useful. It seems I’ll have to make good use of you as my tool in the future.”

“Just listen to what you’re saying.” Dustin responded impatiently. “Either study diligently or practice martial arts seriously. Don’t wander around aimlessly all the time and waste your great talent.”

“Uncle, I’ve been training all day. Don’t you understand the importance of work—
life balance? I should at least take a break, right?” Abigail raised her head proudly. “Considering that you helped me once, I’ll treat you to something tonight!”

Dustin shook his head and couldn’t be bothered to argue with her.

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Since he was quite free, he thought he could use some time to relax.

Twenty minutes later, Dustin and Abigail exited the car in front of a music bar. Compared to the lively and noisy atmosphere of a karaoke bar, the music bar was quieter. Friends could sit together, drink, chat, and listen to music. It was relaxing and comfortable.

“Abigail! Over here!”

Right after they entered the music bar, a short-haired girl stood up and waved at Abigail. Dustin followed the direction of the sound and recognized several familiar faces.

The short-**haired** girl was Nina Sharp. Another one was a popular guy in school, Mike Horton. Dustin thought the rest looked quite familiar but couldn't recall their names.

The only person he couldn't recognize was a girl in a school uniform. She looked young and pretty. The girl had a delicate oval face with exquisite features. She looked pure **and** innocent, like a fairy. With just a glance, she could capture a person's attention.

"Sorry, we're late. Abigail approached them with a smile and took the opportunity to introduce Dustin, "Uncle,

you've already met everyone else. So I won't introduce them again. As for this person, she's the star of today.

our guest of honor, Ruby Xenos."

Abigail added, "Let me tell you a secret. Ruby is not only a popular live streamer with millions of fans, but

she's also a star at our school."

"Abigail, don't be ridiculous. I'm just a trainee, still far from being a star," Ruby pouted.

"Your singing is so beautiful. It's only a matter of time before you debut. I believe you'll become famous in no

time!" Abigail said with a smile.

"Whatever you say!" Ruby rolled her eyes.

"Look, I didn't lie to you. I told you there would be beautiful girls here. **So**, are you impressed?" Abigail turned

back and teased Dustin.

Dustin glanced at her sideways and couldn't be bothered to respond.

"I mean, Abigail, why did you bring an outsider with us when we're here to drink **and** sing?" Mike seemed

displeased.

“Yeah, Abigail, it’s Ruby’s birthday today, and it’s not quite appropriate to bring a stranger along.” Nina chimed

In.

“It’s alright. The more, the merrier,” Unfazed, Ruby smiled.

“That’s right! This guy here is good at fighting. If anything happens, he can be our bodyguard.” Abigail nodded

repeatedly.

“What’s the point of being good at fighting? If something really happens, it’s all about connections and relationships,” Mike sneered. Since Dustin stole the limelight before, he had been holding a grudge. He wanted

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to use Lord Horst to deal with Dustin and settle the score. Yet the man slapped him right then and there. His face **was still a** bit swollen.

“Alright, let’s not talk about that anymore. Since everyone is here, let Ruby **sing us a song.**” Abigail quickly changed the subject.

“It’s been so long since I’ve heard Ruby sing. Today, we’re finally in for a treat!”

“Ruby, come on stage quickly. I can’t **wait** any longer!”

The crowd joined in the cheer.

“Well, I’ll try my best then.” Ruby nodded with a smile, then walked up to the stage and talked with the male singer. The male singer readily agreed and willingly gave up his spot.

“Oh, this young beauty is taking over the stage. Interesting.”

“Hey, pretty! Sing ‘The Love of a Boatman’ for me!”

As soon **as** Ruby stepped on stage, she immediately drew the attention of countless people, especially the men who had a few drinks. They became even more excited and kept cheering for Ruby.

“I’m sorry, I **don’t** know how to sing this song.” Ruby apologized.

“The Love of a Boatman is simple. You can learn it on the spot. As long as you sing this song, I’ll **reward** you!” A chubby guy walked forward with a smile, holding ten roses that he had purchased. Each rose cost one hundred dollars. He had spent more than enough to request a song.

“I really don’t know how to sing this song.” Ruby seemed awkward.

“I don’t care. I’ve already requested the song, and if you don’t sing, it means you’re disrespecting me.” The chubby man continued with an evil grin. “Of course, if you’re willing to have a few drinks with me, we can let this matter go.”

Upon hearing that, Mike immediately stood up, infuriated.

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“Hey! What the f*ck **are** you talking about?” Mike sprung up and yelled, feeling a burst of righteousness after

seeing the sleazy man pester Ruby. “My friend already told you she can’t sing the song! Why the hell do you

keep pressing her?”

“Exactly! How can you force people to sing songs they don’t know? Aren’t you being too unreasonable?” Ninal chimed in. The others who had remained silent wore similar indignant expressions.

“A show—off, huh?” The chubby man sneered, “She should follow the rules since she walked onto the stage. I’ve already paid, so she has to sing!”

“So what if you paid? That measly sum is barely enough to buy coffee!” Mike scoffed disdainfully. “You want to talk about rules? Let me humor you. Hey, I’ll

give you 100 roses. Sing whatever you like for the first song!” he **said** and paid ten thousand dollars on the spot.

“Damn! He sure is easygoing with his money. He spent ten thousand without hesitation.”

“He’s probably some rich kid. Let’s see what happens.”

The

ama, which was far more interesting than someone’s singing, attracted many onlookers, reaching the desired effect.

“I expected more than just ten thousand dollars,” the chubby man Jeered before pulling out a card and swiping it through the card terminal. He yelled. “Bring this girl ten bottles of red wine!”

Each bottle cost ten thousand dollars, so ten bottles added up to 100 thousand dollars. It took guts to spend that much **money** without even hesitating.

“Holy shit! Spending 100 thousand dollars for one song? That guy must be loaded!”

“I can’t understand the life of the rich. 100 thousand is my total salary for an entire year.”

“That girl’s getting so much **money** for no reason, Is this one of the perks of being pretty?”

The crowd began whispering among themselves for different reasons, namely surprise, envy, and even jealousy, while the owner of the music bar beamed from ear to ear. Usually, they only get a few thousand bucks in tips at most; today, however, they were getting over 100 thousand dollars, which meant that the owner would be raking in a large profit even if he split the amount evenly with the singer.

“Why aren’t you saying anything, punk? Don’t tell me you can’t even pay 100 thousand bucks?” Chubster

taunted, causing Mike’s expression to darken.

“It’s on! Let’s see how much you’re willing to spend!” Mike immediately swiped his card again and shouted. “I want 20 bottles!”

20 bottles cost 200 thousand dollars, double what Chubster **had** paid earlier. **There** was no way Mike was willing to give up now.

“Hey, chubster. Do you know how powerful Mike is? You should give up before you embarrass yourself!” Nina boasted loudly.

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“Hmph! Mike’s family has hundreds of millions in assets. What makes you think you can win against him?”

“Precisely! 200 thousand is nothing to him. I dare you to top that. Let’s see who the final winner is.”

A chorus of taunts **and** jeers rose from **the** crowd of youngsters, who were at the age where they cared about nothing else besides their ego. Naturally, it meant returning insults after being on the receiving end.

“Foolish brats!” The chubby man sniggered and swiped his card again. “I want another hundred bottles!”

“100 bottles of red wine?” The man’s order caused an uproar among the crowd, who couldn’t believe someone

had not hesitated to spend **a** million dollars on 100 bottles of red wine.

“He’s a real tycoon!”

“That much money could get him a house, but he **gave** it away so casually. Just how rich is he?”

Everyone was shocked. No one expected to encounter such a scene when they merely came to enjoy some

drinks and music.

“I dare you to top that, brat.” Chubster sniggered.

Mike gritted his teeth, his expression darkening. A million dollars was far from a small amount of money. His

monthly allowance was only 100 thousand dollars at most, and his yearly allowance amounted to only around

a million dollars. The thought of spending a year’s worth of allowance just for a singer troubled

Mike. Worse still, he didn’t have that much money on his card.

“Get him, Mike!”

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“Yeah! He’s too arrogant! You should teach him a lesson!”

“It won’t be a big deal since the money is going to Ruby anyway.”

Mike’s friends were ticked off by the chubby man’s attitude and chose to fuel the fire. Mike’s hands clenched

into fists, his face becoming stormy with anger.

“Goddamn it! I just wanted to show off and impress Ruby. How was I supposed to know that the average-

looking chubster was rich?” he thought.

“Pfft! Don’t tell me you ran out of money,” the chubby man jeered as realization dawned on him. “You’re trying to show off your wealth when you don’t even have a million dollars? How embarrassing!”

“You-

” Mike’s jaw clenched, but he couldn’t refute what the other man was saying.

His friends quickly noticed something was wrong after seeing him remain silent, and they soon realized they

might lose.

“What made you think an immature brat like you could win against me? How foolish!” The chubby man scoffed. “Go home and play with your toys instead of making a fool of yourself here. Do you fancy yourself a knight in **shining** armor? Ha, **what a** joke!”

“You’re going too far!” Mike yelled.

“So what? You could **always** prove me wrong by paying up.” Chubster taunted, rendering Mike speechless. Shut the hell up if you don’t have that **money**.” The chubby man glowered at Mike before turning his attention

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to Ruby. “I’ve spent a million dollars on you, sweetie, so you better start singing. You’re going to have a few drinks with me after that too.”

“I’ll sing for **you**, but I’m going to have to turn down the drinks.” Ruby shook her head.

While she was shocked by the chubby man’s considerable wealth, she also knew what he had in mind, so there was no way she’d share some drinks with him.

“I spent over a million dollars on you, so how hard can it be to share a few drinks with me?” Chubster huffed. displeased.

“I’m not good with drinks.” Ruby seemed troubled.

“Shut up! You aren’t leaving here if you don’t drink with me!” the chubby man shouted.

“Is a million a lot?” Dustin suddenly questioned icily. “I’ll pay you ten million dollars to leave this instant instead of disgusting everyone.

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“Ten million?” The crowd exchanged astonished glances when they heard him . Ordinary citizens couldn’t even

dream of earning that much money in their lifetime. How could Dustin make such a bold statement?

“Do you even have that kind of money?” Abigail asked, shocked and anxious.

“Come on, don’t show off when you don’t even have that much money. You’ll only end up embarrassing yourself.” Mike said scornfully, giving Dustin a disdainful look. Although he dared not challenge the chubby man again, he still had the audacity to look down on Dustin. There **was** no way he believed a shabby-looking country bumpkin could win against someone as wealthy as Chubster.

“**You’re** just spouting nonsense to show off, right? Well, let’s see how this ends!” Nina snorted, not believing

that someone like Dustin would **have** ten million dollars.

“Who the f*ck said that?” Surprised, Chubster glanced around the room frostily.

“It was me.” Dustin stood up slowly, his stare icy.

“**Are** you challenging me?” Chubster sneered. “Are you sure a beggar like you has ten million dollars?”

“And what if I do?” Dustin retorted.

“Then you can have the girl. If you don’t, you’ll have to get on your knees in front of everyone and bark like a dog!” Chubster taunted.

Upon hearing that, the crowd roared enthusiastically. After all, the show had gone from just competing with

money to **verbal** insults.

“Why don’t we **just** let this go? Fighting against someone like him is pointless.” Abigail advised Dustin. Truth be told, she doubted Dustin as well. After all, he wouldn’t be staying in her home if he had ten million dollars.

“Of course not. He challenged me, so how can I back down now?” Dustin replied nonchalantly.

“But **this** is ten million dollars we’re talking about, not one million!” Abigail **cried**, feeling desperate. She

dreaded the thought of seeing Dustin bark like a dog for the chubby man.

“Don’t worry. It’s just ten million dollars. No biggie,” Dustin answered with a smile.

“Do you think you’re a billionaire? Just ten million dollars? Yeah, right.” Nina snorted. How could a country bumpkin like him have ten million dollars when even someone as rich as Mike was struggling?

“Let him be. We should just let him keep acting.” Mike smiled coolly.

“**Hey!** What are you guys mumbling about over there?” Chubster shouted. “Are you going to do it or not? Get lost if you’re not. You’re ruining my mood!”

“Who says I’m not going to?” Dustin smirked. “But we should make it fair. The person who loses **has** to **kneel** and **bark** like a dog. How about that?”

“Are you trying to scare me? Ha, you’re on!” Chubster retorted boldly. “I’ll get down on my knees and start barking if you can produce ten million dollars.”

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“We have a deal.” Dustin smiled and pulled out his card, tossing it to the owner. “I’d like to treat that lady to ten million dollars.”

“Are you serious?” The owner gripped the card, bewildered. His entire establishment wasn’t even worth that much money.

“Why would I lie? Swipe it. The PIN is 666666,” Dustin replied calmly.

“Alright, then.” The owner gulped and ran to the counter to process the request.

Chubster started feeling nervous when he saw how confident Dustin was. “Don’t tell me that shabby kid

actually has that much money," he thought.

The rest of the crowd also began exchanging uncertain glances.

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Despite how plainly dressed Dustin was, his confident and collected demeanor made people think twice about their opinions of him. They began to believe that he was either a regular braggart or someone who actually

had ten million dollars.

As everyone waited silently for the results, the restaurant owner walked over and said, "My apologies, sir, but the PIN was wrong, and the transaction failed."

"Wrong?" Dustin was surprised.

Wasn't his PIN 666666? Did he remember wrongly?

"What about the ten million you were talking about?" Chubster burst out laughing. "Why bother pretending if you're poor? Did you think you could get away with it by acting? What a joke!"

"Tsk. Turns out he's just a braggart. I nearly believed him."

"I know, right? And it must be embarrassing to get your lie exposed like that."

Everyone cast their mocking and disdainful gazes at him, believing that the wrong PIN was his excuse to escape from paying. There was no way they'd allow him to get the attention without paying the money.

"That's such a stupid trick. Only you would use that kind of excuse!" Mike scoffed loudly.

"What kind of friend do you have, Abigail? He's so shameless! Isn't it bad enough that he's poor? How could he pretend to be wealthy?" **Nina** sneered.

*Exactly. Who knew someone who looks as good **as** him would do something like that?"

The group Dustin was sitting with began chipping in with scornful comments, feeling ashamed.

“I told you not to act like a hero.” Abigail frowned, her face burning slightly.

Instead of responding to the mockery. Dustin turned to the owner and said, “If the PIN isn’t 666666, then it’s 888888. Try again.”

“Are you sure?” The owner raised an eyebrow, displeased. He was sure he was being toyed with.

“Yes.” Dustin nodded.

“Fine. I hope it’s correct this time.” The owner smirked before heading back to the counter.

“Pilt! Keep acting, then!” Chubster sneered. “Let’s see how long you can keep this up.”

“I guess someone people just don’t know when to give up,” Mike quipped.

“Doesn’t he find it embarrassing to keep up with the act when he’s already been exposed?” Nina humphed in disgust.

Dustin had clearly turned into a clown, and the onslaught of insults and jeers never stopped.

Just then, the owner rushed over anxiously and stammered. “I—it’s wrong, **sir!**”

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“What? It’s still wrong?” Dustin frowned.

Those surrounding him burst out laughing this time.

“This trick again? Can’t you think of something new?”

‘I’ve met people who are shameless, but none who are as shameless as you!’

Stop joking around. Get to your knees and start barking.

“How shameful! Well, you had it coming.”

By then, Chubster, **Mike**, and everyone else **was** blatantly laughing at him.

“You’re all mistaken! It’s not the PIN that’s wrong; it’s the amount I keyed in!”
The owner cried out, panicked. “I was supposed to key in ten million dollars, but I accidentally added another zero, and the amount became 100 million dollars! Worse, the transaction has already gone through, so I can’t fix it! I’m so sorry.”

Instantly, the room went pin-drop silent.

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The crowd was stunned to see the owner frantically apologizing to Dustin. They all gaped at Dustin, jaws dropped in disbelief.

Ten million dollars had accidentally turned into 100 million dollars, and the transaction was successful?

How much **money** was on that card?

No one could laugh anymore. Instead, their eyes were full of shock and envy as they stared at Dustin, who had easily paid what ordinary families couldn’t even earn after generations.

He was the true tycoon!

“That’s impossible!” After getting **over** his shock, Mike’s reaction turned into disbelief. “Did you make a mistake, sir? There’s no way this guy could have so much money!”

How could such a shabbily dressed man have 100 million dollars?

“He’s right. It has to be fake. There’s no way anyone would carry 100 million dollars around!” Nina voiced her suspicions as well. Although none of the others spoke, they obviously doubted it as well.

“Look closely, you ignorant fools!” The owner humphed and slapped the bill onto the table.

Several people who read the slip of paper were shocked.

“I—it’s real?”

Both Mike and Nina were stunned, and even those who had their doubts were astonished. With the proof right before their **eyes**, they had no choice but to recognize Dustin’s wealth,

“Where did you get so much money?” Abigail asked in awe. Ten million dollars was shocking enough, much less 100 million.

“I earned it, of course. How else?” Dustin responded indifferently.

“What do you do to earn that much?” Abigail became even more curious.

“I’m a doctor. I treat wealthy people, so it shouldn’t be surprising. Dustin answered truthfully.

“I see

For a moment. Abigail pondered if she should start learning medicine instead.

“My apologies, sir. I’ll contact someone to refund you immediately,” the owner kept apologizing. There was no way he could afford to offend someone who had over 100 million dollars. Anyone in their industry knows that if someone **has** 100 million in their deposits, their total assets could be worth ten times more!

*Just get it done,” Dustin responded with a nod before turning his attention to Chubster. “Hey, Chubster! I don’t have ten million dollars. Will 100 million do?”

The corner of Fatty’s eye twitched, his face darkening rapidly. Just like how arrogant his attitude had been earlier, he felt equally humiliated right now. Who could have thought that a country bumpkin could be this rich?

“I’ll take your silence as a ‘yes,’ Dustin smirked. “As per our earlier agreement, you should get to your **knees** and start barking now.”

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“You should go easy on others. You never know what might happen in the future, so don’t **push** your luck!” Chubster growled.

"I doubt you were going to let me go easily either, so why should I go easy on you?" Dustin wore a fake smile.

"Because I'm from the Doyle family!" Chubster answered coldly. "My name is Duncan Doyle, and my eldest brother is Terry Doyle, someone who is well-known in Millsburg!"

"What? Terry Doyle?"

Everyone paled after hearing his name. Most people have heard of that name before. The Doyle family is a martial arts family that runs a security firm. They were known for providing excellent security for wealthy and powerful families.

Terry Doyle was the future head of the family. At a young age, he **had** already made a name for himself for being a capable but ruthless man who disregarded the law.

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In terms of power, Terry was potentially Tyler Grant's rival since they both liked doing things however they

wanted.

"So what if you're rich? You still have to submit to the Doyle family." Mike goaded secretly.

As a martial arts family, the Doyle family has always acted however they liked, so they would never take this

matter lightly.

"The Doyle family is incredibly powerful. I guess it's over for this guy." **Nina** shook her head, **pleased** with the

show.

Being rich was different from being powerful. Some rich families were nothing but ants to powerful families.

"You **scared** now?" Duncan smirked. "Since you know who I am now, **you** should know what to do next, right?"

He may not be able to withdraw 100 million dollars, but he had a powerful brother. As long **as** he used his brother's name, most people would let him have his way.

"So what? Don't be a sore loser. You've **lost** the bet, so you should keep **your** side of the bargain," Dustin responded bluntly.

"Huh?" Duncan frowned. "Do you **have** any idea what you're saying? Are you challenging the Doyle family right now?"

"My answer remains the same. Since you lost, you'll have to kneel! Custin answered.

"You have **no** shame!" Duncan slammed his palm onto the table and yelled. "Men, teach him **a** lesson!"

Immediately, two burly bodyguards popped out of the corner of the room.

"Those who disrespect the Doyle family will have to pay the price. Therefore, we will break one of your arms

today!"

The two guards glowered at Dustin as they advanced furiously, making people dodge aside out of **fear**,

"Go **away!**" As soon as the two men **came** near him, Dustin smacked them across the face forcefully, sending them flying. Furniture broke, and wine splattered in all directions.

"Holy shit!" Duncan was shocked. He didn't expect Dustin to be so powerful, defeating his two elite

bodyguards effortlessly.

"Kneel!" Dustin walked toward the other man slowly, his eyes turning menacing.

"Y—you better not mess around! My brother won't let you go if you harm me!" Duncan shrieked.

"Is that **so**? Let's see if your brother is capable enough." Dustin **sneered** before jamming his foot into Duncan's abdomen.

"Ouch!" Duncan wailed. He soared through the air before his knees smashed into the ground, turning into a bloody mess.

"H-h-how dare you hit me!" Duncan stammered, outraged,

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"So what?" Dustin replied calmly. "You shouldn't blame me for teaching you a **lesson** when you broke your promise first. It should be fair to trade the three barks with three slaps."

With that, he delivered two slaps across Duncan's face. It caused the man to feel lightheaded, his teeth popping out and his nose bleeding. Duncan's already plump face swelled up even further.

"Remember to keep a low profile the next time you try to have some fun." Dustin raised his hand slowly and delivered the last blow.

With a loud smack, Duncan's body, which weighed over 200 pounds, flew into the air before landing on one of the tables heavily, and the man passed out on the spot.

The sight had rendered everyone speechless as they gaped at Dustin,

How could he hit someone from the Doyle family? Did he have a death wish?

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“Are you out of your mind? How could you attack someone from the Doyle family?” Nina and the others went pale as a sheet when they saw Duncan lying on the floor, unconscious. They never expected Dustin to be so

bold.

“So what?” Dustin replied, unconcerned.

“Hmph! What an ignorant fool!” Nina glanced at him disdainfully. “The Doyle family is one of the Fabulous Five. You might end up as a corpse floating in the Ziby River by tomorrow!”

“Really? I don’t think so.” Dustin **shrugged**.

“Don’t think you can do whatever you want just because you’re rich. The Doyle family is far stronger than you can imagine.” Mike informed scornfully. Terry Doyle **is** also a protective man. If he hears that his family was attacked, he’ll take this seriously! If I were you, I’d start apologizing to them and atoning for my sins. That way, you might still have a chance of survival.”

Dustin gave the other man a small smile in response. “Well, you aren’t me.”

“I’ve said what I needed to say. Since you’re being so foolish, good luck. Let’s go!” Mike sneered and got up to leave. He didn’t want to get caught up in this mess with the Doyle family.

“Hmph! It’s no use talking to people like you. When the time comes, you’ll learn just how powerful they are.” Nina shot Dustin a glare before following Mike

.

“Dude, word of advice? Leave Millsburg right now. Run as far as you can before it’s too late,” the group cautioned before leaving hurriedly, worried they might get roped in as well.

“What should we do now? You seem to have gotten yourself in trouble now. I shouldn’t have encouraged you earlier.” Abigail muttered worriedly. She has heard of the Doyle family before as well. They were people whom ordinary citizens like her could never cross.

“Calm down. It’s no big deal.” Dustin **smiled**.

“Yeah, right. Quit bragging.” Abigail huffed.

“You’ll find out soon.” Dustin chuckled but didn’t explain further.

“Thanks for that just now.” Just then, Ruby walked over and nodded her head at Dustin.

“You’re welcome. That chubster **just** happened to annoy me.” Dustin waved her off before suddenly thinking of something. ‘Oh, right. Remember to return my ten million dollars.’”

“What?” Ruby was stunned. She didn’t expect him to bring up money at that moment.

“Hey, how can you ask someone to pay back the money you’ve already gifted out? That’s such a spineless **move**.” Abigail gave him an odd look.

“I was only doing that to defend you guys. You don’t expect me to still give my money away, do you?” Dustin splayed out his hands.

“You’re an interesting **guy**. Sure. I’ll return your money to you. Let me get your contact first.”

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Ruby smiled and exchanged numbers with Dustin before continuing. “You can call me if the Doyle family tries

anything funny.”

“Huh?” Dustin **was** surprised. From the way Ruby spoke, he could tell that there was more than what met the

eye.

“It’s late, Abigail. I’ll be going home now. Talk to you soon,” Ruby waved her hand and turned to leave..

“Hey, kid. Who’s that friend of yours? She **doesn’t** seem like an **ordinary** person.” Dustin casually asked.

“I heard that she comes from a rich family, but I don’t know what business the y’re **in**.” Abigail shook her head. “Forget it. Let’s go. Your dad’s going to get worried.” Pushing the matter aside. Dustin and Abigail quickly left.

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The next morning. Dustin **was** reading medical literature when a silver Bentley pulled up at the entrance of the courtyard.

“Bad news, Dustin! Something happened to my dad!” Ruth rushed into the building and yelled anxiously.

“Calm down. Your dad won’t die yet.” Dustin slowly lowered his book, looking unbothered.

“Huh? How did you know?” Ruth was surprised.

“Didn’t I tell you yesterday? Your father **was** poisoned, and he won’t live past three days. This is only the second day, so he still has one **day** left.” Dustin answered.

“Then, what should we do? Can you treat him?” Ruth pressed.

“I can, but on one condition.”

“What is it?”

“I hope your family can agree to your sister’s request and break off the engagement with the Grant family.

“Break off the engagement?” Ruth frowned. “Dustin, this isn’t a matter to be taken lightly. My father won’t agree to it.”

The marriage was one that both families were expecting. Should the engagement be broken off, the relationship between the two families would worsen, which could negatively impact the Harmon family.

“Don’t tell me it’s more important than your father’s life?” Dustin retorted.

“You don’t know my dad. He’s always prioritized the bigger picture. For the greater good of the family, he’d rather sacrifice himself!” Ruth told him gravely.

“He’s that stubborn?” Dustin was surprised.

“Why else would my sister be forced to do something against her will? I would love for you to be my brother-in-law, but my dad will never allow her to break off the engagement.” Ruth sighed.

“What a stubborn old man!” Dustin frowned. At first, he thought he’d be able to use this incident to change the other man’s mind, but it seemed like that plan was bound to fail.

Suddenly, Ruth said, “If you want to stop them from getting married, I have an idea.”

“What is it?” Dustin asked.

“It’ll be hard to get through my dad, but you can always try someone **else**. For example, the Grant family.” Ruth lowered her voice. “The Harmons’ annual family gathering is happening tomorrow. I’m sure Tyler will send some gifts tomorrow. You should use that opportunity to kick up a fuss. You might be able to mess the

engagement up that way.”

“Are you sure it’ll work?” Dustin thought about it.

“That doesn’t matter. You still have to try. I’m sure you’ll be fine.” Ruth puffed out her chest.

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Dustin stared at her tiredly without replying. She must spend too much time watching soap operas.

“I don’t mind saving your father, Roth, but I need to meet your sister first.” Dustin decided to compromise. He was more worried that he might take things too far, so he wanted to ask for Natasha’s opinion beforehand.

“No problem. I’ll get it down right now!” Ruth took out her phone and made a call. After a moment, she answered. “My mom agreed. As long as you can treat my father, she’ll let you meet my sister.”

“Deal!” Dustin sprung up and got into the Bentley to accompany Ruth back to the Harmon estate. He has been feeling anxious for the past few days. Now, they could finally meet again.

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At noon, Dustin sat in Ruth’s car, and the two of them arrived at the Harmon estate with **ease**.

As one of the Fabulous Five, the Harmon family’s headquarters were luxurious. It had a man-made lake, a garden with artificial hills, farms, wineries, and numerous magnificent villas.

Hundreds of guards patrolled the perimeters, and dozens of staff worked there, fully demonstrating the power

of an aristocratic family.

Staring at the garden, Dustin pondered about the annual family **gathering** happening tomorrow.

“We’re here.”

The silver Bentley slowly pulled into the entrance of the main villa. As soon as they got out of the car, they

spotted Jessica and two servants waiting for them at the entrance.

“You’re here.” Jessica gave Dustin a look over and asked coolly, “Yesterday, you said that my husband was poisoned by mystic poison. Is that true?”

“**You** wouldn’t **have** looked for me if it weren’t,” Dustin answered, making Jessica narrow her eyes.

She would never have sought him out if her husband, Hector, hadn’t succumbed to the odd illness. Even the doctors in their family couldn’t find the cause of the problem.

“Let me ask you again. Are you sure you can cure him?” Jessica asked again.

“I’m not sure. That depends on the severity of his sickness. If it hasn’t progressed too far, it’ll be easy to treat but it’ll be hard if it has.” Dustin didn’t promise her anything.

“Follow me.” Jessica frowned and spun around to lead the way.

Dustin and Ruth quickly followed her, and they soon arrived at a ward full of medical equipment. Many specialists were gathered there as they tried to come up with a treatment plan while Hector lay unconscious on the bed. His once charming face had turned blue, and his lips had turned a shade of purple from the

powerful **poison**.

Dustin approached the bed and took Hector’s pulse before checking his eyes and mouth. He was now sure that Hector had been poisoned by incredibly potent poison.

“Dustin, how’s my dad? Can you treat him?” Ruth asked tentatively.

“It’s a little tricky, but I can try.” Dustin answered after thinking about it.

“Try?” Jessica frowned. “This is his life we’re talking about, and you’re telling me you’ll try? Are you joking?”

“Mrs. Harmon, this isn’t any regular poison. We’ll **have** to take a risk if we want to save him.” Dustin explained. With how serious Hector’s condition was, it’d be a miracle if they could even save his life.

“That’s not what I want to hear! I want my husband to recover completely!” Jessica hissed.

“She’s right. If you can’t do it, let us treat him.”

Suddenly, **a group** of people entered the room. They were led by a chubby, middle-aged man, followed by

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Quentin and a voluptuous woman wearing a dress.

“What are you guys doing here. Trent?” Jessica was surprised.

The Harmon family had three brothers. The eldest was Trent Harmon, the middle was Jacob Harmon, and the youngest **was** Hector Harmon.

As the most capable brother, Hector ended up being the head of the family.

“I heard Hector had fallen ill, so I sought out a famous international doctor. Trent gestured to someone behind him, and a blond man in a coat walked forward, proudly carrying a case.

“This is Dr. Peter Shillingford.” Trent introduced with a smile. “Dr. Peter is one of the best doctors in the world, and he’s currently a professor at Harvard Medical School. He’s known for treating all sorts of illnesses. I’m sure Hector will be safe now that he’s here.”

“A professor at Harvard?” Jessica’s face lit up when she heard that. It was easy to imagine how excellent Peter’s skills must be to be a professor at the world’s **best** medical school. There was no way the doctors in

their country could be better than him.

“What are you waiting for, Rhys? Step aside! There’s no way your measly skills can compete with Dr. Peter.” Trent sneered.

“I’m not underestimating him, but he won’t be able to treat this,” Dustin replied calmly. The poison inside Hector was made up of a combination of witchcraft and parasitic poison. No matter how advanced Western.

medicine might be, there was no way the doctor would be able to treat this.

“Humph! What a fool!” Quentin snapped. Just because you’re a loser doesn’t mean Dr. Peter is. Go **away**.

Don’t **delay** Hector’s treatment!”

“Jessica, what on earth were you thinking? How could you trust a quack doctor? What would you do if Hector ended up suffering side effects? Who would take the responsibility for that? Trent demanded, displeased.

“You’re right.” Jessica smiled sheepishly. She turned around and told Dustin, “Dustin, get out of Dr. Peter’s

way.”

“Mrs. Harmon, I promise I can save Mr. Harmon’s life, but I can’t say the same for someone else.” Dustin

warned.

“Don’t tell **me** you think you’re better than Dr. Peter. What a joke!” Quentin sniggered. “Dr. Peter is one of the best international professors of medicine. How about you? You don’t even have a medical license. What **gives** you the courage to challenge Dr. Peter?”

“Things from overseas aren’t necessarily better. Besides, traditional medicine isn’t inferior to modern medicine. * Dustin retorted.

“I’ve heard of traditional medicine before. It’s the thing people **use** to trick patients, isn’t it?” Peter’s smug voice rang out. His intonation wasn’t the best, but his words could still be **heard** clearly.

“You’re right! I knew you’d be able to tell!” Quentin gave Peter a thumbs-up and smiled. “Modern medicine is the best. Traditional medicine **is** old news by now. People only use it to trick others nowadays.”

“I don’t mind you looking down at me, but you shouldn’t look down on traditional medicine. Ignorant people

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like you don't even know how powerful traditional medicine can be." Dustin narrowed his eyes.

"Why don't we have a small competition since you seem unconvinced?" Peter smirked.

"How?" Dustin.

"See this patient right here? We'll come up with our own treatment plans. Who ever treats him the quickest wins. The person who loses has to admit that they're nothing but a fraud and quit practicing medicine." Peter taunted.

"Are you sure you want to put the stakes so high?" Dustin raised an eyebrow.

"Why? Are you afraid?" Peter leered. "I'll let this matter go if you admit that traditional medicine is merely a fraud."

"Afraid?" Dustin shook his head. "Well, I am slightly afraid that you might burst out crying."

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"You agree, then?" Peter regarded Dustin disdainfully with his arms folded.

"Of course." Dustin nodded. "Since you look so confident. I'm curious to see how good you are. However, I

hope you don't regret your promise later."

"Good. I'll show you how lacking your traditional medicine is compared to modern medicine!" Peter smirked smugly. He pulled a vial of green liquid from his case and explained. "See this? This is the newest antidote my

team developed. Within thirty minutes, the patient will wake up again."

"Good luck." Dustin's response was simple.

“Look closely. This is the power of science!” Peter exclaimed before slowly injecting the green drug into

Hector’s body.

After ten minutes, the unconscious man began to react. Sweat beaded Hector’s forehead, his limbs began warming up, and the blue discoloration in his skin began to recede as his condition began to improve.

“It’s working! It’s working!”

Jessica and Ruth were over the moon to see the changes.

As expected of a leading medical professor from abroad, the effects of such a small action were amazing.

“Do you see this, Rhys? This is Dr. Peter’s skills. One vial was enough to deal with a complicated issue you couldn’t deal with!” Quentin grinned.

“That’s just a temporary fix. It won’t fix the root cause.” Dustin replied indifferently.

“You sure are as stubborn as a mule!” Quentin humphed.

“Western medicine is all about science while traditional medicine is nothing but tricks. How could you ever win?” Peter grinned smugly.

“You’re incredible, Dr. Peter!” Jessica praised.

“What do you think, Jessica? The person I asked for help is **good**, isn’t he?” Trent smiled softly.

“Thank you so much, Trent. I don’t know what I’d do without you.” Jessica lowered her head.

“Don’t mention it. We’re a family, after all.” Trent waved her off.

“The annual family gathering is tomorrow. As the head of the family, Hector will have to host the event, so make sure he takes care of himself.”

“I will.” Jessica nodded her head.

“Hey, Rhys! It’s time to keep up your end of the bargain!” Quentin yelled. “From today onwards, you’re a liar who can’t ever practice medicine again. Got it?”

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don’t **know** who the winner is yet. Aren’t you speaking too soon?” Dustin retorted.

“Just look at the evidence. Are you trying to go back on your word?” Quentin sniggered.

“Open your goddamn eyes and see how your uncle is doing.” Dustin gestured with his chin.

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“Huh?”

Quentin turned around to see that Hector’s condition had worsened. His skin, which had seen some improvement earlier, had turned blue once more.

“**Why** is this happening? Hasn’t he been cured?” Quentin paled.

“Dr. Peter, what’s happening?” Jessica frowned, her earlier happiness quickly turning back to worry.

“That’s odd. He **was** fine just now.” Peter noted, puzzled. “Maybe the dosage was too low. Let me inject another vial.” He pulled out another vial from his case and administered the drug once more.

The results **were** the same. After a temporary improvement, Hector’s skin and lips would turn blue and purple. and his limbs would turn stiff again. Instead of improving, his condition seemed to worsen further. “Dr. Peter, didn’t you say that everything was fine? Why is this happening?”

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Jessica’s **eyes had** turned hostile.

“That’s odd. We’ve tested our antidote multiple times. There’s no way it would fail.” Peter began feeling slightly nervous as well.

“What now?” Jessica demanded with a frown.

“This place is too poorly equipped. There’s nothing better I can do. Peter answered seriously.

“So you turned out to be useless after all?” Jessica’s face darkened further. The person she thought was her husband’s **savior** turned out to be a quack doctor!

“Why don’t you think of another solution, Dr. Peter?” Quentin insisted.

“It’s futile. The technology your country uses is too dated. I can only cure him back in my country.” Peter shook his head, feeling proud of his country.

“Just admit that you can’t do it and stop blaming our facilities or technology.” Dustin retorted coolly.

“As if you’d be able to treat something I can’t!” Peter humphed haughtily.

“This is the difference between traditional medicine and modern medicine. You need all sorts of equipment, but we only need our hands and some silver needles,” Dustin replied calmly.

“Nonsense! Do you think you’re God or something?” Peter looked at him dubiously. As one of the best doctors in the world, he despised frauds like Dustin.

“I have no idea if God can do it, but I’m sure I can.” Dustin answered.

“Fine! Go ahead! Let’s see how quack doctors like you treat patients. Peter flushed with anger.

“Exactly! What’s the point of saying all that? You need to treat Uncle Hector first!” Quentin echoed along.

“Alright. I’ll show you!”

Dustin unbuttoned Hector’s shirt and drew out his silver needles. After studying Hector’s body carefully, he pricked several of the man’s vital pressure points

, most of which were gathered around his midsection. When all the needles were in place, he flicked one **finger**, and the dozens of needles began vibrating at a high frequency.

Soon, dark blood trickled out of where the needles were placed and slowly gave way to a steady stream of vibrant red. Then, Dustin took out a pill and stuck it into Hector's mouth.

When the man's stomach began grumbling, Dustin slapped his palm on his midsection. Instantly, Hector sprung up and spat out a mouthful of darkened blood, which fell to the floor with **a sizzle**.

Everyone in the room was shocked when they saw a cluster of wiggling, red maggots swimming in the pool of blood.

It was a frightening sight.

"What's going on?"

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The crowd exchanged puzzled glances. No one could have expected Hector to have so many maggots in his stomach.

"This is the mystic poison I was talking about. Do you believe me now?" Dustin slowly let out his breath and turned to Jessica.

Jessica frowned but said nothing.

"H—how did you do that?" Peter **gaped** at Dustin in awe.

After throwing up the mouthful of dark blood, Hector's complexion had returned to normal, and his breathing finally evened out, seeming to be fine now.

"This is traditional medicine. You'll never understand it." Dustin stated indifferently.

Peter blushed in embarrassment, not expecting the ordinary doctor **he** mocked to be so skilled.

Was this the power of traditional medicine?

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Not long after he spat out the dark blood, Hector came around. Although his body was weak, it was a miracle

that he'd made it.

As for Peter, when he saw Hector regain consciousness, he admitted defeat and apologized to Dustin sincerely. He said that he'd been foolish to underestimate the power of traditional medicine and that he'd resign from his position after returning to his country to start learning traditional medicine instead.

Dustin decided to let the man be. After all, Peter may be a proud man, but he sincerely respected those who were stronger than him.

The rest of the Harmon family also resumed their activities after making sure that Hector was fine. Quentin,

however, made sure to glare at Dustin on his way out.

"How are you feeling. Dad? Are you in pain anywhere?" Ruth walked over to the bed, holding a glass of warm

water.

"I'm fine. I just feel slightly bloated." Hector took two sips.

"Duh. Look at the blood you threw up. It's full of maggots!" Ruth told him, shaken.

"Huh?" Hector looked down and frowned. "What's this?"

"Dustin said you were poisoned by mystic poison. If it weren't for him, you'd still be unconscious right now."

Ruth explained.

"Dustin?" Hector glanced around before noticing Dustin standing beside him, his expression turning troubled."

I didn't expect you to save me."

"It's still too early to celebrate. Although I've gotten rid of the venomous curse, you aren't in the clear yet."

Dustin told them bluntly.

"What do you mean?" Hector frowned.

"Mystic poison is a combination of witchcraft and parasitic poison. The parasitic poison has been cleared, but

the witchcraft issue remains." Dustin explained.

"Then what should we do?" Hector asked.

"Simple. I just need to treat you once per **day** for the next five **days**, and you'll recover," Dustin said.

"I see." Hector nodded and asked, "How much will each treatment cost?"

"I don't want money. I just need you to promise me something." Dustin bargained.

"What is it?"

"I hope you can annul the engagement between the Harmon family and the Grant family." Dustin's reply was astonishing.

"Annul the engagement?" Hector frowned. "Never!"

"To tell you the truth, Mr. Harmon, I'm the only one who can save your life. I think trading th
at marriage for your

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life is a good deal," Dustin said with a small smile.

"Are you threatening me?" Hector narrowed his eyes.

"I wouldn't dare. I'm merely making a request."

"My answer won't change. Never!" Hector's attitude was firm. "I can tell you that it doesn't
matter if you treat me. The marriage will still commence."

"Aren't you scared of dying?" Dustin frowned.

"What's there to fear? Everyone has to die eventually. The only thing different is the timing."
Hector answered calmly.

"I guess you are different. No one would think about death so calmly." Dustin sighed. He ha
d his doubts when he heard what Ruth said earlier, but after speaking with Hector, he was n
ow sure that the older man was not afraid of death at all

Stubborn men like Hector were always the hardest to deal with.

"It's pointless to butter up to me now. Tell me how much money you want for saving me tod
ay, and forget about everything else." Hector stated icily.

"You don't have to pay me. I did what I needed to. I just want to see Natasha." Dustin **gave** i
n.

"Why do you want to see her? You should know that there's no future for you two!" Hector
warned.

"Even if there isn't, there's nothing wrong with meeting a friend, right? Besides, Mrs. Harmon already agreed to **this** earlier." Dustin replied.

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"Huh?"

Hector turned around **and** looked at Jessica, who reluctantly said, "You were in critical condition, so I became desperate and told him that as long **as** he's able to treat you. I'll let the two of them meet."

"That's fine. Your intentions were good." Hector didn't get angry but responded calmly instead. "I agree to let you two meet, but you'd better not mess around. I'll have someone watching you. Got it?"

"Yes!" Dustin agreed immediately.

"Ruth, lead him to your sister," Hector instructed.

"Okay!" Ruth chirped.

Natasha has been waiting for this chance for ages, and today, the two would finally get to meet.

—

"Oh, that reminds me. Before leaving the room, Dustin halted and turned his **head** around. "Mr. Harmon, mystic poison isn't a simple issue. The person who poisoned you probably has more in store. Be careful of those around you."

"Got it." Hector nodded. He has always lived in seclusion, so it wasn't easy to poison him. It was also worth noting that tomorrow was the annual family gathering. As the head of the family, things would be thrown into

chaos should others find out that he had fallen ill

Therefore, it was hard not to **have** suspicions when the timing at which things were happening was **so**

precarious.

“Jessica, who do you think poisoned **me**?” Hector asked all **of** a sudden.

“Besides the Dark Lord, I can’t think of anyone else who is skilled at the mystic arts and holds a grudge against our family.” Jessica responded in a serious tone.

The mysterious and powerful Dark Lord **has** always been a thorn in their side. The Harmon family has invested in countless men to get rid of him over the years, but their efforts proved to be futile. Every year, **core** members.

of the Harmon family would mysteriously **end** up dead, and each time, clues would point to the Dark Lord as

the culprit.

It **was** safe to say that one man alone had made the entire Harmon family restless,

and mentally.

“Yes He’s the only one.” Hector sighed tiredly. “Unfortunately, we can’t do much since he continues to hide

in the dark. That’s why I have no choice but to force Natasha to marry into the Grant family.”

“I understand.” Jessica sighed as well. “We can only use the Grant family’s power to deal with the Dark Lord if

Natasha marries Tyler. Or else, our entire family will be doomed.”

“I feel so sorry for Natasha. She has to sacrifice herself for our family.” Hector looked remorseful. As a father.

there **was** nothing he wished more than his children’s happiness. Alas, some things **were** beyond his control.

“Natasha is a good girl. She’ll understand why you’re doing this,” Jessica consoled him.

“I hope so.” Hector sighed again. Suddenly, he thought of something **and** asked, “What do **you** think of Dustin?”

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“He’s a genius who’s skilled in both medicine and martial arts. He might be the best among his peers in Millsburg. Unfortunately, he still has a long way to go before competing with Tyler Grant.” Jessica **gave** her honest opinion. After knowing Dustin longer, she finally changed her opinions about him. However, because of his family background, there was still a gap between them.

“I wouldn’t mind making him our son-in-law if Natasha wasn’t promised to another. Unfortunately, they were just not meant to be,” Hector muttered, troubled. “Try your best to help him from now on. We owe him that much.”

“I understand,” **Jessica** nodded.

The marriage between the two families had been set in stone, so it was a pity that the fated pair could never get together.

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Chapter 450

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Chapter 452

Knowing Natasha’s temper, eloping did sound like something she might do. With the family gathering right around the corner, Mrs. Davys couldn’t let something like that happen.

“Fine. You can stay.” Natasha wasn’t in the mood to argue, so she dragged Dustin over to the gazebo over the pond.

Mrs. Davys was just about to follow them when Ruth stopped her. “My dad only said to keep an eye on them. not stalk them! Why would you impede on a couple’s private conversation?”

Mrs. Davys thought about it for a moment and decided to wait where she was. After all, the two of them were still within her sights, and she could see every move they made.

“How did you get in here, Dear? My father isn’t the type of person who would give in easily.” Natasha asked, pouring two cups of tea.

“I saved his life, so I asked to meet you in return.”

Dustin gave her a run–down of everything that had happened.

After hearing the story, Natasha grumbled. “What a reckless old man!”

“That’s why I came to talk to you. What should we do?” Dustin asked helplessly.

“I’ve been thinking about this too. There are only two ways to stop this wedding. We either change my father’s mind, or we force the Grant family to propose the annulment first.” Natasha pondered for a second before pointing out. “My father’s too stubborn. He’s even willing to die for the family, so it’ll be too difficult to persuade him unless we can get rid of his worries.”

“What worries?” Dustin asked, curious.

Natasha sighed. “Years ago, our family offended someone called the Dark Lord. He’s a ruthless and evil person who uses despicably cruel methods. He’s been tormenting our family for years, killing someone every now and then. In recent years, he has been acting more ferociously, going to more extreme lengths. Even Fletcher Lawson was one of his men. It’s safe to say that the Dark Lord is not only a thorn in my father’s side but also a constant pain in my family’s ass. The reason my parents decided to marry me off to the Grant family was to ensure my safety, as well as borrow their power to deal with the Dark Lord.”

Understanding immediately dawned on Dustin. “So, as long as we get rid of the Dark Lord, your dad might give

in?”

“Yep.” Nasha nodded. “Without the Dark Lord, our family has nothing to fear anymore.”

“Where’s the Dark Lord? I’ll get rid of him.” Dustin’s eyes turned murderous.

“Things wouldn’t have turned out this way if anyone knew where he is.” Natasha shook her head, smiling bitterly. “He’s so well hidden; I don’t even know what he looks like.”

“That’s going to be tricky.” Dustin frowned. It **was** going to take some time to find someone whose identity and looks were both a well-kept secret. “Since dealing with the Dark Lord Is Impossible, we can only think of a plan to make the Grant family annul the agreement first.”

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Natasha’s tone turned sharp. “Knowing Tyler Grant, he can’t bear it if anything is tainted. Tomorrow, when

they send the gifts over, I’ll tell him that I’m already yours. With his pride, there’s no way he’ll accept that. He

might even annul our engagement on the spot!”

“Are you sure it’ll work?” Dustin asked, unsure.

“It’s worth a shot. Natasha grinned mischievously. “No matter what, I’ll be kicking up a fuss tomorrow. Worst come to worst, I’ll just use my trump card. That way, the Grant family would never accept a daughter-in-

law like me!”

“What trump card?” Dustin’s eyes twinkled.

“That’s a secret for now. You’ll find out tomorrow.” Natasha teased. After all, it’s a trump card. She wouldn’t reveal it so easily unless absolutely necessary.

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Chapter 453

Dustin did not leave right after meeting Natasha. Instead, he stayed in the Harmon estate under the pretense of treating Hector’s illness.

Naturally, to prevent the two of them from eloping, Mrs. Davys kept a close eye on them the entire time, separating them every time their actions became intimate.

During the night, the two were forbidden from seeing each other, which Dustin obeyed begrudgingly.

With that, the night passed uneventfully.

The next morning, the Harmons' annual family gathering had officially begun.

Countless people began pouring into the estate, luxury cars casually clustering the plaza.

As one of the Fabulous Five, the Harmon family was incredibly prosperous, consisting of hundreds of family

members.

Besides those from the Harmon family, loyal company staff and other important family guests had all been invited as well making the place much livelier.

Hector, the head of the family, looked much better after receiving another round of treatment from Dustin.

Although the older man still looked weak, he was able to move around without much difficulty.

"Is the gathering this packed every year?" Dustin was shocked by the volume of guests heading to the banquet hall

"Of course!" Ruth lifted her head proudly. "Our family is large and well-connected, so a lot of people come for

our annual gathering."

"They're merely opportunists, trying to butter up to us after hearing of our union with the Grant family." Natasha scoffed. None of the past gatherings had ever been this lively. Most of the people were obviously

here because of the Grant family.

“What are you still doing here, Rhys?” An annoying voice asked from behind them.

Dustin turned around to see Quentin **and** the woman from yesterday walking over. She wore a dress that showed off her voluptuous curves, and her enchanting looks only making her more bewitching. In comparison, Quentin looked much paler and weaker.

“Dustin is my dad’s savior. Why can’t he be here?” Ruth demanded.

“Hmph! It was just a coincidence. What’s there to be proud of?” Quentin scoffed.

“Mind your manners, Quentin,” the woman admonished Quentin before flashing Dustin a smile. “I’ve been feeling sick lately, Doctor. When can you come **over** to my room and help me take a look? You seem quite skilled.”

“Huh?” Dustin raised an eyebrow. What she said had sounded quite odd.

“Dustin has been quite busy recently, Aunt Celeste. I’ll ask him to treat you when he has the time.” Natasha plastered on a smile.

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“Alright, then. I’ll be waiting, then.” The woman, Celeste Marrow, smiled teasingly, brushing against Dustin as she walked past, releasing a unique and calming aroma.

“Hey, our annual family gathering is not something you can join. You should piss off,” Quentin growled a warning before following the woman, emitting the same scent.

“What are you looking at?” Natasha regarded Dustin coldly when she realized he was still staring at the woman. “Don’t tell me you have a thing for other people’s wives too?”

“O—o—

of course not!” Dustin choked, awkward. “I was just thinking of the unique scent she carries.”

“Are you saying I don’t smell as good as her?” Natasha snapped, jealous. “She’s my eldest aunt. You better not get any ideas.”

“Your aunt?” Dustin was surprised. “She’s so young. She doesn’t look much older than Quentin.”

“Obviously.” Natasha rolled her eyes. “My uncle’s first wife passed away a long time ago, so he found this woman. She looks pretty, but her reputation is horrible.”

“It’s inevitable that people would criticize a couple with such a large age gap.” Dustin wasn’t surprised.

“It’s not just that.” Natasha shook her head and lowered her voice. “I’ve heard that she plays around with Quentin as well.”

“What?” Dustin gaped at her. “Are you serious?”

A stepson having an affair with their stepmother? How scandalous!

“Why would I joke about something like that?” Natasha answered seriously. “I’m warning you. Stay away from that witch, or you won’t even know how you were caught.”

“Um

Dustin pressed his lips together, at a loss for words. No wonder the woman had been looking at him that way. She turned out to be a cheater.

Poor Trent. Dustin wondered what expression the other man would wear if he found out about his son sleeping with his wife.

As time passed, more guests filled the banquet hall, and things became even livelier. People crowded together to share wine and chat together. Beverages **were** self-served, so people were free to eat and drink however they pleased.

While everyone **was** having a good time, a wall cried out from the crowd.

A man who had been drinking suddenly began throwing up blood violently before crashing to the floor, convulsing. His face had turned blue, and blood seeped out from his nostrils, painting a terrifying picture.

“What’s going on?”

Shocked, the crowd stepped away from the fallen man. No one could have expected the man, who had been happily drinking and chatting a second ago, to abruptly fall to the floor, coughing up blood.

“How can this be?” Natasha’s brows furrowed, and she quickly approached the scene with Dustin.

Dustin studied the sick man before testing his pulse. “He was poisoned by a powerful poison!”

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Chapter 45d

“Poisoned?” Natasha paled. “The food and drinks here were carefully inspected. How could it be poisoned?”

As soon as those words escaped her lips, more pained wails came from the crowd **as** a woman in a gown suddenly fell to the floor, convulsing, bleeding out of her nose.

“T—there’s poison in the wine!” she yelled, terrified.

Immediately, pandemonium ensued as everyone in the room panicked.

Those who hadn’t drunk the wine quickly tossed their glasses aside, while those who had quickly became frightened and broke out in a cold sweat.

Unfortunately, that was not the end.

After the first women, people began toppling over like dominoes, and more tortured wails rang out.

One after another, guests fell to the floor, blue-faced, convulsing, and bleeding out of their noses.

Within moments, more than half of the guests cried out in pain on the floor.

The few unharmed people remained rooted in their positions as they looked around, terrified. Within minutes, the once happy atmosphere had turned into complete hell!

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Chapter 454

“What’s going on? Who did this?”

Natasha’s brow furrowed tightly as she studied the people on the floor, her face turning cold. Things would still be fine if only a few people were poisoned. Now, however, hundreds of people had been poisoned simultaneously. The consequences would be detrimental

The person who did this clearly only had one aim—to get rid of the Harmon family, once and for all!

“Dad! Mom! Uncles!”

Ruth panicked after seeing her family fall to the floor consecutively and darted toward them, but before she could reach them, she also spat out blood before crashing to the floor.

“Ruth!” Natasha paled. She was about to rush forward, but Dustin pulled her back. “Don’t go there. It’s the air that’s poisonous, not the wine!”

“Then, what should we do? We have to save them!” Natasha cried worriedly, struggling to keep calm when faced with her poisoned family members.

“Take this pill first.”

Dustin drew out a white pill and put it into Natasha’s mouth. It was a Curax, which was an antidote for

poisons.

“To cure them, we have to first find the source of the poison. Give me some time.”

After ensuring Natasha's safety, Dustin began scanning the room. For the poison to escape his notice, it must

either be colorless and odorless or successfully fused into the environment.

"The Dark Lord! It must have been him!" Trent yelled as he lay on the floor, his agitation prompting him to

throw up more blood.

"I get it now. The Dark Lord must be trying to use this opportunity to get rid of our entire family!" Jacob seethed through gritted teeth. As a powerful martial artist, his body was better than most, and his symptoms were less severe than others. Still, he would die from the poison sooner or later.

"Him again! It's been years! Why can't he let us go?" Hector coughed violently, his face turning as white as a sheet as his condition began to deteriorate. There was no way he'd be fine after suffering another bout of

poisoning before he even fully recovered from the previous round.

Currently, the only ones in the hall left standing were Dustin and Natasha. Everyone else was lying on the floor,

howling in pain.

"Found it!" Dustin quickly noticed the anomaly.

Four incense burners had been placed in each corner of the hall, white smoke billowing out from them.

continuously. Upon closer inspection, Dustin realized that all of the incense had been tampered with.

Poisoned **gas** mixed with the scent of Incense **was** normally difficult for anyone to notice.

After getting rid of the source, Dustin pulled out several Curax tablets and fed them to Hector and several

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others.

“Natasha, get me two buckets of water.” Dustin turned around and ordered.

“Okay.”

Natasha rushed out without hesitation, reappearing moments later, carrying two buckets of water.

Dustin pulled out his bottle of Hexanavir and poured half a bottle into each bucket. There were over hundreds of poisoned victims, and he didn't have enough Curax, so the only temporary fix left was Hexanavir.

It may not be as effective as Curax, but it could at least stop them from dying.

“Feed all the victims half a bowl of water,” Dustin instructed and got to work.

Those who were able to move crawled over to the bucket themselves, so Dustin and Natasha only had to feed those who could no longer move.

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After struggling for half an hour, everyone finally managed to drink the antidote. Although they were still weak and pale, their lives were no longer in danger.

By the time they were finished, Natasha collapsed on the floor, worn out, and Dustin heaved a sigh of relief.

It was fortunate that he had so many drugs on hand, or there'd be no way he could deal with so many poisoned patients.

“Thank God you're here, Dustin, or our family would have been done for.” Hector pulled himself up, his face full of gratitude. The Harmon family had nearly been wiped out.

“You're welcome, Mr. Harmon. I just did what I had to.” Dustin replied, waving his arm.

“Uncle Hector, don’t you find this suspicious?” Quentin suddenly asked. “Why does this guy have the antidote?”

“What are you implying?” Hector frowned.

“Everyone who joined the gathering is either from our family or our esteemed guests. Everyone knows each other very well, while this guy is merely a stranger,” Quentin said, locking suspiciously at Dustin.

“Are you saying I’m the one who poisoned you?” Dustin narrowed his eyes.

“Hmmp! Someone from the inside was involved in this incident. You were able to correctly identify the cause and provide the antidote. Shouldn’t we be suspicious of you?” Quentin asked.

“Stop spouting nonsense! Why would he save you if he was the traitor?” Natasha yelled.

“To earn our trust, obviously!” Quentin answered confidently. “He orchestrated this entire thing. He first poisoned us before saving us with the antidote. This is not the first time I’m seeing such dirty tactics!”

His words immediately drew everyone’s attention to Dustin, their gazes conveying various emotions. Wariness. Distrust. Confusion. Anger.

After some thinking, they realized what Quentin said was logical. After all, everyone present had a vested interest and knew each other inside out, and the only stranger was Dustin, which made it hard not to suspect

him.

“How absurd!” Natasha cried indignantly. “Quentin Harmon! Dustin saved your life just now, but you’re accusing him wrongfully? What kind of person are you?”

“I’m just trying to help everyone figure out who the mole is,” Quentin replied unapologetically.

“Fine! You said that Dustin is the traitor. Where’s the proof?” Natasha demanded.

“Isn’t all this proof enough?” Quentin sneered. “All of us were poisoned, but he was completely fine, so who else could it be?”

His words caused an uproar.

“He’s right! All of us were poisoned except that guy. How fishy!”

“Exactly. I was wondering why he was fine, but he turned out to be the person who poisoned us!”*

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“What a treacherous man! Why on earth did I even thank him for? Ugh!”

Everyone’s opinion about Dustin began to sway under Quentin’s prodding. Instead of appreciative gazes, all Dustin received now were furious glares.

Hearsay sure was dangerous. In no time, Dustin found himself labeled guilty.

“Shut up!” Natasha yelled, infuriated.

“Are you guys crazy? Dustin saved you, but instead of thanking him, you’re pointing your fingers at him? Unbelievable!”

“Natasha, this is a serious matter. I think we should look into this issue properly.” Trent suddenly spoke.

“I agree!” Jacob shouted abruptly. “I say we arrest and interrogate him for everyone’s safety!”

“Arrest him! Arrest him!” the Harmon family chanted agitatedly.

It was as if Dustin had suddenly turned into a criminal.

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Looking at all the hostile faces around him, Dustin smiled an imperceptible cold smile. They really didn’t know what was good for them. If he had known earlier

er, he wouldn't have saved anyone. Now, he not only ended up failing to get in to anyone's good books but even brought trouble unto himself. How unlucky!

"Why so quiet, Dustin? Is it because you're feeling too guilty, so you don't dare to speak a word?" Quentin said aggressively. He looked as if he wanted to get to the bottom of things.

"You've already said everything there is to be said. What else can I say?" Dustin snorted and continued, "I saved your lives, but you keep insisting that I poisoned you and speaking so self-righteously. I've never met anyone as ungrateful as you bunch."

"Humph! How dare you still defend yourself?!" Quentin's gaze was icy as he said, "If you didn't poison us, then why don't you explain why you have the antidote?"

"That's right! Why would you have the antidote?!" Everyone started demanding loudly. The incident was too much of a coincidence: it was difficult for people not to be suspicious.

"I'm a doctor, and I'm also proficient at medicine. Isn't it normal for me to cure you guys from the poison?" Dustin said plainly.

"I can vouch that Dustin is indeed a very skillful doctor!" Natasha said firmly.

"Me too!" Ruth added. They believed firmly in Dustin's medical skills and character.

"Fine, even if you're a doctor and happened to have the antidote, then tell me why you didn't get poisoned. Don't tell me it's because you have a strong immune system, so no poison can harm you," Quentin demanded.

"You're right. I am indeed immune to all poison," Dustin said seriously. With his capabilities, common types of poison had no effect on him. Even the Deadly Slither's poison, one of the most infamously lethal types of poison, only made him sleep for a while.

"Did you guys hear that? What a ridiculous excuse!" Quentin scoffed and said coldly, "Dustin, oh Dustin! You're such a good liar. You're also human like all of us, so what gave you the audacity to say that you're immune to all poison?"

"Hmmp! Immune to poison? Sounds like bullshit to me!"

"I know, right? Only the person who poisoned us could come up with such a ridiculous excuse!"

"Don't waste any more time on him. Hurry up and hold him down so we can interrogate him!"

The crowd flew into a furious uproar. They obviously did not believe Dustin.

"Dad, you're the head of the family, hurry up and say something!" Seeing that the situation was going sideways, Natasha immediately turned to her father.

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Hector frowned, not knowing what to say. Although he believed that Dustin was innocent, he couldn't treat a threat to the whole family's life lightly. Most importantly, there were still suspicions surrounding Dustin, which made it hard for him to decide.

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"Hector, let me handle this," Trent said. "I've been in charge of the safety and security of the family all along. Since something like this has happened, I should carry out a thorough investigation regardless of whether Dustin is innocent."

"Dad's right! For the family's safety, we should always be safe rather than sorry! Men, detain him!" Quentin commanded with a swift gesture of his hand.

"Yes, sir!" A group of the Harmon family's guards stepped forward and surrounded Dustin. They had already drawn their swords.

"Stop!" Natasha shouted in anger. "If anyone dares to act rashly, don't blame me for being ruthless!"

"Natasha, you have to look at the bigger picture," Trent said sternly. "If Dustin is innocent, then I will surely clear his name. I will not condemn him."

"What's the difference between condemning him and arresting him in public?" Natasha said with a frown.

"I only require his cooperation in the investigation. I guarantee **that** I will not hurt him."

“He’s right, Natasha. This is a very serious matter that warrants a thorough investigation. I’m afraid we’ll have

to trouble Dustin a little this time.” Jessica said.

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Chapter 457

“Why don’t you trouble yourself? I don’t care, but nobody touches Dustin today!” Natasha didn’t give in at all.

In her eyes, no one was more important than her man. Even if he was guilty, she would still defend him till the

end, much less when he was being wronged right then.

“Nonsense!” Jacob’s temper flared, and he shouted, “How can a junior like you meddle with such an important family matter? Someone take Miss Harmon back to her room!”

“Yes, sir!” Mrs. Davys and the others dared not show any hesitation. They half dragged, and half persuaded

Natasha out of the banquet hall.

Witnessing this scene, Dustin frowned. He had wanted to take action a few times already, but he had controlled himself. The Harmon family’s ways already ignited his anger.

“No one’s going to help you now, Rhys.” Quentin took two steps forward and gave a low laugh. “I already

asked you to leave earlier, but you just didn’t want to listen to me. Look where it’s gotten you now. You regret

it, don’t you?”

“I’m not the person who poisoned you,” Dustin tried to explain.

“Is that important? If I say that it’s you, then it’s you!” Quentin laughed coldly.

“So you’re condemning me on purpose?” Dustin asked with a frown. Being suspected was one thing, but being condemned was another.

“So what if I am?” Quentin had on an amused expression. “Everyone needs an explanation anyway, and making you the culprit will please everybody! What’s the matter? You feel very wronged, don’t you? Very dissatisfied? But what can you do? In this world, power comes above everything else. A pariah from the lowest rungs of society like you deserves to be a scapegoat! Just accept your fate!” With that, he turned around and bellowed, “Lock him up and torture him till he owns up! If he dares to retaliate, then kill him at once!”

“Yes, sir!” Hearing his command, the Harmon family’s guards acted immediately.

“Get lost!” Dustin rocked his body, and a potent wave of energy sent countless guards flying.

“How dare you still resist? This just shows that you definitely have something to be guilty of! Guards, heed my command! Kill the culprit immediately!” Quentin laughed wickedly and gave the kill order. At once, a wave of elite guards surged into the banquet hall from all directions.

“Do you really want to take things to the extreme?” Dustin asked icily.

“Humph, anyone would kill a traitor like you! Kill him!” Quentin said pompously. The moment he said that, a figure flashed before him. Dustin’s arm shot out suddenly, and he gripped Quentin by the neck, lifting him into the air with just one hand. He looked like he was holding a dying fish.

“How dare you!”

“This is preposterous!”

Seeing what was happening, the Harmon family members all shouted in shock. Nobody thought Dustin would still dare to attack while he was already being surrounded.

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“You imbecile! Let go of my son now!” Hector shouted furiously. However, he dared not act rashly for fear that Quentin would get hurt.

“He is undoubtedly the culprit! We must not let him go!” The crowd went into a furious uproar when they saw Dustin attacking someone.

“Hahaha— Hey, kid! You’ve pissed everyone off. Nobody can save you now!” Quentin laughed mirthlessly and said confidently. “If you have common sense, let me go

at once. I could still spare your life. But if you dare touch a hair on my head, I can promise I’ll make you die a painful death!”

“Really?” Dustin snorted and tightened his grip aggressively. With a loud snap, Quentin’s head lolled sideways. He died on the spot before he knew it!

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Chapter 458

Seeing Quentin die such a sudden death, the crowd was frozen with fright. Their eyes protruded, and disbelief was written across their faces. They could never have imagined Dustin to be so daring as to kill someone over a mere misunderstanding. He was swift, brutal, and very vicious. He never even gave Quentin a chance to negotiate. Shouldn’t every hostage be given a chance to negotiate first? Where was the reason for killing someone straight away without saying anything first? He was so unpredictable.

“It’s over. It’s really over this time.” Ruth smacked her forehead and shut her eyes. If Dustin was just a suspect before this, he was now a murderer, no matter what the truth was. From that moment on, Dustin was the Harmon family’s public enemy! After a short moment of silence, the crowd launched into uproar.

“How dare you kill someone with all of us watching! Today will be your last day!”

*Fuck! Is that idiot crazy? How could he be so bold as to kill a member of the Harmon family on their very own turf? He’s a lunatic!”

“Burning bridges with the Harmon family so openly? I’ve never seen someone so extreme.”

Because of Dustin’s actions, the entire family gathering turned into chaos. Some people were in shock, others were shouting furiously, and some even felt in awe of him.

“Imbecile! You imbecile!” Seeing his son’s body. Trent was so outraged that he vomited blood and collapsed onto the floor.

“How dare you kill my nephew! I’ll rip you to pieces!” After getting his senses back, Jacob bellowed furiously. “What are you guys waiting for? Kill him!”

“Stop! Everyone stop!” A feminine shout sounded out. It was Natasha running back after being dragged away earlier. She barged her way through the crowd and stood in front of Dustin, looking like she would defend him till the end.

“Natasha! What are you doing? You can’t possibly be defending that murderer!” Jacob shouted angrily.

“Natasha! Hurry up and move aside! That man has lost his mind!” Jessica yelled in panic.

“I already saw what happened just now. If you guys hadn’t pushed him to his limits. Dustin wouldn’t have made an impulsive mistake like that.” Natasha still attempted to defend him.

“This is absurd! He killed your cousin. Not only do you not blame him, but you’re even defending him. Are you even a part of the Harmon family?!” Jacob was beside himself with rage.

“That’s right! I think you’ve become blinded to be defending a murderer!”

“You really are in cahoots with him!”

Natasha’s attitude pissed off all the Harmons. She was a turncoat and a heartless traitor!

“Dustin! Quick, take me hostage! It’s the only way you can leave this place alive!” Natasha whispered. She

knew that saying anything else would be useless at that point, and the only way she could keep Dustin alive was to go with this underhanded plan.

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“It’s not that serious. Give me three minutes, and I can explain everything.” Dustin said with a slight smile. Natasha’s selfless protection warmed his heart.

“What’s there to explain? Quentin’s dead. Nobody will believe anything you say!” Natasha said anxiously. If she wasn’t worried that people would see through their act, then she even wished she could hold a knife to her throat.

“As long as you believe me.” Dustin said calmly.

“What exactly are you up to?” Natasha asked with a frown. She really didn’t know how he could be so calm when the situation had already escalated to such a point.

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Chapter 459

“Everybody. I know that all of you hate me, but please let me say a few words.” Dustin looked around and said loudly, “As long as you let me finish speaking, you can kill me or do anything you please. I will not resist!”

“Hmph! Are you still trying to make excuses till the very end?” Jacob demanded with a glare.

“I must say this regardless of whether you’ll believe me, but Quentin deserved to die. That’s because he is the real culprit who poisoned you!” Dustin dropped a bombshell.

“Bullshit!” Jacob snorted coldly. “Quentin is a Harmon. How could he poison members of his own family? I think you’re just framing him!”

“That’s right! If you’re going to make up a story, then at least make it believable. Who would believe you saying Quentin was the culprit?” Everyone scoffed and looked at Dustin with hostile gazes. If it wasn’t because Natasha was shielding him, they would have attacked him long ago.

“You say that Quentin is the culprit, but do you have evidence?” Hector, who had been silent till then, finally spoke up. He didn’t trust anyone, only the facts of the case.

“First off, I hold no grudges against the Harmon family, so I have no reason to poison you guys,” Dustin explained slowly. “Hence, all of you should be aware that the real culprit behind the scenes is the Dark Lord. However, not only did Quentin not blame the Dark Lord after being cured, but he kept suspecting me. He even used all sorts of reasons and excuses to condemn me and misled everybody to make me the scapegoat. He deserves to pay with his life! That’s why I **have** reason to suspect that Quentin works for the Dark Lord! And because I saved everyone from the poison, he saw me as a pain in the ass that should be eliminated as soon as possible!”

Once he finished explaining, everybody became a lot more quiet. Some people were already mulling it over to determine if it was the truth. Everybody had their own version of a story, but after hearing Dustin out, they found it indeed a little strange.

“Humph! What a good talker!” Jacob’s expression was still icy. “He’s already dead anyway, so you can say whatever you want, can’t you?”

“Exactly! Do you think you can walk free by making up a story? Let me tell you that won’t be the case!” The members of the Harmon family **were** still treating Dustin with animosity, not trusting him at all.

“Words are useless. **You** must show us evidence!” Hector shouted.

“You want evidence, huh? Sure!” Dustin walked into the corner and picked up the incense burner that had been used to release the poisonous fumes. He explained, “The incense inside has a unique scent. It’s very long-lasting, and when it mixes with the poison, it makes it very hard to notice.”

“So what?” Jacob said impatiently.

“Take a sniff. Isn’t there an odd scent on Quentin? It smells almost exactly the same as the incense,” Dustin said.

“Huh?” Jacob smelled the incense, then walked over to Quentin’s body and took a hard sniff. His expression changed instantly. Just like Dustin had said, the smell on Quentin was exactly the same as the incense in the

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burner. "They smell the same!"

To determine the truth, many people from the crowd came forward to take a sniff and experienced a shocking revelation. "Humph! So what if they smell the same? What does it prove? It could merely be a coincidence!" Jacob said coldly.

"Of course, the smell cannot prove anything. Actually, what raised my suspicion was not the smell, but Quentin's body." After a pause, Dustin dropped another bombshell. "You might not believe me when I say this, but Quentin already died long ago. His body **was** only being controlled using witchcraft!"

The crowd flew into an uproar.

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Chapter 460

"Outrageous! This is absolutely outrageous! All of us saw with our own eyes that Quentin was alive and well before you killed him. Yet you dare say that he was just a corpse? How absolutely ridiculous!" Jacob's rage burned to a whole new level, and he wanted to rip Dustin apart.

"Hmmp! Do you take us for fools? What makes you think we would believe your bullshit?!"

"Exactly! You were the one who killed Quentin. We all witnessed it!"

The crowd was furious, and their suspicions towards Dustin grew even stronger. How dare he deny killing someone and even use such a ludicrous excuse to clear his name? Did he think they were three-year-olds?

"Young

ing man, do you know what you're talking about?" Hector said with a frown. He had tried to give Dustin a chance to explain himself, but his words only grew more outrageous.

“I know you guys don’t believe me, but I have proof.” Dustin walked to Quentin’s corpse and ripped Quentin’s

clothes off, exposing patches of red lines to the crowd. “Do you see this? This is corpse plaque!” Dustin shocked everybody again.

“Corpse plaque?!” Everybody looked at each other skeptically at hearing those words. On the one hand, they

were taken aback by what Dustin said. On the other hand, they were skeptical about whether the corpse

plaque was real.

“Hmmp! Is it corpse plaque just because you say so? What if those are just normal bruises?” Jacob said with

a frown, still in disbelief.

“I — I can prove that it is really corpse plaque!” At that moment, a bespectacled man suddenly stepped

forward and said with a shocked expression, “I used to be a doctor, and I’m very familiar with corpse plaque. What’s more, judging by the corpse plaque on his body, Quentin has been dead for at least twelve hours!” The

moment he said that, everyone’s expression changed.

“How could that be?! Quentin was still up and about just now. We all saw it clearly!”

“That’s right! There are so many witnesses. How could it have been a sham?!”

Besides being shocked, many people were skeptical because this revelation was hard to accept. “I was also

wondering how a living person could have such serious corpse plaque on his body,” the bespectacled man

said in astonishment.

“Dustin, what’s going on?” Natasha asked in confusion. She also couldn’t believe that the Quentin she had

seen earlier **was** actually a **dead** body.

“I already said that Quentin **was** already dead, but somebody was controlling his body with witchcraft.” Dustin

continued explaining. “I believe you guys must have heard of the rumors of corpse possession in Iden. This is

similar to corpse possession, but the technique of it is far more refined.”

“That’s nonsense! How could dark magic like corpse possession exist in this world?!” Jacob demanded.

“If you haven’t seen something before, it doesn’t mean it doesn’t exist. There are endless branches of the

mystic arts that are very strange. Corpse possession is nothing in comparison,” Dustin said plainly.

Chapter 460

“Hmmp! You can’t solve the case merely based on corpse plaque!” Jacob said stubbornly. As a warrior, he

only believed in his own fists.

“You really don’t believe anything I say, huh? Fine, since **you** still doubt me, then I’ll enlighten you today.”

Dustin suddenly pulled out a silver needle and stabbed it into the space between Quentin’s eyebrows! A rumbling sound filled the air. A little while after he plunged the needle, Quentin’s body suddenly started

convulsing.

Then, black blood started flowing uncontrollably from his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. After a few heaves of Quentin’s chest, little black snakes started slithering out from every orifice of the corpse.

“Snakes! They’re snakes!”

Witnessing this scene, the crowd lost their composure and retreated in fright.
Anyone would get goosebumps

just by imagining snakes slithering out from a person's head.

“How could this be?”

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Chapter 461

Jacob was stunned and he couldn't really believe his eyes. It was his first time witnessing such a strange incident.

"The Dark Lord! It must be the Dark Lord's doing!" some members of the Harmon family started shouting. From time to time before this, some Harmon family members would die sudden deaths, but none of them had been as terrifying as this incident.

"How very brutal!" Hector frowned deeply, looking distressed. Someone had killed Quentin first, then controlled his body with witchcraft to poison the whole Harmon family. These tactics were not just cunning but vicious. Nobody other than the Dark Lord could be capable of it.

"I'm sure you guys believe my words now?" Dustin said at the perfect timing.

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"I-

..” Jacob was hesitant to speak. Although it was hard to accept, the facts were laid before him, and he had no choice but to believe it.

"Dad! The truth is out. Won't you ask your men to fall back?" Natasha said.

"Fall back." Hector gestured with his hand for the guards to retreat.

"Hector! He is my only son. He can't just die for nothing!" Trent wailed. He was sitting collapsed on the floor.

"Jacob! This incident has nothing to do with Dustin. Our hatred should be directed at the Dark Lord!" Hector said grimly.

"But "Trent opened his mouth, but he didn't know what to say. He couldn't bring himself to accept this revelation.

"Trent, don't worry. Quentin's death will not be in vain. We will find the Dark Lord and avenge Quentin!" Hector promised.

“Ahh... my poor son!” Trent sobbed sorrowfully.

Hector sighed and patted him on the back in consolation. Then, he turned to look at Dustin and asked the question everybody was curious about. “How could you tell?”

“I already realized that something was off since yesterday, but I couldn’t be sure. Only when I got close to Quentin today did I realize that his face was deathly pale, and his limbs were stiff. There was even a smell of rot on him. Although the incense covered the smell of rot, I still managed to notice. Of course, I did not act rashly. The main question I had to find the answer to was who was controlling Quentin’s body and what this person’s motive is,” Dustin explained.

“Then have you found out?” Hector asked.

Dustin nodded and said, “Of course, I’ve already found out who the perpetrator is.”

“Who is it?” Hector narrowed his eyes and clenched his fists subconsciously.

“This person is so near yet so far.” Dustin looked around and pointed at a pretty young woman beside Trent. “It’s her!”

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“Huh?” Everybody looked in the direction he was pointing in and immediately frowned.

“Me?” The young woman was stunned. “Bullshit! You speak nothing but nonsense!”

After a moment of shock, Trent got worked up. “You idiot! You just murdered my son, and now you’re slandering my wife? What are you trying to do?!”

“Dustin, do you know that she is my sister-in-law?” Hector asked with a frown.

“Of course I do,” Dustin said calmly. “Not only is she your sister-in-law, but also the perpetrator of this incident. She is the mastermind behind controlling Quentin’s corpse!”

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Chapter 462

“The mastermind?”

Everyone’s gaze fell on the beautiful lady when they heard that. Had he said that at any other time, none of them would have believed him. In fact, they might even have brushed it off as a lie. But after everything that had happened, they had no choice but to consider his words seriously. After all, they had just witnessed a corpse moving around with such vitality. At this point, nothing seemed impossible anymore.

“Hey, miracle doctor, I haven’t crossed you before this, have I? Why are you setting me up?” The beautiful lady frowned with a troubled expression.

“Dustin, you better not be accusing others without solid proof!” Hector warned him gravely. His brother had just experienced the pain of losing his son, and now, his wife was accused of being the perpetrator. This was no doubt rubbing salt in his wound.

“That’s right! What proof have you got to claim that our sister-in-law has anything to do with this?” Jacob demanded loudly.

“I must have a certain level of confidence to accuse someone of something so severe.” Dustin gazed pointedly at the woman and said, “Quentin’s body has a unique scent on it. And she has the same smell on her, only much stronger. If you don’t believe me, go ahead and catch a whiff.”

A few of the ladies who stood close to the woman went closer **and** sniffed the air **around her**. Immediately.

they nodded. “He’s right! She does have a special scent on her, and it’s the same scent on Quentin’s body!”

Everyone’s expression changed when they heard that, and their look on the woman turned wary.

"I've always been using fragrances that I formulate myself, and Quentin's my son! What's so strange about **my** scent rubbing off on him?" She tried her best to explain the situation.

"The scent is just **a** point of suspicion. It isn't solid evidence, and it doesn't prove anything." Hector shook his head. It didn't make sense to pin the blame on someone based on a scent.

"Of course, that isn't all." Dustin approached the woman and circled her as he continued, "People who are well-versed in the mystic arts usually have something different about them because they feed the venomous insects that they breed with their blood. With time, some changes will happen to their body."

"What changes?" Hector probed.

"Ordinary people have crimson red blood, but people who practice the mystic arts will have blood which is black and acutely poisonous. All you need to do now is to check her blood, and the truth shall be uncovered." Dustin stated nonchalantly.

"Nonsense!" The woman shouted. "What do you mean you're going to check my blood? That's ridiculous!"

"Celeste, it'd be best to run a test to prove your innocence," Hector persuaded.

"What? Do you really believe the rubbish he said?" Celeste asked, feeling wronged.

"This is a grave matter, Celeste. **You** should cooperate with **us** on this," Jacob echoed.

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"Honey, they're joining hands and putting me in a difficult position! Are you just going to watch as they treat me like this?" With tears in her eyes, Celeste turned to Trent for help.

“Jacob! Hector! I’m your elder brother! Are you not going to show me any respect? Trent roared. His son had just passed away, and now, they were turning on his wife. Of course he couldn’t take it.

“Trent! You’ve got to see the big picture here!” Hector **said** seriously. “If Celeste is innocent, I’ll make a public apology!”

“That’s right. Trent. This is a matter that affects the future of **our** family. We can’t risk it! Everyone can be at ease once **we** just run a quick test on her blood.” Jacob coaxed.

“Fine! From the looks of it, you’ve all been brainwashed by this rascal!” Trent spat through clenched jaws. Then, he furiously said. “Alright! If you insist on running a test on Celeste’s blood, then fine, we’ll do it. But if my wife turns out to be innocent. I’ll cut this brat’s tongue off!”

“Sure,” Dustin agreed.

“Honey, you know that the sight of blood makes me faint.” The woman shrunk back with a scared look.

“Don’t worry. It’ll be over before you know it. Once we prove your innocence, I’ll make sure he pays!” Trent said confidently.

“Check her blood.” With a wave of Hector’s hand, two women swiftly came forward and proceeded to take a blood sample from Celeste.

But right before they managed to do so, she sighed regrettably. “I never thought that I’d be exposed so soon! What a waste of my excellent acting skills.”

“What?” Trent, who stood by the side, was caught off guard.

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Before he could even wrap his head **around what** was going on, a sharp blade was already pressed up against his throat. The blade glistened with a dark sheen, obviously coated in poison. “Celeste, what are you doing?” Stunned by the sharp turn of events, Trent was at a **loss** at how to react. He had never tho

ught that the day would come when his wife would threaten him with a blade against his **neck**.

“Stop calling me that. Your beloved Celeste **died a** few days ago.” The woman smiled.

“You’re not Celeste? Then who are you?” Trent’s expression was one of utter horror and confusion.

“The Dark Lord is my master. Who do you think I am? The sinister smile on her face remained unchanging.

“You’re the Dark Lord’s disciple?” Hector frowned. This was **a** grave matter. They had never expected the Dark Lord to plant a mole in the Harmon family disguised as one of them.

“So it is true that you’re the one who poisoned Quentin! Guards! Get her!” Jacob ordered without further ado.

“Stand right there!” The woman made **a** slight move with the blade and threatened. “This blade is coated with poison. Just the slightest scratch on him, and you’ll bid him goodbye forever. I suggest that none of you make any sudden moves.” Everyone in the room stopped in their tracks when they heard that.

“Let my brother go, and I’ll spare you!” Hector bellowed.

“Hah! Do you think I’d believed you?” The woman held Trent hostage and began inching backward toward the door. As she did so, she taunted, “You lot are in luck. My intention had been to wipe out all of you today. Who knew you’d be so lucky to have someone here to save you? None of you would have been able to survive otherwise.”

“Cut the crap! Let him go right this instant, or you won’t make it out of the door alive!” Jacob roared savagely.

“Do you bunch of dimwits think that you **can** stop me? Anyway, I’ve had my fun today. I’ll come back some other day to toy with you.” When she reached the exit, the woman suddenly turned to Dustin and smiled seductively at him. “Hey, miracle doctor, don’t you forget what you promised. When you have the time, come over to my room, and we’ll **have** a nice long chat, alright? See you again soon!” And with that, she produced a spherical object and hurled it to the ground.

With a loud resounding boom, dense smoke burst out on the spot, clouding the visibility for a radius of several feet around them.

“Quick! Spread out! The gas might be poisonous!” Dustin warned at once. That **gave** everyone a fright, and they all dispersed promptly for fear of inhaling poisonous gas.

By the time the **smoke** cleared out, the woman was already gone. Trent was left behind, lying on the ground. unconscious.

“Trent!” Hector rushed forward to check on him. Fortunately. Trent was just unconscious and wasn’t harmed in any **way**.

“Get her!” **Jacob** was livid. Gathering his men, he was ready to go after her to take her down.

“Let her go!” Hector **stopped** them. He wouldn’t put it past the Dark Lord’s disciple to have several tricks up

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her sleeves. It might be dangerous for them to go after her and fall into her trap.

“Are we going to let her off just like that, Hector?” Jacob **was** peeved at the thought of her going free after all

she had done.

“Of course **not**. But now’s not the time for us to take action yet” Hector told him seriously. They were out there in the open while their opponents were in hiding. The situation was not beneficial to them, and besides, without proper plan and preparation, they would only be led on a wild goose chase.

“Damn it! The Dark Lord is really playing us for fools!” Jacob hissed.

“Let’s talk about this later. For now, have your men arrange to send our guests back safely. Our family gathering will end here.” Hector announced.

“Sure.” Jacob nodded and busied himself with the arrangements. Now that something like that had happened, there was no point in carrying on with the gathering anymore.

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With Hector and Jacob's arrangements, all the guests in attendance at the Harmon family gathering gradually

left, and the annual event came to a jarring end.

In order to prevent any other parties from taking advantage of the situation, Hector gave everyone firm

instructions to keep what happened a secret and that under no circumstances was any information to be

leaked.

When all the guests had left, about 100 of the Harmons stayed back. As part of the Harmon family, they understood that if anything were to happen to the family, they would be similarly implicated, so they were all

in it together.

"We really appreciate your help in finding the culprit, Dustin. Had it not been for you, the Harmon family would have suffered a tremendous loss." Hector patted Dustin on the shoulder with admiration in his eyes. It was

rare to come by such a fine young man.

"Dad, Dustin saved our entire family. Surely you're not just thanking him verbally?" Natasha prompted.

"Of course not." Hector smiled. "**Dustin**, if there's anything that you need, just name it. I'll try my best to fulfill

your wish,"

"If you really mean it, Mr. Harmon, I'd like to request that you annul Natasha's marriage alliance and let her

have her freedom,” Dustin **said** earnestly.

“Well

Hector frowned. A moment later, he shook his head. “I’m really grateful to you for saving my family.

but this is one thing I cannot promise you.”

“Why? Is it only because the Grants are able to help you defeat the Dark Lord?” Dustin questioned.

“It’s one thing to defeat the Dark Lord.” Hector sighed **and** continued helplessly. “The marriage alliance had been agreed upon a long time ago. If we suddenly decide to annul it, it would be akin to publicly disgracing the Grant family, and its repercussions would be beyond our imagination!”

There were three prominent families in South City. The Murrays had a military background, and with General Christopher Murray as head of the household, they were highly respected and had the military behind them. The Hill family, on the other hand, had their connections in the martial world. As someone who had been a master of the Balerno martial arts, Paul Hill had a myriad of disciples across the nation. His prestige in the martial world was unrivaled. As for the Grants, they had both military power **and** connections in the martial world. Their multifaceted development made them the family who thrived and flourished the most out of the three influential families. Their **wealth** of knowledge, experience, and resources, and how extremely well-informed they were about current affairs **because** of all their connections made them more formidable than the Dark Lord himself. He amounted to nothing when compared to the powers that the **Grant** family possessed.

Harmons stood a chance against the **Dark** Lord, but they were utterly helpless against the Grants. And that just was how things stood with the Harmons now. Annulling the marriage alliance was simply out of the question. They dared not even think about it.

“Say, Mr. Harmon, would it change things if it wasn’t the Harmons who decided to cancel the marriage but the

Grants instead?” Dustin asked cautiously.

"I know you're holding out hope for that, but chances of that ever happening is about as close to zero." Hector shook his head. "The reason why the Grants agreed to the marriage alliance was because they were Interested in our family's potential in the business world so that they can bring their family's status up to a whole new level with our support in the industry."

"But would you agree to it if the Grants decided to annul the arrangement?" Dustin probed.

"If it really comes to that, I guess I'll be forced to agree." Hector chuckled.

"Dad! Mark your words!" Natasha broke out into a grin when she heard his words. "As long as Tyler Grant decides to annul the marriage arrangement, you must never force me into a marriage again!"

"What do you have in mind?" Hector felt uneasiness coming over him. This daughter of his always had the wildest ideas.

"Don't you worry about that. All you've got to do is remember what you just said." Natasha did not explain any further.

"You" Just as Hector was about to say something, Mrs. Davys came over.

"Mr. Harmon, the Grants are here to visit." she reported.

"Hurry up and welcome them!" Without wasting any time, he personally went out to welcome them with the rest of the Harmons in tow.

Outside the gates, a large throng of smartly dressed people awaited.

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There were several luxurious cars and a whole lot of bodyguards standing guard behind them. It was a grand sight to behold as there were easily a hundred people gathering: A man and a woman stood right at the forefront.

The charismatic man had a tall physique that exuded a commanding presence, and his sharp eyes seemed to be able to see through everything. Every step he took gave out a strong air of danger and menace, as though he were the G

rim Reaper himself making his way through a sea of bloody corpses. He stood out from the crowd and carried such an air of reverence. This was none other than the impressive Tyler Grant! And the lady beside him was Jayla Grant, whom Dustin had had a chance encounter with.

“Tyler, I’ve asked Natasha about her thoughts on this marriage alliance before. She seemed to have expressed that she did not wish to marry you,” Jayla said offhandedly.

“That’s not her choice to make. No matter what she says, I will get the woman I have my eyes on,” Tyler said domineeringly with such confidence.

“You’re right.” Jayla nodded in agreement. “It doesn’t matter what Natasha thinks. This is an alliance of two families. She’s just a woman. She has no right to say anything about it.”

“They’re here.” Tyler raised his head and gazed straight ahead.

The gates to the Harmon estate swung open, and Hector, along with the rest of the Harmons, swiftly came forward to welcome them. “Sorry to keep you waiting. Tyler. Come on in.” Hector politely beckoned for them to enter.

Soon, they were all brought into the compound of the Harmon estate. As they made their way in, the Harmons stood to either side of them, showing their respect and sincerity.

“Bring us tea,” Hector instructed the household staff. Once they settled down in the lounge, all sorts of

refreshments were served. The Harmons demonstrated such courtesy and were as respectful as could be.

“Mr. Harmon, you should know that the purpose of our visit today is to send you the bride token,” Jayla started, and as she spoke, she gave a clap as a signal.

In no time, boxes upon boxes of gifts were brought to them. Upon opening the boxes, they found them to be full of priceless goods. Some were packed full of gold bars, some were full of accessories made of pure gold, and others carri

ed jewelry of all sorts. There were over 20 boxes in total, and every one of the m held goods of

priceless worth. It **was** truly astonishing.

“Mr. Harmon, will this be enough for the bride token?” **Jayla asked** with her chin proudly lifted, Tyler, however,

just sat by the **side**, sipping on his **tea** as though all of these were none of his business.

“Of course it is! We’re very pleased with the sincerity that the Grant family **has** shown us.” Hector nodded with

a smile.

“Great! Since you’re happy with this, we shall proceed with the marriage. We will come for the bride in 10 days! * Jayla cut things straight to the point.

“Sur-

” Hector **was** just about to agree to the arrangement when the crisp voice of a woman sounded.

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“No, I do not agree to this!”

“What?” When they heard that, everyone’s gaze shot over to the entrance of the lounge.

With everyone’s eyes on her, Natasha slowly made her way into the lounge with several people behind her. “I do not agree to the marriage alliance.”

“You do not agree?” Jayla’s expression darkened. “Have you any idea what you’re saying, Natasha?”

“Of course I have. And I stand by my words: I will not marry Tyler Grant,” Natasha said impassively.

“What is the meaning of this. Mr. Harmon? Are you going back on our arrangement?” Tyler slowly **looked** up. his sharp gaze directed pointedly at Hector. “Have you ever considered the repercussions of your actions?”

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The Harmons couldn't help but shudder when Tyler's gaze swept **over** them. An uncontrollable fear seemed to

come over them. Though he spoke calmly without any emotions, **his gaze** alone was enough to instill fear in them. For a moment, they felt like **they were** all prey to a monstrous beast.

"Do not be mistaken, Tyler. She doesn't mean that." As Hector said that, he shot Natasha a glare. "Stop

messing around. Go back to your room right this instant!"

"Natasha, this marriage alliance is an arrangement between two families! This isn't child's play! You mustn't act recklessly!" Frightened, Jessica stepped forward to warn Natasha. It was one thing for her to speak impulsively in front of Jayla. But now that Tyler **was** here, things would get out of hand if she still insisted on saying such **things**.

"I'm not messing around, nor am I acting recklessly." Natasha stood her ground. "I know you're an exceptional person, Tyler, but matters of the heart cannot be forced. Nothing good will come of **this**. I hope that you can cancel the arrangement." The Harmons were in no position to annul the marriage arrangement, but the same could not be said for the Grants.

"You want me to cancel the marriage arrangement? And why should I do that?" Tyler asked, aloof.

"As I said, we're not compatible. It will not bring us any good if we get married just for the sake **of** getting married," Natasha said with certainty.

"I don't care." Tyler took another sip of his tea before he continued indifferently, "Since we had **an** arrangement, then you're going to follow through with it, or you're going back on your words."

"Can you **please** be reasonable?*" Natasha frowned. "I already **have** someone that I like. You and I, it's not going to work out for us!"

“Oh? And who is that person that you like?” Tyler demanded.

“It’s him!” Natasha dragged Dustin out from behind her.

“You?” Jayla’s brows furrowed when she had a good look at Dustin. She never expected to bump into that annoying person here.

“What? Do **you** know him?” Tyler shot Jayla a side-long glance.

“Tyler, he’s the one who fought with me over the flower of Crimson Gem!” Jayla hissed.

“Oh.” Tyler **wasn’t** too fazed.

“Do **you** see now, Tyler? This is the man I like. We have mutual feelings for each other, so I hope you’ll give us your blessings,” Natasha said.

“Mutual feelings? Tyler chuckled menacingly. “You’re mine, Natasha. Nobody can take you away from me. If you refuse to marry me, I’ll kill him. You get me?” His words were straight to the point, and he did not even bother to mask his threats.

“How dare you!” Natasha was **furious**.

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“There’s nothing much I daren’t do,” Tyler stated matter-of-factly.

“Tyler, if it’s an alliance with the Harmons that you’re after, you have a myriad of other options! Why are you so intent on marrying me when there are so many other eligible young ladies in the Harmon family?” Natasha drew a deep breath and announced gravely, “Since this is what **things** have come to. I’ll come clean. I am no longer a virgin. I have slept with Dustin.”

“What? You’ve slept with him?” Chaos broke out when they heard what Natasha said. The Harmons all stared at her wide-eyed in disbelief. The Grants, on the other hand, were equal parts horrified and infuriated.

“Natasha! What nonsense are you spouting? Are you out of your mind?” Jessica was so shocked she broke out in cold sweat. It was a disgrace to the Harm

ons' reputation for Natasha to lose her virginity before marriage. Besides, it was also blatant humiliation toward the Grants.

"You wretched girl! What nerves you've got!" Hector was beside himself with fury. The Harmons **had** strict rules, especially toward their daughters, who were expected to preserve their innocence until the day they were married.

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"Natasha Harmon, you are shameless! Absolutely vile!" Jayla was so angry she slammed her hands on the table and jumped up from her seat. With her brother's **status** and prestige, he was never **going** to marry a woman who had slept with someone else.

"Are you trying to provoke me?" Tyler's brow knitted together ever **so** slightly. A brief second later, he regained **his** composure and put on a facade of indifference. "I do not mind that you've lost your virginity."

"What?" Once again, everyone **was** shocked by what they heard, especially the Grants. It was like they did not

even **know** Tyler anymore.

"You do not mind that I'm no longer a virgin? Well, what if I told you that I'm with child?" Natasha tossed him another shocker. "Truth be told, I'm pregnant. I'm carrying Dustin's child!"

The moment she said that, a commotion came over the room.

"Oh, you wretched child! How terrible!"

"Oh, Natasha! You've brought disgrace upon the entire Harmon family!"

"How can you agree to a marriage alliance **when** you're already pregnant with a **brat**? How utterly shameless!"

From the Harmons to the Grants, everyone **was** admonishing and chastising Natasha for what she had done. Some of her close relatives were so furious that they didn't even know **what** to say.

Even Dustin himself was surprised to hear that. Was this the trump card that Natasha claimed to have? Wasn't it too much? It didn't seem like the best idea out there. She **had** totally destroyed her reputation just to get out of the marriage arrangement. He had to admit that he **was** impressed by this trick she pulled, but **he** couldn't help feeling bad for her. He could already imagine the mean words and criticism that would be thrown

her **way** from now **on**.

"Natasha Harmon! I've shown you enough patience and tolerance, but this is too much! You're pushing my boundaries!" Tyler slowly stood up with a dark expression. No matter how composed he usually was, he could

no longer stay calm now.

"The blame is on me, and for that, I am sorry. If you need any form of compensation, just let me know."

Natasha said.

"Compensation?" Tyler scoffed. "Do you think you're being smart by pulling something like **this**? That everything will go your way because of what you said?"

"What do you mean?" Uneasiness crept up over Natasha.

"If there's **one** thing I hate the most, Natasha, it's being lied to. You better pray that I don't ever find out that your pregnancy is **a** sham or who knows what I'll do to you. Also, you won't be getting what **you** wished for. I will not call off the marriage. I stand by what I **said**. You're mine, and nobody's **ever** going to change that. It doesn't matter whether or not you're **pregnant**, and it doesn't matter if you're dead or alive. What's mine **will** stay with me forever! I will be back for you in 10 **days**, and if you **Harmons** insist on rejecting the marriage arrangement, I'll take it that you choose to be enemies of the Grant family. As for what will come of **that**, I'm sure you're more than aware. With that, Tyler turned and left, but **his** words left Natasha in a state of stupor,

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She did not expect Tyler to be so persistent even when things had turned out the way they had.

“Count yourself lucky that my brother **is** still willing to accept you, Natasha! But I have you know, people like you will never have an easy time in the Grant household!” Jayla followed in Tyler’s footsteps after she hissed meanly.

“Oh, Natasha! What’s gotten into you?” Jessica was so upset that she **was** just short of pulling her **hair** out.” You’ve just managed to ruin what was supposed to be a perfect marriage! It **was** foolish of you to pull something so absurd!”

“Natasha, Tyler isn’t an average person. You’ll never fool him with your pregnancy deception. I’m afraid that you’ve gotten yourself into some deep trouble!” Hector sighed. **The** only reason he had gone along with the act was because he bore hopes of freeing her from the marriage arrangement, but who would have thought that Tyler didn’t buy it at all? And not only so, he did not seem to have any intention of calling off the marriage at

all!

*There must be some other way... Natasha’s brow was deeply furrowed as she cracked her head thinking of a way out of her predicament. The **way** things had played out was beyond **her** expectations, and she was in a dilemma right now.

“Dustin, hurry. You should get out of Millsburg pronto! Knowing Tyler, he’d never let you off the hook!” Hector

was suddenly reminded of the danger Dustin was in.

“Don’t you worry, Mr. Harmon. Tyler won’t be able to mess with me so easily.” Dustin smiled and continued, Oh, and leave the matter of calling off the marriage to me. If persuasion doesn’t work on him, then we’ll try

more aggressive means.

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“More aggressive means?” Hector and the **rest** of the Harmons were taken aback by Dustin’s suggestion, and they all stared at him like he had gone out of his mind. He wanted to use more aggressive means against the Grants? Did he have a death wish?

“Dustin, if you have a death wish, that’s all on you. Please do not implicate us!” Jessica said sternly with a frown. From how she saw it, her daughter’s rebellion and her publicly calling off the marriage were all because of Dustin, so she harbored some form of resentment toward him.

“Tyler Grant isn’t an ordinary person. He has the smarts and the brawns, he’s courageous and witty, and most importantly, he’s got military ranks. It would be arduous to make him back off.” Hector shook his head.

“Every man has his weaknesses. As long as I grab hold of his weakness, I’ll be able to turn the tables. We’ve got 10 days left. I’ll make **sure** that I smoothen everything out nicely.” Dustin promised with certainty.

“Act within your means, boy. Don’t push things, or you’ll bring doom upon yourself,” Hector warned him gravely. He was thankful to Dustin and did not wish to see him putting himself at risk.

“Rest assured, Mr. Harmon. I know **what** I’m doing.” Dustin nodded.

“Dustin, why don’t you stay at the Harmon villa for the next few days? I don’t think that Tyler would do anything over the top on our turf,” Natasha suggested.

“No!” Natasha’s suggestion elicited an immediate rejection from Jessica. “It would make things immensely worse if the Grants were to find out that Dustin is staying here!”

“Well things have already fallen apart between us. Will this make any difference?” Natasha **raised** a brow.

“The situation **as** of now is still salvageable, but if you continue provoking Tyler, then you’re putting us all in grave danger!” Jessica said sternly. With the power and authority the Grants possessed, they had infinite ways of making the Harmons’ **lives** a living hell.

“Mrs. Harmon’s right. Now’s not the time to be making enemies. It’d be best for us to keep a low profile for the next few days.” Dustin nodded in agreement. It went without saying that he did not fear the Grants, but that did not mean that the Harmons did not fear them too.

“What if Tyler wants to kill you?” Natasha frowned.

“Well, that’d **be** a wish come true! I haven’t had the chance to loosen up for the longest time! I’d welcome a punching bag.” Dustin chuckled.

“Hey! I’m being serious here! This is a grave matter!” Natasha chided hollily. The Grants weren’t part of the martial world, so they weren’t bound by all the rules of the martial world. They had no qualms about killing

someone off.

“Don’t worry about me. Stay home and wait for my good news!” **Dustin** soon left after setting Natasha at ease.

Things weren’t looking good for the Harmons. On the one hand, they had to deal with the Dark Lord, and on the other, the Grants. One **was** hiding, and the other **was** up on the surface. Neither one of them was easy to deal with. It would be a challenge for him to deal with **both** of them alone. He had to come up with a perfect

strategy to settle everything.

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“Did I **really** act too impulsively today, Dad?” Natasha let out a sigh as she watched Dustin walk away. She had thought that she could anger Tyler into canceling the arrangement, but it turned out that not only did her plan not work, but she had also planted Dustin in a precarious position. She was sure Tyler would find all sorts of ways to make life difficult for him.

“You were pretty rash. Indeed, but what’s happened has happened. There’s no point dwelling on it any further. We’d be better off thinking about how to deal with it.” Hector said thoughtfully.

“Why don’t we go to Grandpa?” Natasha **asked** warily.

“Why should we go to him? We, Harmons, do not need his help!” Hector’s expression turned cold. The usually calm and collected man suddenly lost his cool as though she **had** brought up something sensitive which should not have been mentioned.

Natasha dared not speak anymore when she saw how agitated her father **was**. Standing by the side, Jessica sighed when she heard the conversation between them. It seemed almost impossible to bridge the gap

between the two families.

At the same time, over in the backseat of a luxurious car.

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Tyler leaned back into the seat. Even as he took a rest with his eyes closed, he exuded an air of danger.

“Tyler! That wretched girl Natasha is really too much! We need to bring her into line!” Jayla sat beside Tyler, still indignant over Natasha’s words. Her brother was such a remarkable person who was outstanding in every aspect. **Natasha** should have counted her blessings and thanked every deity she knew that he even wanted to marry her! But not only did she not appreciate him, she dared to call off the marriage alliance in front of such a crowd. This was humiliation through and through!

“Say something. Tyler! That b*tch cheated on you! Are you really not pissed off by that?” Jayla was even more disgruntled by Tyler’s silence. His fiancée had cheated on him with another man and even got herself pregnant! This was something that would never sit well with any man!

“There’s no point getting all worked up.” Tyler said with indifference. “I am not marrying Natasha because I like her. I only have my **eyes** on the potential she holds, so it matters not to me whether or not she’s pregnant.”

“Surely you can’t be serious, Tyler! She cheated on you! Does that not matter to you?” Jayla thought that her ears were playing tricks on her.

"I am only interested in results. I don't care what means it takes to achieve the results I'm after. I will marry Natasha, and that's final. Whoever dares stop me from getting what I want, I'll see to it that they die." Tyler's

tone remained as detached as **ever**.

"You've changed, Tyler," Jayla said as she shrunk back into her seat. She'd been away from her brother for two years, and she was starting to find that he was getting increasingly unfeeling. A man who was unaffected by

being **cheated** on by his fiancée. He truly seemed quite terrifying to her now.

"What do you know about the man who **was** with Natasha, Jayla?" Tyler changed the topic.

"He's Dustin Rhys, a medical practitioner. He lucked out and got a flower of Crimson Gem at an auction not

too long ago. We **had** a little argument over that." Jayla told Tyler all that she knew about Dustin. After her

disagreement with him back then, she ran a thorough check on him, but she found nothing out of the ordinary.

"The flower of Crimson Gem is quite valuable. I want it," Tyler said nonchalantly. "Get some of our men to

retrieve it, and get rid of the scumbag while they're at it."

"Sure thing!" Jayla's eyes lit up instantly. She had been planning to exact revenge on him for the longest time.

Now that she had her brother's support, she was sure she'd get things to go her **way**.

On Dustin's way back, his phone rang. He took his phone out **to** see that it **was** a call from Dahlia.

"Dustin, where have you been for the past few days? I haven't heard from you for quite some time. I went to the

medical center to see you, but

Maximus said you've gone missing for several days."

“Oh, I’ve got some matters to attend to in Millsburg. I won’t be back so soon,” Dustin explained.

“Is that so? **What** a nice coincidence! I’m in Millsburg too! I just got off the train. I called to bid you goodbye, didn’t expect you’d get here before I did!” Dahlia sounded surprised.

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“What are you doing here in Millsburg? Dustin was taken aback.

“The Nicholson family’s business, **Cardinal** Group, is located here in Millsburg, so I’ve come to take over the position of chairperson,” Dahlia told him.

“I see.” Upon giving it more thought, it made **sense** for the company to be in Millsburg. After all, **many** elites were gathered here in Millsburg, so many huge corporations and enterprises chose to establish their presence.

and operations here.

“Shall we have lunch together? There’s something I’d like to discuss with you,” Dahlia invited.

“Sure. Where are we having lunch?”

“Spices Diner.”

“Alright. I’ll be there in **a** bit.” Dustin ended the call and told the **chauffeur** to **head** straight to Spices Diner.

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Over at **Spices** Diner, Florence sat in a booth **and** took in the sight around her, occasionally commenting on what she saw. “Look, Dahlia. Things are so different here in Millsburg. Every other diner here looks so posh! I’ve decided! I’ll stay here in Millsburg for good! This is such a huge and advanced city! Everything’s so convenient here, and it’s way better than stuffy old Swinton!”

There was nothing much Dahlia could do but listen helplessly. She had planned on coming to Millsburg to assume her position alone, but Florence and James insisted on tagging along. They claimed that they didn't want her coming to Millsburg **alone** with no one to rely on and that they'd be more at ease knowing that they'd be able to help her and take care of her.

"Mom, does Aunt Victoria live nearby?" James suddenly asked out of nowhere.

"She does! And I've invited her to join us for lunch. She should be here by now." Florence nodded.

As they spoke, a group of three came in through the door, led by a glamorously dressed middle-aged woman. She was adorned from head to toe in gold, from gold necklaces to gold earrings and rings. She appeared every part a wealthy woman, and she was none other **than** Florence's **sister**, Victoria Franklin. Following behind her were Julie and an attractive young man.

"You're here, Victoria! Quick, have a seat!" Florence immediately stood up and welcomed them enthusiastically when she saw them coming in through the door.

"Florence, why have you decided to visit Millsburg? Victoria eyed her from head to toe, deliberately showing off her gold bangles and the thick gold rings on her fingers as she spoke.

"Dahlia's running a company here in Millsburg, so we followed her here." Florence chuckled. Then, it finally registered with her how flashily Victoria **had dressed** up. "Hey, **have you** hit the jackpot? Where'd you get all your jewelry from?"

"Haha! **These** are nothing! I've got loads more at home!" Victoria smiled smugly. "I have to say, I've got quite an accomplished daughter. She recently made a hundred million dollars, so she got me some jewelry."

"What? A hundred million dollars?" Florence's eyes widened in disbelief. "Julie, since when were you so capable?" **Dahlia** had toiled and suffered for three whole years to start up Quine Group, and even she did not

have a hundred million in cash. Julie had struck it rich indeed!

“Oh, Aunt Florence, **have** you forgotten I graduated from **a** prestigious university? I’ve **always** been capable! You just don’t know it.” Julie hugged her arms arrogantly. She had returned to Millsburg and enjoyed all of

life’s **pleasure** after selling off Florence’s sapphire.

“I guess I never found out.” Florence shot her an awkward smile.

“Florence, how long does it take for Dahlia to make **a** hundred million dollars? A year or two? Well, Julie did it in three **days!**” Victoria announced proudly.

“Three **days?** **You** wouldn’t get rich so soon even if you robbed a **bank!**” James had his doubts.

“Oh, you **have** such a limited worldview,” Julie made a disdainful face.

“Victoria, who’s this with you?” Florence’s gaze stopped on the charming young man who stood beside Julie.

“Oh, this is my daughter’s boyfriend. He’s Terrence Stone.” At the mention of Terrence, Victoria was even more chuffed up. “Terrence **is a** manager in Brooks Corporation. A fine young man with broad connections, he is. Oh, by the way, do you know Brooks Corporation? That’s a large enterprise worth several billion in market value!”

“Worth billions?” Florence was shocked to hear that. Cardinal Group was big enough of a deal for her. The prospect of a company with a value of up to billions was unimaginable. Was this the kind of grandeur that Millsburg had to offer?

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"I guess you can say that I have quite an influence here in Millsburg, so if any of you ever run into any problems here, you can come to me," Terrence said as he

handed out **his** name card. **As** he spoke, he shot Dahlia one too many glances. A hint of lust flashed in his eyes. Dahlia was, after all, a bombshell. Not only did she have a perfect figure, but her face was also exquisite. She was unlike any other woman he'd seen before and definitely in a much different league compared to Julie.

"Very impressive, Mr. Stone! Here, take a seat, everyone." As Florence gestured for them to take their seats, she called out to the waitstaff, "Excuse me, we're ready for our meal **now!**"

"Hang on," Dahlia piped up. "We're missing one person."

"Oh? Who else are we expecting?" Florence looked around them, puzzled.

Just as Dahlia was about to speak, Dustin gracefully made his way in through the doors. "Over here!" Dahlia stood up and beckoned for Dustin to join them. Her company turned around to see who it was and collectively

frowned.

"Why is he here?" Florence was obviously displeased. Because of her prejudice toward him, she still held him

in disdain.

"Sorry to keep you all waiting." Dustin went up to them and smiled politely.

"We weren't waiting for you!" Florence said curtly. "You sure are a pesky one, Rhys! We've just arrived in Millsburg, and you've followed us here? You haven't been tailing us, have you?"

"I think you're mistaken. I've been in Millsburg for the past few days." Dustin said calmly.

“Hah! Who knows if you knew that we’d be coming here beforehand?” Florence pursed her lips. Her daughter was now the chairwoman of Cardinal Group, and she’d had a huge leap in status. Dustin was nowhere good

enough for her anymore.

“Don’t say that, Mom. I was the one who invited Dustin for lunch,” Dahlia explained.

“Fine, whatever. Since you’re already here, you can join us.” Florence couldn’t be bothered to argue with him.

“Have a seat,” Dahlia patted the seat beside her, indicating Dustin to sit beside her.

Her caring and attentive gesture, however, seemed to have caught Terrence’s attention. A cold glint rose in his eyes. “Damn it! Why would such a gorgeous and thoughtful woman be attracted to such a douchebag?” He thought to himself.

“Buddy, you don’t sound like you’re local. Mind sharing where you’re **working**?” Terrence smiled insincerely.

“Where **he’s** working? Hah! He’s just a grubby **old** medical practitioner with **n**o formal qualifications,” Florence scorned. From **how** she saw things, Dustin’s success **today** was all thanks to Natasha. Simply put, he was

nothing more than a toy boy.

“You practice medicine without qualifications?” Terrence was briefly stunned before he burst out laughing. “That’s a rare one. You’d barely be able to sustain yourself with such a job, would you? Things must be hard for you.” He **was** blatantly **poking** fun and regarded Dustin with a **dismissive** attitude.

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“You’re right. It is tough. I barely get any patients. I’d call it a good month if I even get five patients coming in.” Dustin said, unbothered by Terrence’s comments.

“Hah! Then why are you still practicing it?” Terrence adjusted his tie and said pompously. “I say, why don’t you work for me? It just so happens that I’m in n

eed of a chauffeur. If you can drive, why don't you be my chauffeur? I'll pay you a monthly salary of ten thousand dollars. How's that?" "Thanks. I appreciate the offer, but I'm not interested." Dustin shook his head.

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"My man, this **is** a pretty decent salary. You won't get a better offer anywhere else! If you do a good job, I might even give you a bonus!" Terrence jibed.

"You're lucky that Terrence is offering you this position **as** his chauffeur, Dustin. You'll regret it if you pass **on** this opportunity!" Julie said proudly,

"That's right! Terrence is the manager of Brooks Corporation, and he **has** a bright future ahead. You'll get a lot

of extra perks working for him. What's there to not like about it?" Victoria echoed.

"Is Brooks Corporation that big of a deal?" Dustin still wasn't convinced.

"You don't know Brooks Corporation? It's a huge enterprise worth over hundreds of billions! You'll live a life of luxury if you're even the least bit affiliated with it!" Victoria scorned. He truly **was** a country bumpkin who knew

nothing.

"I'm sorry, I've never heard of it before." Dustin shook his head yet again. He didn't know much about the

business sector in Millsburg.

*Alright, so you've **never** heard of Brooks Corporation. But how about Big Bucks Brooks? Surely you've heard of

him? He's renowned in the whole of Balerno!" Terrence smirked.

"Big Bucks Brooks?" Dustin raised his brows. "Of course, I know him."

“Great. Well, Brooks Corporation is one of Big Bucks Brooks’ businesses, and I work for him!” Terrence

declared self-importantly.

“Oh? So you work for Roderick? What coincidence!” Dustin chuckled.

“What do you mean? Do you know him?” Terrence’s eyes narrowed.

“Of course I do! He used to seek medical help from me!” Dustin nodded.

“Seek your help?” Terrence sniggered. “You’re quite a liar, aren’t you, my man? Have you even got any idea how influential Big Bucks Brooks is? How could he possibly go to an unqualified medical practitioner like you

for help?”

“Exactly! There are reputable doctors everywhere here in Millsburg! Why would he seek medical help from **you**, of all people, when he can go to them? Who do you think you are?” Julie said with contempt.

“Hey, Rhys! Quit acting all important when you haven’t even gone through proper medical training! How disgusting!” Florence frowned. Since Dahlia was the one who invited him over, she felt embarrassed now that

he **was** ousted as **a** liar.

“You don’t believe me? Well, how about I give Roderick a call now?” Dustin proposed.

“Sure! Go on, call him. I’d like to see for myself just how well-connected you are.” Terrence

laughed maliciously. Even **as** manager of Brooks Corporation, he didn’t have Big Bucks **Brooks**’ number. How could this punk be acquainted with him? How ridiculous!

“Yeah, go on! I’d be impressed if you actually got **ahold** of him!” Julie sneered

.

“Okay.” Without wasting any time, Dustin pulled out his phone and made a call to Roderick Brooks. But after quite some time, the call still didn’t get through.

“What’s wrong? Is he not picking **up**? Haha! **Well**, carry on then, Terrence joked sarcastically. He was **sure** that Dustin was just putting on a show.

“Hey! Are you done yet? Everyone can tell that you’re taking it! Are you really going to carry on with the act?” Julie asked condescendingly.

“Hah! What an embarrassment!” Florence was very much annoyed.

“Forget it. Dustin. Let’s eat.” Dahlia saw that things weren’t going well for him, so she quickly attempted to help him out of the awkward situation. Everyone knew Big Bucks Brooks. He single-handedly controlled Millsburg’s economy, so he definitely wasn’t someone who just anyone could establish a connection with.

“It got through.” Just as everyone held Dustin contemptuously. Roderick finally picked up his **call**.

“Oh? The call got through? Here, let me hear what he has to say!” Terrence teased nastily and snatched the phone right out of Dustin’s hand before putting the call on speaker mode so that everyone could **hear** the conversation. “Hello, who is this? Are you Big Bucks Brooks? Hey, Mr. Brooks, I’d just like to know, are you planning on playing along with the act too?” he asked derisively.

“Hey, you’re not Mr. Rhys! Who are you?” Roderick asked.

“Me? Hahaha! I’m Terrence Stone, manager of Brooks Corporation! You’re pretending to be Roderick Brooks, aren’t you? Well, I’d like to see you try!” Terrence scoffed.

“Terrence Stone, right? Very well. I’ll remember you.”

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“So what? What can you do to me?” Terrence taunted, unaware of the impending trouble he had brought upon himself.

"I'm Roderick

Brooks, and you work for me. What do you think I can do to you?" Roderick asked coldly.

"Still keeping up the act, I see. Do you think I'd really buy this crap you're spouting?" Terrence snorted.

*Terrence Stone, I'm officially informing you that you have been fired by Brooks Corporation, effective today. You need not come to work tomorrow." Roderick wasted no time in making the decision.

"Hahaha! You're firing me? You're something else, aren't you!" Terrence guffawed. "Truth be told, I have a powerful person backing me up in Brooks Corporation. Even Roderick Brooks is in no position to fire me, much less an impostor like you!"

"Is that so? Well, would you be so kind as to enlighten me who the person backing you up might be?" Roderick asked sternly. If someone like this was the manager, it was high time Brooks Corporation had a restructuring.

"You **have** no business finding out who the person is. All you need to know is that you'll be sorry if you ever mess with me!" Terrence expressed conceitedly.

"How insolent!" Roderick huffed. "I don't want to waste my time speaking to you. Pass the phone to Mr. Rhys!"

"What's the matter? Can't hold up the act any longer? You're no fun." Terrence then tossed the phone back to Dustin and ridiculed, "My man, this actor you found yourself is pretty incompetent at what he does! He lacks the necessary charisma. I say he needs to go back and brush up on his skills!"

"Actor?" Dustin stifled a laugh. "I wasn't lying: he really is Roderick Brooks!"

"Heh! If he's Roderick Brooks, then I'm Roderick Brooks' father!" Terrence said without giving it much thought.

Dustin simply found him amusing. Terrence was quite a stubborn one. Dustin had already reminded him multiple times that it was really Roderick Brooks he was speaking with, and yet he took no heed and continued to speak with such arrogance. He'd be in for a lough time when he went to work the next day.

“Mr. Rhys, do you know this person?” Roderick suppressed his anger.

“I don’t know him well. This is my first time meeting him,” Dustin said with a chuckle.

“That’s good to know.” Roderick heaved a sigh of relief. If Dustin were on close terms with Terrence, then he wouldn’t act rashly. But since they weren’t, he could handle things his way.

“Alright, Mr. Brooks, I’ll **leave** you to carry on with your day then. I’ll contact you some other time.” Dustin quickly ended the call. His intention had just been to give Terrence a warning so that he didn’t behave so arrogantly. Who’d have known that he was so foolhardy and went so far as to insult his **boss** like that?

“Your act’s been busted, my man. Is there any point keeping it going?” Terrence looked down his **nose at** Dustin, wearing a wise and discerning expression **as** if he had seen through Dustin’s lie.

“Hah! I think he’s the only one fooled by his act! Some people really know no shame! Julie shook her head, looking at Dustin like he **was** nothing but a clown

“What’s the meaning of all this, Florence? How could you bring a scammer to our table? Are you insulting **us**?” Victoria was upset.

“Dustin! Can you please cut your bullshit? Are you not ashamed of yourself? Because I am!” Florence shot daggers at him out of her eyes. Why did he have to act like he was all that when they were just having a meal? And what’s worse was that his lie got busted! It was downright embarrassing!

“There’s no point saying anything more. You’ll find out the truth tomorrow.” Dustin gave a faint smile, not bothering to explain further. He knew that no matter what he said, these people weren’t going to believe him.

“Quick! This is the place! I saw him go in!”

Right then, a commotion broke out at the door. They looked up and **saw** an obese man with a bunch of henchmen coming in menacingly. The person taking the lead was none other than Duncan Doyle, who had had a run-in with Dustin in a bar a few days back.

“Here he is!” Duncan’s eyes swept across the diner, and he quickly spotted Dustin. With his henchmen in tow, he stormed up to him.

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“That’s strange. Why are they headed our way? They look like they’re up to no good. They’re not here to give us trouble, are they?” Florence fidgeted anxiously in her seat.

“They’re here for me.” Dustin piped up.

“You? Have you offended someone again?” Dahlia frowned. She noticed that Dustin ran into quite a lot of trouble these days.

“I wouldn’t exactly say I offended him, per se. I simply beat him up to teach him a lesson on how to behave,” Dustin said calmly.

*This is not Swinton. There are influential people all around. There are some people that we simply cannot afford to cross!” Dahlia whispered. Though she was now chairwoman of Cardinal Group, the handover **had** yet to be completed, so she had neither funds, connections, nor experience. At this stage of her life, what she needed to do was to make more connections, keep a low profile, and stay out of trouble.

“Don’t you worry. Miss Dahlia. I’m here. I’ll make sure that nobody kicks up a fuss here.” Terrence shot her a confident smile, trying to portray the image of a savior. He’d never pass up the opportunity to flex his muscles in front of such a beautiful lady. Every man wanted to play the part of a hero saving the damsel in distress.

“Dahlia, Terrence has some very powerful people backing him up. With the connections he has, these rascals don’t stand a chance,” Julie said proudly as she hooked an arm around Terrence’s.

“Is that so? Then I’ll **have** to thank Terrence in advance.” Dahlia managed to force a smile on her face.

“Don’t mention it. It’s no big deal,” Terrence said with a wave of his hand as he beamed joyfully, thinking it’d

be effortless to deal with these thugs.

“You scoundrel! I’ve been searching high **and** low for you for the past two days! You can’t run away now!” Duncan advanced with a threatening smile on his face. His malicious gaze was fixed on Dustin.

“Why were you searching for me? Have **you** finally realized that you were wrong and were looking for me to apologize?” A hint of a smile tugged on Dustin’s lips.

“Apologize, my foot!” Duncan’s face fell as he **roared**. “Two **days** ago, you humiliated me and gave me three slaps **across** the face. I swear I’ll chop your hands off today, you asshole!”

“Excuse me, sir, Please calm down. If Dustin has hurt you in any **way** at all, I’ll pay you for the damages he’s

done.” Dahlia stood to alleviate the tension.

Surprised that someone would stand up for Dustin, Duncan gave Dahlia a **good** look before his eyes lit up.

“Gorgeous! This lady is gorgeous Indeed!” he thought.

He’d set eyes on many beautiful ladies before, but this was something else. She was truly a rare beauty!

“Hey loser, is **this your** girlfriend? She’s quite hot.” Duncan stroked his chin as he **leered** at Dahlia with a smirk. ‘I’ll strike you a deal. If you let your girlfriend sleep with **me** for one night, I’ll let you off the hook for that ass move you pulled last time. How’s that?”

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“You insolent bastard!” Before Dustin could say anything, Terrence slammed his fist on the table and stood up. “Which sect do you belong to? Don’t you know that men’s disagreements should be settled between men? So keep the lady out of your dirty **business!**”

“And who are you to run your mouth here, you **cad?**” Duncan squinted at him.

“Hmph! I am Terrence Stone, manager of Brooks Corporation! If you know what’s good for you, you better scram, or I’ll **make** you regret the day you were born!” Terrence said with his hands behind his back, going for a look of superiority. Brooks Corporation was a giant in the Millsburg business industry and had enormous influence over the market, so Terrence **was** used to people backing off the moment he told them that he worked for Brooks Corporation. It worked like a charm.

“Manager of Brooks Corporation?” Duncan’s expression darkened when he heard that, and within a split second, he went up to Terrence and gave him a hard slap across the face. “Fuck you! How dare a measly manager behave so pompously? Do you have a death wish?”

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With a loud smack, Duncan’s hand made contact with Terrence’s cheek. The force was so strong that he staggered backward, nearly tripping over himself. The crimson outline of a palm blossomed on his face, clear

for all to see.

Julie, along with the rest of them, were astonished by what they saw. It was beyond their expectation that these thugs would be so dauntless **as** to assault the manager of Brooks Corporation. Were they out of their

minds?

“You—

How dare you hit me!” Terrence held his cheek in his hand, gasping in disbelief. “Do you not know who I am? I am a managerial level in Brooks Corporation!”

“So what?” Without another word, Duncan gave him another hard slap. I’d probably be intimidated if Roderick Brooks himself were here. But a mere manager? Do you think I’d be afraid of you?”

“You scumbag! You’re done for, I’m telling you! How dare you hit me! I’ll make you pay if it’s the last thing I do!”

Beside himself with rage. Terrence pulled his phone out and **was** about to call for backup.

“Fuck you!” Duncan kicked Terrence to the ground and bellowed, “How dare **y ou** act so arrogantly when death is staring you in the face? Get him, boys! Give him a good beating and show him who’s boss! With his orders, his henchmen came forward and rained kicks and punches down on Terrence.

“Stop it! Stop this immediately, or I’m calling the cops! Julie shouted. These things were going to be in deep trouble for messing with Terrence!

“Call the cops? Yeah, you go ahead and try that, and you’ll be walking out of here with **one arm less!**” Duncan glared at her nastily. That did the trick and shut Julie up.

“You you you’re too much!” Victoria was so angry, but there was nothing she could do, and that added to her frustration. She was consumed by distress at the sight of her prospective son-in-law being beaten up.

“This is all your fault, Rhys! If it wasn’t for you, Terrence would never **have** been beaten up!” As usual Florence pinned the blame on Dustin. Bullying people that she thought were weaker than her was what she did best. “I’m not the one beating him up! What’s this got to do with me?” Dustin was speechless. After all, it was Terrence who wanted to be the hero of the day but ended up embarrassing himself.

“Hmph! Terrence **was** helping you, and you’re here making sarcastic comments. Are you **even** human?” Florence demanded furiously.

“Well, maybe I’m not. If you are, why don’t you go ahead and save him?” Dustin gestured in Terrence’s

direction.

“You-

” Florence was rendered speechless. She would never **dare** to save Terrence because she feared that she would be implicated.

“Dustin, you fight well, Hurry! Go help him out!” Dahlia’s **brow** was furrowed. Terrence had **meant** to help **them**, so she could not just stand there **and** watch him being assaulted without doing anything about it.

“Alright.” Since Dahlia was the one who asked, Dustin **finally** got up and gave several of the henchmen kicks that sent them flying. “You’ve had **your** fun, **and your** anger **should** have subsided. That’s enough,” he **said**

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nonchalantly.

“You’re in deep shit yourself! How dare you concern yourself with other people’s business?” Duncan spat spitefully.

“Come straight at me if there’s anything you’re displeased about. Do you even call yourself a man if you bully the weak?” Dustin said calmly. Terrence, who **was** cowering on the ground, looked insulted when he heard Dustin calling him weak. He had meant to flex his muscles and show off how powerful he was, but these thugs had no regard for his status whatsoever! And because of that, not only did he get beaten up, Dustin ended up walking away with the credit that was supposed to be his. This **was** humiliation unlike any other!

“Fine! I won’t attack him. I’ll attack you instead!” Duncan smiled viciously and beckoned for his men to go forward with a wave. “Mess him up! And go all out while **you’re** at it! I’ll bear the consequences!”

“Yes, sir!” The **group** of henchmen answered and charged up toward Dustin all at once.

At the sight of that, Dustin composedly picked up a handful of cutleries from the table and threw them straight

ahead. As the whooshing sound halted, everyone saw that the forks and knives were half-buried in the

henchmen’s thighs.

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“Ah!” There were a series of loud cries as the henchmen were caught off-guard, falling to the floor one after another and rolling around in pain.

In a blink of an eye, the floor was littered with people. Everyone had a fork or a knife lodged so deeply in their thighs that they couldn't even pull it out.

“What?” Duncan couldn't help but be startled by the sight.

He had carefully handpicked these henchmen. All of them had gone through extensive training and were highly skilled. Typically speaking, a ten-against-one battle would have ended in an overwhelming but predictable victory on one side.

Yet, never in his dreams would he have expected that all of his men would have fallen just like that.

Were cutleries supposed to be this deadly?

“What? That bastard is this strong?” Victoria couldn't help but be shell-shocked by how nonchalant Dustin looked. In her mind, Dustin was just an insignificant small fry.

How was he capable of that?

“Fuck! Turns out he's had some training. Why didn't he act sooner?” Terrence gritted his teeth, feeling the

soreness throughout his body. If Dustin had come to his rescue sooner, he wouldn't **have** had to get beat up

for nothing!

Undoubtedly, that bastard just wanted to embarrass him!

“Rhys seems to be getting better and better at fighting.”

Florence and the rest were secretly stunned. Although they knew that Dustin was a decent fighter, seeing him

end a battle in a single second like that was shocking enough.

“You want to take revenge on me, but you only brought so few people? That may be a tall order.” Dustin stared into Duncan’s eyes and continued indifferently. “If you break one of your arms and promise **never** to appear in front of me again, I may consider letting you off this time.”

“Letting me off?” After a brief moment of surprise, Duncan burst into menacing laughter. “Punk, I’ll admit that you’ve got something in you, and just any henchman is no match for you. However, if you think that victory is in your hands, then you’re majorly mistaken!”

“Hmm, are you saying you have another trick up your sleeve?” A shadow of a smile crossed Dustin’s face.

“Of course!” Duncan said with confidence. “After all, I’m here for revenge, so of course I made preparations. You’re a good fighter, aren’t you? Well, I’ll bring out someone who is an even better fighter than you now!”

With that, he clapped his hands twice.

Suddenly, two men in tracksuits walked in. One was in his forties, while the other was in his early twenties. From the looks of it, they had to be father and son. Not only did their faces resemble each other’s, but they also had similar builds; both of them had burly figures sculpted from solid muscles, and veins popped through

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their skin like earthworms. They looked terrifying.

“Punk, do you know who they are?” Duncan said gleefully. “They’re the famous Sander father–son **duo** of the martial world, Cobalt and Flint Sander!”

“The Sander father–son duo?” When Terrence heard this, his expression immediately changed.

Others might not know it, but he knew very well how strong the Sanders were. The son, Flint, was already

ranked thirteenth on the Hundred Immortals. Meanwhile, the father, Cobalt, was ranked second!

What did being ranked second entail?

He was **already** far past the capabilities of the average person. He could smash rocks with his **hands** and feet.

Rumor had it that when Cobalt **was** at his peak, he had challenged 27 dojos in Millsburg in a row. Not to mention, he won every single time!

That alone **was** a testament to his immense power!

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Seeing Cobalt and Flint stride in, shivers ran down Terrence's spine. "Just who is this bastard? How did he manage to get the Sander father-son duo here?!"

These two were renowned top dogs in the martial world. Either one of them could take on a hundred

opponents at once. They rarely showed up for anyone; it was definitely no easy feat to have invited these two to a light.

"Terrence, who is the Sander father-son duo? Are they very powerful?" Julie asked from the side.

"Powerful? To the average person, these two are monsters! Especially the one named Cobalt—he's an absolutely terrifying freak. He kills like it's nothing. Countless people have died by their hands!" Terence said solemnly.

As one of the backbone members of the Brooks Corporation, he naturally knew a thing or two about the martial world.

"What? They're that scary?!" Julie shrank behind Terrence.

Although Florence and the others didn't say anything, they maintained their distance, afraid that they might end up as collateral damage. They had no understanding of the world of martial arts, but from the aura that the Sanders radiated, they were clearly not good people.

They couldn't get on the bad side of people like them, no matter what!

"Punk, if you cross the Sander father-son duo, you're done for!" After the shock wore off, Terrence couldn't help but laugh at Dustin's fate.

Because of Dustin, he got beaten up for nothing, so he was mad. Not to mention, Dustin had stolen his thunder, which caused resentment to build within him. Now that Dustin was down on his luck, he almost couldn't stop himself from clapping and cheering.

"You bastard, no matter how good you are at fighting, you're nothing in front of the Sander father-son duo." Duncan said mockingly.

"Are they very strong?" Dustin asked.

"What? You've never heard of the Sander father-son duo?" Duncan lifted a brow and added, "Fine. I'll **give** you a grand introduction today. You're going to lose so badly that you have no choice but to admit their superiority! The younger one is Flint, ranked thirteen on the Hundred Immortals. His father, Cobalt, is even more impressive. He's now ranked second on the Hundred Immortals! Do you know what that means? **Unless** a divine-level martial arts expert appears, he's unmatched! No matter how **strong** you are, you're nothing in front of number two of the Hundred Immortals. You won't even last a second!"

After listening to all that, Dustin **remained** unaffected. He grunted noncommittally and asked, "And?"

"And?" Duncan sneered. "Punk, you're truly fearless! It's expected for a small-town bumpkin to be so ignorant. But no worries. You'll learn in a moment how strong the Sander father-son duo is!"

"Really?" Dustin smiled lightly. "I do want to broaden my horizons."

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“Very well! I’ll grant you your wish!” Duncan regarded Dustin like he was on his deathbed. Then, he said to Cobalt, “Master Sander, I’ll leave this bastard in your hands. Don’t kill him yet; leave him alive for me to play with.”

“Flint, go and meet him.” Cobalt wore a cool expression, standing there with his hands behind his back. He had no intention of moving a muscle.

Naturally, the second-ranked of the Hundred Immortals had a matching ego. If he fought anyone and everyone, then he’d be devaluing himself.

In truth, he had zero interest in joining a battle of this level. However, he owed the Doyle family a favor, so he had to show up.

“I can solve any problem as long as I’m paid. Don’t blame me when I cripple you later,” Flint said, slowly approaching Dustin with blazing eyes. His muscular body was absolutely threatening.

“And I’ll say the same thing to you,” Dustin said.

“Great! I hope you’ll still be so mouthy later!” Flint smiled coldly. He tapped his foot lightly, and his entire figure

shot into the air like an arrow leaving the bow.

As he got closer to Dustin, he drew his fist back before aiming it toward his abdomen. This punch carried a

few tons of force: even a cow would be blown to smithereens, much less a human being.

Dustin didn’t attempt to dodge this blow. Instead, he answered it with his own list.

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However, comparatively, Dustin's fist was much smaller than Flint's.

"You're asking for it!" Flint snorted coldly. He exerted more force in his arm, his internal energy surging out from his body.

There was a loud explosion as the two men's fists collided with each other.

Dustin stood there without budging an inch. Cracks began forming beneath his feet. On the other hand, the moment their fists crashed into each other, Flint let out a grunt. He flew backward, slamming against the wall heavily, leaving a crater in his wake.

The arm that he used to throw the punch was dripping with blood, and his bones were shattered. He couldn't move anymore. After two seconds, he finally couldn't hold back anymore and coughed up a mouthful of blood. His body began to crumple slowly, sliding down the wall like wet mud.

"How is that possible?!" Duncan was stunned by what happened. Although Flint wasn't as strong as Cobalt, he was still ranked thirteen on the Hundred Immortals. However, a figure as powerful as that had been sent flying from a single punch by Dustin.

Was that punk that strong?

"Hmm?" Seeing the severely injured Flint, Cobalt couldn't help but frown. He thought his appearance would merely be a formality; he didn't think he'd encounter a skilled fighter.

If he could defeat his son with one punch, then that man was not any weaker than him. He had to take this seriously now.

"Young man, you're quite skilled. May I ask who your teacher is?"

To have such power at such a young age, he must be from a famous guild in the martial arts world. If this man were someone he couldn't afford to piss off, then he'd be in trouble, so he'd better ask first.

"I do not belong to any guild," Dustin answered indifferently.

"You don't belong to any guild?" Cobalt's eyes widened. If that **was** the case, then it was very scary. "Young man, I think you're a talent. I don't want to slaug

After you, so if you apologize to Duncan today, I'll let things go. How does that sound?" Cobalt said lightly.

As a veteran in the world of martial arts, he naturally had his own life philosophy. If he didn't know his opponent's background, he'd better not let things get ugly if he could avoid it.

"Master Sander, what **are** you saying? I want you to break his legs, not ask him for a simple apology!" Duncan frowned, upset.

"Are you telling me what to do?" Cobalt's face turned icy. "Just because I owe you a small favor, I have to give my life for you?"

Duncan **wore** a **dark** expression, but he didn't dare retort.

Cobalt turned back to Duncan. "Young man, what do you say?"

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"An apology is no problem, of course. However, he owes me an apology, not the other way around," Dustin said with a slight smile.

"Huh?" Cobalt's eyebrows wrinkled. "Young man, I'm already making a concession. Don't take an inch and ask for a mile. You may come from an extraordinary background, but I'm no average Joe either. I'm sure you've heard of the Hill family, one of the Tremendous Three. I **was** formerly their family's fighter!"

"The Hill family?" Dustin couldn't disguise his surprise when he heard this.

"It seems like you know the power of the Hill family. In that case, let both parties take a step back and remain cordial. Or else, this serves no one any good," Cobalt said.

"Since you were the Hill family's fighter, I'm sure you recognize this," Dustin said, taking out an emerald badge.

"The Consultant Badge?!" The moment Cobalt saw the badge, his expression changed. Then, under the shocked gazes of everyone, he fell to one knee, kneeling on the floor with a thud.

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“Lord Consultant, greetings! I am fighter Cobalt Sander!”

Under everyone’s gaze, Cobalt got on one knee and saluted Dustin with a face full of respect. He was the Hill family’s fighter, in other words, he was a high-ranking guard.

Meanwhile, a consultant was completely different—a consultant was second only to the master!

Everyone, no matter who, referred to him with the respectful address of “sir” or “lord.”

One could count on one hand the number of Consultant Badges the Hill family had given out. There were merely a handful of consultants, but each and every one of them was all-powerful figures!

If Dustin was able to get a Consultant Badge, then that was sufficient proof of his power and worth!

“Er

Everyone was shocked when Cobalt suddenly got on one knee. They were completely dumbstruck, their faces full of disbelief.

That was none other than the famous Master Sander, the second-ranked on the Hundred Immortals! People everywhere worshiped the ground he walked on.

Yet, a person of that caliber had actually knelt for Dustin.

What the f*ck was going on?!

Terrence and Duncan were dumbfounded. Julie and the others looked at each other, shocked.

They had never expected that just by taking out a badge, Dustin could have scared someone into falling to their knees.

In truth, even Dustin hadn't expected Cobalt to react this way. It seemed like the Hill family's Consultant Badge was truly exceptional.

"M—
Master Sander, what are you doing?" Duncan asked in shock. He even looked completely at a loss. He'd invited Cobalt to fight for him, not kneel for his enemy.

Ignoring Duncan's words, Cobalt remained on one knee on the floor as he uttered a sincere apology. "My lord, forgive me for not recognizing you. I have offended you greatly earlier, but please do not take it to heart."

At some point, **sweat** began to bead on his forehead.

The Hill family's Consultant Badge didn't just represent power but also a significant status. It wasn't an exaggeration to say that with just one word from a consultant, he could be made to disappear.

"It's fine. You were just doing someone a favor. Since things didn't sour further, then let's just treat it as a misunderstanding." Dustin said without a hint of aggressiveness. Cobalt's behavior earlier had at least earned some of **his** respect.

"Thank you, my lord!" Cobalt said, looking overjoyed.

After expressing his gratitude, without any hesitation, he carried his son on his back and left.

Chapter 479

Although being ranked second on the Hundred Immortals seemed like an amazing feat, it actually didn't count for nothing in front of a true master. After all, in a place like Millsburg, there were many hidden dragons and crouching tigers, and divine-level martial artists were a dime a dozen.

Seeing Cobalt flee, Duncan instantly panicked. "Master Sander? What's going to happen to me if you leave?"

"What's going to happen? You're on your own!" Cobalt said, throwing a glance over his

s shoulder as though he was looking at a dead man. Even the Doyle family couldn't afford to cross the Hill family's consultant.

"What?" Duncan was flabbergasted.

He was on his own? What the f*ck was he going to do?

Seeing that the tables had turned, Duncan spat fiercely, "Punk, this is not over! Just you wait!" and attempted to slink away.

"Hold right there. Did I say you could go?" Dustin said indifferently. "You come and go as you please. What do

you take me for?"

"Punk, I've already let you off the hook. What more do you want?" Duncan shouted, putting up a fierce front.

"Of course, I want to give you a lesson. As I said earlier, I want to break your arm. I can't just eat my words." Dustin picked up a fork and flung it casually.

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The fork whizzed through the air like an arrow leaving the bow and went straight through Duncan's arm.

"Ah!" he screamed, cold sweat pouring down his face.

"Remember, if this happens again, I won't stop at just an arm," Dustin warned.

"You — you're ballsy!" Duncan pressed his arm that was bleeding profusely, and ran for his life— his former moments of glory had now turned into a humiliating spectacle.

"Dustin, what was that thing you took out earlier? Why did that guy get on his knee immediately when he saw it?" Dahlia couldn't help but ask curiously once Duncan was gone.

The others didn't utter a word, but they were also bewildered.

“Oh, two days ago, I saved a patient, and his family gave **me** a badge. They told me that if I ever got into trouble, this could save my life. I didn’t think I’d actually have to use it,” Dustin said with a laugh.

“Huh? That’s unbelievably lucky,” Dahlia said, slightly surprised. She had almost thought that he was going to

end up in deep shit.

“Hmph, how impressive can that be? In the end, he **was** still riding on **someo**
ne’s coattails!” Terrence said

cynically.

Dustin’s actions had made him feel ashamed. “You got all the glory because of that little badge. I’m tall, rich, and handsome, but why do I have to be shown up by you?” he thought bitterly.

“Dustin, to forge iron, you still need a strong hammer. A favor can only be used once, so don’t be too pleased with yourself. Next time, you won’t be his lucky again!” Julie said indignantly.

Her man was the best man in the world. What was a barefoot doctor in comparison?

“Really? I guess,” Dustin said with a light smile. He was too lazy to defend himself. There were always bound to be green-eyed monsters who couldn’t see the glory of others.

“Dustin, this badge of yours is really pretty. Can I borrow it for a few days?” Florence’s eyes were sparkling as she stared at the Consultant Badge in Dustin’s hand. If she could get her hands on the badge that could make people kneel, then of course she’d want to take it for a spin.

“This badge already has an owner. Even if I gave it to you, you can’t use it. You might even get into trouble,” Dustin said, shaking his head.

Considering Florence’s personality, if she got a hold of this, she could turn the whole world upside down.

“Hmph, what kind of trouble? I think you’re just selfish!” Florence’s face turned frigid.

“Mom, what do you want to do with Dustin’s badge?” Dahlia frowned.

“I just thought it was pretty and wanted to take a closer look. Who would’ve thought that that bastard would be so petty? Whatever, I don’t want it anymore! It’s just a shitty badge; what’s so special about it? You can hold onto it until it rots! Let’s go!” Florence blew her top. She wasn’t in the mood to eat anymore; thus she straight up asked them to leave.

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“Even at her ripe old age, she still throws tantrums like a child,” Dahlia said helplessly, shaking her head.

“After so many years. I’ve gotten used to it.” Dustin thought nothing of it and changed the subject. “By the way, didn’t you come looking for me to discuss something? What was it?”

“It was nothing. I just wanted to refer you for a job,” Dahlia said, forcing a smile.

“A job? What kind of job?” Dustin was taken aback.

“To be the Chief Security Officer of the Nicholson Corp. What do you think?” Dahlia arched her brow.

“Chief Security Officer? What **gave** you that idea?” Dustin was puzzled.

“This is my first time in Millsburg, and I’m not familiar with the people or the place. Taking on a multibillion-dollar corporation, there will surely be many hardships. I need someone to help me,” Dahlia explained straightforwardly. “The corporation’s security department is in charge of safety and security. Any sign of trouble has to be taken care of in time. There are many positions in the company that carry a lot of weight, and this is a role I can’t give to an outsider; I have to keep it within my circle. After giving it a lot of thought, I think you’re the best guy for the role!”

She’d appointed him Chief Security Officer, half because she trusted him and half because she wished he’d stay by her side. After all, she’d be the closest person to him.

If he took on that position, she wouldn’t have to worry about Natasha stealing him from the shadows. By then

, with time, feelings would develop. Well, then things would be up to her, wouldn't they?

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Chapter 481

Dustin was in a dilemma. “Dahlia, you know I’m only average at martial arts. I’ve never been a Chief Security

Officer before. Don’t you think I’m not suited for that post?” He **was** good at fighting and treating illnesses, but he had no experience holding an executive position in a company. It just didn’t feel right.

“You just need to be good at fighting.” Dahlia smiled at him. “You don’t need to do anything. You just need to oversee safety matters and, at the same time, protect me from harm.”

“Dustin didn’t know what to say.

“Hmph! If you don’t want to do it, fine.” She pulled a long face. “I’ll just die a quick death if someone wants to harm me. It’s no big deal.”

“Come on, it’s not that serious.” His eyes twitched.

Dahlia responded, “You’re right, it’s not that serious. Nicholson Corp. has tens of billions in assets. Of course, I don’t need any protection as the newly appointed chairman. It’s not like anyone is after their shares. Please. just remember to collect my body when I’m assassinated.”

“Stop speaking like that. Alright, I’ll do it, okay?” He smiled bitterly. This woman had started learning some tricks.

“Don’t force yourself. I don’t want you to regret your decision.” Dahlia said.

Dustin shook his head continuously I’m not forcing myself. And I won’t regret it .”

“Alright! You’re the one who said it; I didn’t force you.” She immediately flashed a beautiful smile.

He was helpless. “I feel like I’ve fallen into your trap.”

“You should be grateful. There are people waiting for the opportunity to be trapped.” She looked up at him proudly.

“Not to mention, I’ll treat you well.

I didn’t prepare any gifts today, so I’ll give you a small reward first.” She stood up on her tiptoes and swiftly landed a peck on his cheek.

As

she drew back, a waft of a light fragrance followed. Dustin froze and looked at her funny. “Dahlia, you seem to have turned into a delinquent.”

“Don’t guys like delinquent girls?” Dahlia retorted wittily. However, her face turned bright red. In the end, she wasn’t able to act freely without restraint like Natasha could.

Dustin was thinking of a response when his phone suddenly **rang**. It was a call from Patrick.

“Hello, Dustin? Sorry for bothering **you**.”

“It’s okay. Is there anything I can help you with, Patrick?” Dustin’s tone was pleasant.

“Well, the **thing is**, even though my grandfather’s condition has stabilized, he’s been coughing nonstop these past few days, and he doesn’t seem to be in good spirits either. I recalled that you mentioned he needs to take some medicinal wine?”

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Chapter 451

“Medicinal wine?” Dustin was confused for a moment before it hit him. “Oh, I’m sorry! I’ve been so busy these

past two days that I’ve forgotten about it. But no worries; I’ve had it brewed beforehand. I’ll get someone to

deliver it to you immediately.”

“I see. Sorry for the trouble.” Patrick breathed a sigh of relief.

“It’s no trouble. It’s an oversight on my part.” Dustin felt embarrassed. Because of the Harmons’ annual family

gathering, he’d forgotten about the Hill family.

After he hung up, he made a call to Edmund. “Hello, Mr. Robinson. Can you help me check if the medicinal wine I left in the kitchen is still there?”

Very soon, Edmund responded, “It’s here. What should I do with it, Mr. Rhys?”

“I’m unable to leave at the moment. Could you please help me deliver the medicinal wine to Patrick Hill at the Hill family residence?”

Edmund agreed immediately. “No problem. I’ll go right away!”

30 minutes later, a Mazda came to a slow stop in front of the gates of the Hill family residence. The car door opened, and Edmund got off carefully while carrying the medicinal wine in his arms.

“Hey! What are you here for?” The guard by the gates yelled.

Edmund smiled apologetically. “Sir, I’m here to deliver wine to Sir Patrick Hill on Mr. Rhys’ orders.” For an affluent **family** like the Hills, even the guards thought that they were above others.

“Mr. Rhys? Which Rhys?” the guard questioned.

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Chapter 482

“Mr. Dustin Rhys.”

“Who’s Dustin Rhys? I’ve never heard of him. Get lost, and don’t be an eyesore!” The guard lambasted. Every day, many people sent gifts to the Hill family. It had already become a regular occurrence for them.

“But Mr. Rhys instructed me to deliver this to Sir Patrick personally.” Edmund was in a hard spot.

“Hey, do you not understand what I said? I told you to get lost!” The guard was getting impatient.

Edmund was nervous and shrank back in slight fear. “Could you kindly deliver the message at least?”

“Who are you to ask me to deliver a message? Get lost before I lose my cool!” The guard’s expression was

cold.

“What’s the noise about?” At that moment, a tall, well-built man walked out.

The previously upset guard immediately greeted him with a smile. “Mr. Torben, it’s nothing. A beggar is being rowdy and wants to pass a gift to Mr. Patrick. I’ll get him to leave immediately.”

“Hold up.” Torben raised his hand to stop him and turned his attention toward Edmund. “You know Patrick?”

“No.” Edmund shook his head, his expression filled with fear. “Mr. Rhys asked me to pass a bottle of medicinal

wine to Sir Patrick. Could you kindly pass on the message?”

“Dustin?” A cold glint flashed through his eyes. “So you were sent by him.”

“It seems like you are acquainted with Mr. Rhys. Thank God.” Edmund was relieved, thinking he had met a

savior.

“Mmhm, thank God.” He sneered. “You mentioned a bottle of medicinal wine. It’s for Patrick?”

Edmund nodded. “That’s right.”

“It’s not poisoned, is it?” Torben narrowed his eyes.

“Poisoned?” Edmund was taken aback and waved his hands in panic. “That’s impossible. This is a medicinal

wine to treat the sick. How could it contain poison?”

“Really? Why don’t you try it then?” He smiled mockingly.

Edmund smiled apologetically. “This is medicinal wine for Sir Patrick. A person of my status can’t drink it.”

“What? You’re not going to listen to me?” Torben’s expression turned **dark**. “You not drinking just proves that

the medicinal wine is suspicious. Someone, take him away!”

“No, no, no. I’ll drink!” Edmund panicked and opened up the bottle in a hurry before **taking** a sip.

“That’s too little. Finish the whole bottle!” Torben ordered.

“What?” Edmund was shocked and at a loss. He would most probably collapse if he finished the whole bottle.

“Not going to drink? Let me help you out personally!” Torben grinned, then grabbed a fistful of Edmund’s hair

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and pulled his head down so his mouth was facing upward. At the same time, he grabbed the medicinal wine and forced it down his throat.

As the wine went down his pipes, Edmund coughed and choked uncontrollably until his face flushed red. He appeared extremely tormented.

Torben bellowed in laughter. “Drink up! Finish it all, buddy!” The sounds of his laughter never stopped as he continued forcing the remaining wine down his throat. He appeared exhilarated, as if tormenting others was a fun activity.

Torben didn’t seem satisfied even after he emptied the bottle. He snapped his fingers as he ordered, “This person is suspicious and added poison to the wine. Take him away immediately to be served his punishment!”

“I ... I didn’t poison the wine.” Edmund laid on the floor, barely clinging to life.

“Bastard, you’re still talking back?” Torben stepped on his face and sneered. “Trash like you at the bottom of the food chain are just our toys. Your life is in

my hands! I'm in a bad mood today, so I'm going to make sure you wish for death!"

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Chapter 483

When Dustin returned to Enchanting Villa, it was already dusk, but Edmund was nowhere to be found. Dustin found it suspicious. Typically, Edmund would already have dinner prepared by this time. With how considerate he was, he would even inform Dustin in advance when he had to leave the house.

Just as he was wondering about the situation, his phone rang. It was from Abigail.

"Dustin! Things are bad. Something happened to my dad!" Dustin could tell she was anxious as soon as she spoke.

"What happened?" Dustin turned serious.

"The hospital just called. They said my dad was beaten up so badly he almost died," Abigail replied.

Dustin's brows furrowed slightly. "Edmund treats everyone with kindness. Why would he suddenly be beaten up?"

Edmund was always cautious and reserved, and he interacted with people with an apologetic smile on his face. Logically speaking, he wasn't the type to engage in conflicts or make enemies.

"I'm not sure about the details. I'm on the way to the hospital."

"Which hospital?"

"Pinevale Hospital."

"Okay, I'll be right there." Dustin left the house right after he hung up.

Within 20 minutes, he had arrived at the hospital. In one of the wards, Edmund appeared lifeless. He was covered in bandages, leaving only his face exposed.

Abigail was pacing in the ward, at a loss. After all, she was only a 17-year-old high school student. She had never encountered a situation of such magnitude. It was inevitable for her to panic when her only relative was left in such a state.

“Abigail, how’s Mr. Robinson?” Dustin suddenly stormed into the ward.

“Dustin, You’re finally here!” It felt like she had found her pillar of support.

She said in a rush, “The doctor said my dad has multiple fractures and damaged organs. His whole body is also covered in all kinds of wounds. It’s suspected that my dad was tortured.”

“Tortured?” Dustin frowned. “Have you guys offended anyone before?”

“No!” Abigail shook her head immediately. “My dad is an honest though timid man. He’s never offended

anyone.”

Dustin was silent. He approached Edmund and took a seat before feeling for his pulse. The next second, his expression darkened. Although Edmund’s injuries were not life-threatening, the perpetrator had used extremely cruel means. They had deliberately avoided striking vital points, ensuring that their victim would endure excruciating pain.

Someone who could perform such an act was either harboring a **deep** grudge or just purely sadistic.

“Mr. Robinson, can you hear me?” Dustin asked softly.

Edmund’s eyes fluttered before opening slowly. His voice was hoarse and weak. “Mr... Rhys.”

“Mr. Robinson, don’t worry. I will make sure you get better.” His expression turned solemn. “I’m going to ask you a few questions. You need to answer me honestly.”

“Okay Edmund nodded as much as he could.

“Who made you like this?” Dustin went straight to the point.

“I don’t know. I went to the Hill family residence today to deliver the medicinal wine. But someone deliberately made things difficult for me and made me go through hell.” Edmund spoke with difficulty. A glint

of fear flashed through his eyes.

“Medicinal wine?”

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Chapter 484

Dustin frowned. “That meant it was the Hills that did this?”

He had been kind enough to have Edmund deliver them the medicinal wine to treat Paul. Instead of being grateful, they attacked Edmund. No matter the reason, he was not going to let them go easily.

Dustin felt guilty. “I’m sorry, Mr. Robinson. I put you into this mess. You wouldn’t have endured such suffering if I didn’t send you there.”

Edmund forced out a smile. “No, it has nothing to do with you. I was just unlucky.”

“Don’t worry. Mr. Robinson. I will get revenge for you. It doesn’t matter who did this to you. I will make them pay!” Dustin vowed.

“Mr. Rhys, the Hills are a powerful and influential family that we can’t afford to offend. Please don’t act impulsively.” Edmund grew agitated. It was one thing for him to be beaten, but if he was the reason Dustin was harmed, he would never forgive himself.

“Don’t worry about me. You just need to make sure you get better. I’ll deal with this matter.” He took out a pill and fed it to Edmund before standing up to leave.

“Dustin, where are you going?” Abigail felt inexplicably uneasy.

“To get revenge.” He patted her shoulders.

“Take care of your dad. Call me anytime if something happens.” He left as soon as he said that.

Half an hour later, Dustin arrived at the front gates of the Hill family residence. Taking in the luxurious villa, Dustin walked up to it with deliberate steps, his expression dark.

“Stand right there! Who are you?” The guard yelled after noticing him.

Dustin asked coldly, “Are you the ones who have been standing guard the whole day?”

“So what if we are?” He cocked his head up. He wasn’t afraid of offending Dustin purely because of the clothes he was wearing. It was obvious Dustin wasn’t from a prestigious family.

“Very well. Did you guys beat up a man who delivered some medicinal wine to day?” Dustin asked again.

Realization dawned on his face. “Oh, you mean that old man? It just so happened that he ran into Young Mr. Hill, so he **got** roughed up.”

“You mean Torben Hill?” Dustin narrowed his **eyes**.

The guard glared at him fiercely. “Hey! Who are you to call Young Mr. Hill by his full name? That’s Sir Hill to you.”

“What’s the reason?”

“Reason?” The guard was puzzled for a moment before bursting into laughter. “Are you f*cking joking? Does Young Mr. Hill need a reason to beat someone up? Peasants like you are even below his pet dogs. He can just kill you without reason, not to mention beat you up!”

Chapter 484

“Is this how the Hill family operates? Disregarding human life for no reason?” Dustin’s expression grew colder.

“Who the f*ck are you?” The guard sized him up. “You aren’t that old man’s son, are you? What? Are you here

for revenge? Open up your f*cking eyes, and look at where you are!”

“Punk, this is not a place for you to act so recklessly. Scram! Otherwise, your father will be the last of his

bloodline!”

The rest of the **guards** laughed mockingly, with Dustin looking like a clown to them. They had gotten used to

their tyrannical bullying and wouldn't care about mere peasants.

“Last question. Did you join in the beating?” Dustin's expression **was** calm, but his eyes were frosty.

“So what if we did? Get the f*ck out of here before we make you a crippled man!” The guard yelled.

“It's good that you admitted to it.” Dustin nodded determinedly at his words, and without another word, he landed a forceful punch on the guard's abdomen.

The impact resembled a truck collision, and a thunderous explosion sounded as the guard flew backward. He crashed heavily into the gate, with the sturdy metal gates denting under the force.

The guard was stuck to the gate, every bone in his body was shattered as blood gushed out from his mouth and nose. He died on the spot.

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Chapter 485

“What?” The rest of the guards froze at the sight of their buddy, who died with just a punch. They never

imagined Dustin would be so vicious. It was obvious that he didn't have any respect for the Hills if he would

kill someone over a disagreement.

“How dare you!”

“The audacity!”

“You must be tired of living! To actually kill someone from the Hill family!”

After a momentary daze, the few remaining guards brandished their knives and yelled angrily at Dustin.

Dustin stood calmly in place. His cold gaze scanning them left and right, he asked, “Did you guys also beat Mr. Robinson up?”

“What?” Their pupils constricted as they unconsciously took a few steps back. It felt like they **had** been

marked by **a** predator. However, they soon realized the absurdity of it. They were at the Hill family residence!

What was there to be **afraid** of when they were only up against a single **person**?

“You punk! If you don’t want to die, surrender immediately, or don’t blame us for being merciless!” The guard

on the left took **two** steps forward, his expression hostile.

A resounding **bang** rang out. With a kick, Dustin propelled him back **into** the wall. As blood sprayed out of his

mouth, his lifeless body collapsed onto the ground.

The guard on the right was bewildered. “You f*cking-” He was about to attack when another kick left him

stuck on the wall. In the span of a few breaths, only one guard was left standing among the four of them.

“I—I’m

warning you. Don’t try anything! I didn’t do anything. It’s **none** of my business!

” Taking in the sight of his

dead and crippled buddies, his face lost all color, and his legs trembled from the shock.

"I'll give you a chance. Get Torben out here!" Dustin demanded coldly.

"Okay! Just wait!" The remaining guard didn't hesitate and rushed inside immediately.

Not long after, nearly hundreds of people stormed out of the manor. "Who dared cause chaos in our residence?"

Torben led the way in front with his head held high. Following closely behind him was their head of security

and a large group of elite guards.

"Young Mr. Hill, that's the punk!" The guard who escaped earlier pointed at Dustin. "He not only spoke ill of

you, he even killed my good buddies just **now!**"

"What?" After taking a closer **look**, Torben let out an audible scoff. "So it's you. What's the matter? I heard you're here to seek revenge."

"Are you the one who beat up Mr. Robinson?" Dustin asked coldly.

"Mr. Robinson?" Torben raised an **eyebrow** and smiled teasingly. "Oh you **mean** that old thing? That's right,

I'm the one who did it. What about it?"

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"Why?" Dustin questioned.

"Why?" Torben let out a chuckle. "That's new."

He flashed Dustin a devious smile.

"I have always acted without reason. It depends on my preferences. Simply speaking. I do whatever I want. Understand?"

"Yeah." Dustin nodded. "Since you don't seem to speak reason, I have nothing else to say to you. Today, I will make you a crippled man and drag you in front of Mr. Robinson for an apology."

“Make me a crippled man?” While Torben was initially taken by surprise, he soon chortled in laughter. “Hey punk, you’re quite the wild person! Do you know you’re in the Hill family residence? This is an extremely dangerous place. What makes you think you can show off here shamelessly?”

With a calm demeanor, Dustin responded, “My two fists right here.”

“Bravo, bravo!” Torben grinned. “Since you don’t seem to value your life, you can’t blame me for what I’m about to do. Kill him!”

“Charge!” After receiving the order, the hundreds of elite guards brandished their knives. They charged at Dustin at the same time with the overwhelming urge to kill.

Dustin didn’t back down and walked forward with a stoic expression, every step leaving a deep imprint on the ground.

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With the distance closing in and only a few meters left between both parties, Dustin’s knees bent slightly before he stepped forcefully onto the ground. He propelled forward like a rocket, following an explosion–like noise that left a crater in its wake. What was left behind in his path were groans and splattered blood.

Protected by his energy sphere, the elite guards were sent flying before they could even touch him. Some suffered broken limbs, while others died instantly. No one could put up a fight against him. Dustin was like a fierce tiger preying upon a flock of sheep–unstoppable **and** invincible. Within a few minutes, half of the hundreds of elite guards had collapsed to the ground.

“Damn it, this punk has skills!” Torben frowned as he watched Dustin go on his rampage. The Hill family’s elite guards were the cream of the crop. It was a sight to see them fall one after the other.

“Young Mr. Hill, if my observation serves me right, that guy should be a divine-level martial artist.” The head of security, clad in a black outfit, suddenly commented.

“Divine-level martial artist? Aren’t you one as well? How confident are you?” Torben responded. To be head of security for the Hill family, one had to be at least a divine-level martial artist.

He was confident. “Don’t worry, Young Mr. Hill. Dealing with this guy will be a piece of cake.”

“Very well. Don’t kill him later, just make him crippled. I want to enjoy playing with him later!” Torben sneered.

He smirked. “No problem!”

While they were talking, the fight in front of them was coming to an end. Hundreds of guards were sprawled on the ground as anguished moans and groans filled the air from the wounded and the crippled.

The head of security clapped as he walked up front. With a smile, he said, “I have to admit, kid, you’re skilled.

It’s a pity you have encountered me today.”

Dustin spat out two words. “Get lost.”

“Hah! You have quite the temper for your age.” His expression darkened. “Today, let me show you how big the world is. You aren’t the only skilled one out there!”

As soon as he said that, he jumped on his toes and propelled forward like a bullet. The next second, a loud bang rang out. The head of security had just flown forward when he rebounded more than 20 meters from the impact. It was as if he had been hit by a train, his head and torso buried into the ground, leaving only his two

feet hanging outside that still twitched occasionally.

“What?” Torben was shocked by the turn of events. The Hill family’s head of security was a divine-level

martial artist, but he was defeated with just one move. How the f*ck was it possible?

“It’s your turn now.” Dustin turned his attention toward Torben and approached him slowly.

“Rhys! I’m **warning** you— don’t try anything! I am a direct descendant of the Hill family. If you touch me, I’ll

make sure you **die** a cruel death!” Torben yelled cowardly.

“The Hill family name is not your immunity card. It might work on someone else, but not me!” In a flash, Dustin

was already in front of Torben and threw a forceful punch to his abdomen.

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Torben screamed in anguish before he was lifted **up** high. Dustin slammed him to the ground, crushing his

knees in the process, and he spurted blood all over.

“Stop right there!” Suddenly, a huge number of armed soldiers swarmed out of all comers. The key members of the Hill family had come after hearing the news.

“Insolent bastard! Who gave you the courage to act like this on our family grounds!”

“Release him! Otherwise, there will be nothing left of you!”

“Surround him! If he moves, kill him immediately.!”

A wave of discontented admonishment rang out. In the blink of an eye, Dustin was completely surrounded.

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Dustin looked around him and found himself completely surrounded. What greeted him was a dense crowd of the Hill family's elite. He noticed a few familiar faces among the crowd, including Autumn and Patrick, who stood out especially.

"Dustin?" Upon arriving at the scene, Patrick was stunned, appearing greatly astonished. He had first thought it was someone who didn't know **any** better when he heard the news. He didn't expect that person to be Dustin.

Autumn's expression turned dark when he recognized the person. "You brat! So it's you! That's some courage

you've got! How dare you hurt my son? Release him immediately!"

"Release him!"

'Release him now!"

The elite members of the Hill family began clamoring, each one of them glowing with a murderous look on

their faces.

When he saw reinforcements arriving, the previously flustered Torben straightened his posture and arrogantly

declared, "Hey, punk, weren't you being arrogant earlier? Why are you silent now? You aren't frightened, are

you?"

"Let me tell you the truth: the power you are seeing before you is just the tip of the iceberg of what the Hill family is capable of. I know you have some skills, but so what? The Hill family has numerous experts and

highly-skilled individuals. Killing you is as easy **as** crushing an ant.

“I’m giving you a chance now. Kneel before me, and lick my shoes clean. And I might spare your life!”

After he said that, Torben spat out a mouthful of phlegm stained with blood on his shoe.

“Are y

ou seeking death?” Dustin raised an eyebrow in response.

“Hah! Do you dare touch me? Open up your eyes! You’re surrounded by my people. If you act rashly, you’ll die

for sure!” Torben sneered, looking smug.

“It seems like you haven’t realized the gravity of the situation. It’s alright, let me show you how karma works.”

With that, Dustin stomped on Torben’s knee, bending it 90 degrees into an unnatural position. A gush of blood

splattered out in all directions as his bone pierced his flesh.

Torben **was** stunned before letting out a high-pitched, anguished scream. The pain was so intense that he rolled on the ground.

“Dustin. Let’s talk it out. Don’t be rash!” Patrick was shocked. If Dustin only injured their guards, he could still

get away with it considering his previous merit. But it would be a different situation altogether if he attacked

Torben.

“Bastard! How dare you continue your assault! You must be tired of living!” Autumn was enraged and shot a

menacing glare in Dustin’s direction when he saw his son’s leg getting crushed.

Dustin ignored him and stomped heavily on Torben's other leg, leading him to let out another anguished

scream. His face contorted in pain as tears streamed down his cheeks, losing all of his previous arrogance.

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Autumn's anger reached a tipping point as he screeched, "You bastard! You're dead meat! Your whole family is dead meat!"

It was as if Dustin didn't hear him as he lifted his feet two more times, breaking both of Torben's arms. In a short amount of time. Torben had lost the use of all four limbs and was suffering from excruciating pain.

"Be patient; this is just the start. I'll return the pain and suffering you put Mr. Robinson through twofold." Dustin grinned, looking like the devil. He took out a silver needle and, with extreme speed, pierced it into Torben's governor vessel on his back. It penetrated into his body, disappearing instantly. On the surface, there didn't seem to be any traces of the needle left.

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Torben's pain increased immensely, and he let out miserable screams.

"You despicable bastard! There is no animosity between us. Why did you stoop to such heinous acts!" After screaming. Autumn gradually regained his composure. However, the murderous look in his eyes only intensified.

"No animosity? Why don't you ask your son what he's done?" Dustin finally looked up.

"No matter what my son did, that's not an excuse for you to assault someone here!" Autumn declared fiercely.

"All of you truly have the same corrupt principles. Since you can't be reasoned with, don't blame me for resorting to violence." Dustin impassively declared. "I

'm giving you three days to prepare. In three days, I want to see your son apologize to the victim. Otherwise, you'll bear the consequences!"

"Kid, did you think you could leave safely after injuring someone here? Do you think we are at a public playground?" Autumn's rage was boiling.

"If I want to stay, nobody can make me leave. If I want to leave, nobody can make me stay either." With that, he kicked Torben away, then turned around to leave.

"Kill him!" Torben was seeing red as he yelled.

The group of elite Hill family members charged at him. If it weren't for Torben being held hostage previously, they would have acted much earlier. Without the person in his hands, they could finally attack. Nobody had ever walked out alive after daring to cause trouble at the Hill family residence. Not even God!

However, ten minutes later, the final guard fell to the ground with a loud thud. Autumn and the remaining onlookers were bewildered. Taking in the figure standing in a pool of blood in the distance, their faces were filled with horror, as if they were staring at a monster.

They had mobilized a good two to three hundred fighters, yet the resulting outcome was everyone lying in a pool of blood within ten minutes. It didn't matter if they were low-level martial artists or divine-level martial artists; no one could stand against him.

The Hill family, established for over a hundred years, had never encountered such a formidable opponent. It wasn't an exaggeration to say Dustin had single-handedly destroyed the Hill family's array of highly-skilled fighters, dismantling their legacy as a martial arts family.

In the end, Dustin left. Nobody could make him **stay**, and no one dared make him stay either. Silence engulfed the entire Hill family courtyard.

"What—
what monster is that punk!" Autumn swallowed with difficulty, his back drenched in sweat. He never would have thought the Hill family elites would face such a crushing defeat by one man.

“Uncle Autumn, you seem to have offended someone you shouldn’t have.” Patrick wiped the sweat off his forehead, trying his best to calm himself down. It finally dawned on him that Dustin didn’t stop Paul’s punch that day by **some** miraculous coincidence. It was pure talent!

From his actions earlier, Dustin must be at least a fully developed divine-level martial artist. That meant, other than being a grandmaster, he had no competition. The problem was that Dustin was only in his early twenties.

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His talent in martial arts was simply astounding if he managed to achieve such a feat at his age.

“Ha! Don’t joke with me!” Autumn’s expression grew menacing after he calmed down. “I’ll admit that kid is skilled. But don’t forget, we still have our shadow **guards!**”

Patrick frowned. “Uncle Autumn, the shadow guards are the Hill family’s hidden trump card. We can only deploy them when pushed to the brink of death. We’ll also need Grandpa’s permission. We can’t just use them at will.”

“I don’t care!” Autumn’s face was contorted in rage. “I won’t accept this treatment! I’m going to kill that kid!”

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Chapter 489

Three resounding tolls of bells echoed throughout the Hill family residence. This prompted a large number of key family members to swiftly gather at the meeting hall. The Hill family had a clear rule that if **warning** bells were sounded, it meant a major incident had occurred within the family.

No matter where they were or what they were up to, they were **required** to head immediately to the meeting

hall.

“Autumn, what the hell are you doing? Who permitted you to ring the bell?” Spring had arrived with a few of his aides and strode into the meeting hall. He noticed that most of the key family members were already gathered.

The family members were drawn to the meeting hall by the sound of the bell, not yet knowing what had transpired. Since the Hill family residence was enormous, surrounding an entire mountain, those residing behind the mountains didn't hear the commotion at the front gates.

Autumn's expression was gloomy. “Spring! Someone had gone on a killing rampage at our residence. If I hadn't rung the bell our family's legacy would soon be reduced to ruins!”

“Oh? Who has such courage to start trouble with our family?” Spring was instantly agitated.

“It's that Dustin kid!” Autumn gritted his teeth. “That kid is audacious and arrogant. He openly disrespects our family just because he thinks he's got some skills. He not only injured two to three hundred of our elite members, but he also crippled my son!”

“Dustin? How could it be him?” Spring furrowed his brows, slightly surprised. “Are you sure you didn't get the

wrong person?”

“How would I get the wrong person? Even if that kid was burned to ashes. I would still recognize him!” Autumn's expression was one of pure resentment.

“Everything must have a reason. Why would he do such a thing?” Spring questioned.

“No reason could ever justify his heinous acts!” Autumn insisted indignantly.

*Spring, just look at my son. Look at how badly he was beaten up!” He waved his hand, and soon, Torben was carried in carefully on a stretcher. He was covered in blood and had severed limbs, and his face was contorted

in pain as he wailed incessantly.

The horrifying sight caused an uproar among the family members. Torben was a direct descendant of the family. He was also someone the family nurtured with great care. Naturally, witnessing him reduced to such a battered state caused a significant commotion.

“Dustin has gone too far! We must make him pay for his actions!”

“That’s right! We must capture him so that it can serve as a warning to others!”

Everyone present spoke fervently with righteous indignation.

“Everyone, please quiet down. I have something to say.” At that moment, Patrick walked up and said calmly. “Uncle Spring, after investigating, I **found** that Torben **was** the one who started this fiasco.”

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Spring raised his eyebrows. “Oh? **Why?**”

“Dustin had asked someone to deliver a bottle of medicinal wine today to treat Grandpa’s illness. However, things were intentionally made difficult for the person at the front gates. Not only did Torben smash the bottle, he almost killed him. That was why Dustin came to take revenge.” Patrick explained the situation in detail.

“What?! Is that true, Autumn?” Spring turned his attention to Autumn.

“So what? He’s just a servant. What’s the big deal about beating him up? Is he worth being compared to my son?” Autumn confidently justified his actions.

“A servant is indeed not worth mentioning. But what about Grandpa’s medicinal wine?” Patrick rebuked him, “Torben is taking Grandpa’s health as a joke. Don’t you think that is disgraceful behavior?”

“You cut the crap!” Autumn’s expression shifted slightly. “Who knows if the medicinal wine was poisoned? My son might have stopped him because he had a good eye and realized the wine was tampered with!”

“That is just your one-sided opinion,” Patrick said impassively.

“Shut up!” Autumn **glared** at him. “Are you suspecting me? How dare you point fingers at someone with a

higher standing than yours?” Since he couldn’t argue against him, Autumn pulled rank. But that made him

more suspicious.

“Enough! Stop arguing!” Spring slammed his hand on the table to stop their dispute. “Autumn, I will investigate

this matter thoroughly. Go and get Torben treated.”

“Investigate what? My son has been battered to such a state! No matter what, I will get my revenge!” Autumn

spat out in anger.

“That’s right! It doesn’t matter why. The Hill family will not be bullied!”

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At that moment, many of them agreed. On a normal day, no one would dare cause a scene with them, as they were usually the bullies. Even if they were in the wrong, it didn’t matter to them. Whoever was the better fighter would be the superior party.

“What do you plan on doing?” Spring narrowed his eyes, seemingly upset.

“I want to deploy the shadow guards and turn that kid into minced **meat!**” Autumn was seething in anger.

“Nonsense!” Spring shot up as he slammed the table. “The shadow guards are the foundation of our family. How can you just mobilize them like that?”

“I don’t care! I’m getting revenge! If you don’t agree, I’m asking Father!” Autumn was stubborn.

“Who’s looking for me?” At that moment, an elderly man with a white beard and white brows slowly walked out. His hands were behind his back, and he looked calm. Even though he didn’t give off a powerful air, his every step and move exuded a subtle sense of authority.

“Sir Paul!”

Paul’s appearance had everyone on their feet as they paid their respects. Even Autumn, who was defiant

earlier, turned submissive.

Paul sat confidently at the head of the table, his expression indifferent. “Who said they wanted to deploy the

shadow guards?”

Everyone else, including Spring, could only obediently stand and remain quiet.

“It’s me, Dad.” Autumn stepped out determinedly.

“And your **reason**?” Paul picked up a cup of tea and took a sip, not even sparing him a glance.

“Someone crippled my son and injured at least two hundred of our elites. A threat like that must be dealt with!” Autumn complained with indignation.

Paul responded calmly, “So, what you mean to say is, your son was beaten up into a pulp because he’s useless, and now you want the entire family to pay for your antics?”

“What?” Autumn was taken aback. He couldn’t comprehend what **Paul** said. He never expected his father to

respond that way.

“Dad! It’s your grandson who was battered! Don’t you feel bad for him?” Autumn decided to use emotional

persuasion.

“He deserved it for being a bad fighter. If he has the ability, get him to fight **back** himself. He’s **a** weakling if he

needs to hide behind the family’s strength.” Paul was expressionless.

“But-”

“Don’t try your nonsense with me!”

Autumn tried to explain but was stopped by Paul, who had raised a hand. “The Hill family was built on martial

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proWess. Every generation has gone through battles and conquests. But your generation is pampered and

weak. You **have** completely forgotten about our ancestral teachings and the dignity that comes **with** being a martial artist. Did you think martial artists were born into lavish feasts and beautiful women?

“A martial artist sweats, bleeds, fights valiantly, faces death and emerges victorious, and crawls out of piles **of** corpses and pools of blood! Look **at** you. How many of you have experienced near-death experiences? And how many of you have truly set foot on the battlefield? Today, even a young lad can mess around with all of

you, and yet you have the audacity to complain to me? All of you are a bunch of useless trash!”

With his final insult, the entire room fell silent. Not only Autumn, but every Hill family member present broke out in cold sweats. They understood that Paul was furious not because they had caused trouble, but because

of their incompetence.

“Today’s incident will serve as a wake-up call for all of you.” Paul stood up and dusted off his clothes.

“Autumn, bring your son to apologize to Dustin. That lad’s future is bright, and he’s not someone we should be

enemies with. At the very least, he’s not someone you bunch of **losers** can afford to offend.”

“Dad”

“If you refuse, I will kick you out of the family.” With that, Paul left without another word, leaving the remaining family members looking at each other in fear and regret.

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Chapter 491

The next morning, in a ward at Pinevale Hospital, Edmund's serious condition finally turned for the better. Hel laid on the hospital bed, sleeping peacefully, with Abigail keeping watch beside him. Even though the father-daughter duo didn't get along well on a typical day. Abigail cared for him the most when a serious matter arose. She had been busy the entire night and hadn't gotten any sleep.

"Kid, eat something." At that moment, Dustin walked in with breakfast. "Your father's condition has stabilized, and he'll get better soon. You don't need to worry."

"Thank you, Dustin." Abigail forced out a smile. She took a few bites but didn't have the appetite to continue and pushed the food aside.

"Abigail, we're here." Suddenly, a group of youngsters walked through the door. They were Abigail's classmates, and they all brought something with them. Some of them had flowers, some had fruits, and others brought drinks. Among the gifts, the one most eye-catching **was** Mike's panax root.

"Abigail, I **heard** your dad has fallen sick, so I bought this wild panax root. It can greatly replenish your **dad's** health." Mike smiled, passing the delicately wrapped panax root to **Abigail** with both hands.

"Thank you, but this is too valuable. You should take it back." Abigail declined his kind gesture. She had heard

that the **value** of wild panax root **was** akin to gold.

"How can I take back a present? Not to mention, it doesn't cost much." Mike pointed.

"Abigail, this is a sincere gesture from Mike. Just accept it. Since your dad is injured and hospitalized, he could make good use of it." Nina urged her gently

"Alright, thank you." Since they'd put it that way. Abigail had no other reason to refuse.

“That’s more like it.” Mike smiled and **asked**, “Right, Abigail, I heard your father was hospitalized after getting

beaten up. Who dared do such a thing?”

“Uh...” Abigail didn’t know what to **say**. She didn’t wish for her father’s situation to be spread outside.

“There’s no need to be afraid. Just tell me what happened. It doesn’t matter who did it. I’ll make sure he pays!” Mike patted his chest with confidence.

Nina chimed in. “That’s right! With Mike here, no one would bully you. He’ll deal with any problems you have

easily.”

“Abigail, there’s no need to feel bad. We’re classmates, and we’ll solve every problem together.”

The group of youngsters spoke fervently in righteous indignation.

Abigail glanced at Dustin, not sure if she should tell them.

“Abigail, why are you looking at him? He’s not the one who did it, is he?” **Nina** said suspiciously.

“No, no, no. Of course not.” Abigail shook her head immediately.

“Then what happened?” Nina asked again.

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ally spoke. “I’ve dealt with the matter. All of you don’t need to worry about it.”

Dustin finally

“Who do you think you are? Do you think we’re not going to worry about it just because you said **so?**” Mike looked irritated. “Don’t think you can look down on people just because you have some money. Let me tell you, connections are far more important than wealth!”

“That’s right! The most important thing in Millsburg is connections. What can you do with money?” Nina pursed her lips in disdain.

“I said that for your own good. You guys can’t afford to offend the perpetrator.”

“What a joke!” Mike scoffed loudly. “Do you know who I am? Do you know who my father is? And you’re saying I can’t afford to offend that person? What a bold statement.”

“Hey! I advise you not to underestimate others. You’ll never be able to compare with Mike’s background,” Nina said condescendingly.

Mike continued to be insistent and cocked his head up, acting all high and mighty. “Why are you silent? I’m curious to know who exactly it is that I can’t afford to offend,

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“It was Torben from the Hill family.” Dustin spat out the words casually.

“Torben Hill?” Instantly, Mike felt like he was struck by lightning at the revelation and turned pale. The rest of them also had a look of horror on their faces, as if they had seen a ghost.

Torben Hill was the infamous vile demon of Millsburg, a scion of an affluent family standing at the pinnacle of power! He was known to be arrogant and tyrannical, committing all sorts of atrocities. However, with his powerful background, nobody dared provoke him. To them, an influential figure like Torben had the power to do whatever he wanted with them. Even if they were to encounter him on the street, they wouldn’t dare look up, not to mention provoke him.

“Y—you must be joking. Torben is the perpetrator?” After he fully digested the fact, his voice started trembling.

Dustin had a stoic expression. “What? It seems like you’re terrified.”

“T—terrified? No way!” Mike calmed himself down and rebuked stubbornly, “I grew up not knowing what terrified means. It’s just Torben Hill. I better not see him on the streets; otherwise, I’ll definitely give him two slaps to the face!”

With so many ladies watching, he couldn't afford to show any weaknesses. It didn't cost anything to put on an act anyway. He would think about the consequences afterward.

"Really? I guess you're truly amazing." Dustin only found it hilarious. He could clearly see him breaking **out** in a cold sweat, yet he was still being obstinate.

"Hmph! It's not just all talk. Even an imprudent brat like Torben would need to address me formally!" Mike pointed his thumb at himself.

"You talk big for your age." Suddenly, they heard a booming voice resonating from the door. Following closely behind, a group of Hill family members strode in. Leading the group was none other than Spring Hill, with Autumn and Patrick behind him. Even the injured Torben was carried in.

"Who was that? Who's talking?" Mike was irritated and turned around, his expression clearly displaying his annoyance. He was in the midst of showing off! Who was so rude to interrupt him?

"What?" Before he turned around, he still had an arrogant look on his face. Once he noticed that the people who walked in were the backbones of the Hill family, he froze on the spot, clearly astonished.

He didn't recognize all of them, but there were a few familiar faces he had the privilege of meeting during upscale social gatherings. **However**, their once majestic presence appeared quite ordinary as they stood with more prominent members of the Hill family.

"Were you the one who spoke earlier?" Patrick **gave** him a once over and smiled.

"Let me introduce myself. I'm Patrick Hill. I heard you mention you would slap Torben if you met him, and I couldn't agree more. He's right here. Please go ahead and don't hold back." Patrick gestured with one hand as if inviting him to go ahead.

"What?" Mike was shocked as he remained rooted in place, completely at a loss. He was just putting on an act. Who would've thought he would encounter the actual person himself!

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In the face of the Hill family members' menacing gazes, Mike's legs gave way as he finally succumbed to the pressure and fell to his knees with a thud.

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"I— It's a misunderstanding!" Mike couldn't stop shaking and broke out in a cold sweat. "I was just joking. Please don't take it to heart, everyone."

Patrick still had a smile plastered on his face. "You mean you're not going to slap him?"

"No, I wouldn't dare!" Mike waved his hands. "I have a cheap mouth and just like to brag. Please forgive me for my insolence, and don't find fault with me." Mike even slapped himself a few times to prove his sincerity.

At that moment, Nina, who was still quite young, was also shocked into silence and was trembling slightly. The Hill family was such a powerful family that she wasn't even worthy of looking at them. Every one of them had the right to take her life away.

"Since you don't have the guts to touch him, go stand at one side." Patrick's smile gradually disappeared.

"Yes, yes. Right away.

Mike nodded like an obedient chick, shrinking back into a corner with the rest of his

classmates. As his heart beat rapidly, he wondered why the prominent members of the Hill family had arrived

at such a place. He also wondered who beat Torben up to such a state.

"Dustin. I hope you have been well." Patrick turned toward Dustin and greeted him.

“Patrick, why have you come today?” Dustin responded nonchalantly.

“The thing is-”

“Let me talk to him!” Patrick was just about to explain when Autumn interrupted rudely. “Kid, you should be punished for hurting my son. But since the Hill family has always been kind and generous, today, I have decided to give you a chance to live!”

While Patrick frowned at his words, Spring was quietly looking down, seemingly an outsider to the current situation. Mike and the rest of the classmates, on the other hand, were greatly shocked by his revelation. They glanced at Dustin as if he was a monster. He had nerves of steel to be the one to cripple Torben.

“A chance?” With a smile, Dustin shook his head. “I’m curious, what kind of ‘chance’ are you giving **me**?”

“First, heal my son. Second, deliver us another bottle of medicinal wine. As long as you fulfill these two requirements. I won’t hold a grudge against your previous misdeeds,” Autumn said with a serious expression.

*Autumn Hill, I guess you haven’t gotten the situation straight.” Dustin walked up to him slowly, his gaze growing increasingly dark. “The ball is in my court now. Whatever I say goes. It’s not up to you to decide.”

“What?” Autumn frowned. “Are you going to fight us to the end, kid?”

“I can if you want me to. Your son and father don’t have many days left to live anyway.”

Autumn’s expression darkened. “Are you threatening me?”

“So what if I **am**?” Dustin didn’t back down. “If you want to fight, I’m always ready. But if you’re here to ask for forgiveness, you should have the attitude of someone asking for forgiveness! My demand remains the same.

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When your son kneels in front of Mr. Robinson and apologizes, I’ll let him live. Otherwise, scram!”

His words ignited a frenzy among the crowd. It was a great disgrace to have a direct descendant of the Hill family kneel before a commoner.

“God damn! Is this punk insane? How dare he ask Torben to get on his knees?”

“What an idiot. He must be seeking death to act that wild in front of them!”

Dustin’s bold words had made Mike and the other classmates whisper among themselves. In their eyes, what

he did was just akin to suicide.

“You’re stepping out of line, kid!” Autumn erupted in rage.

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“Are you done? If that’s all you’re here to say, then get lost. Don’t be an eyesore.” Dustin waved his hand in

annoyance, clearly showing no respect for them at all.

“You-

” Autumn was about to launch into a new tirade when Spring raised his hand and interjected. “Enough! Torben started this and is the one at fault. It’s only fair for him to apologize.”

“Spring!” Autumn’s brow furrowed deeply.

“What? Have you forgotten what Dad said?” Spring gave him the side eye, slightly upset.

“I ...” Autumn gritted his teeth but remained silent in the end.

Spring **gave** a nod. “Torben, apologize to the person you beat up and bring this matter to an end.”

“I-

’m sorry.” Torben gritted out the words with difficulty as he laid on the stretche

r. Since the odds were against him, he did **as** ordered. This was more important before he could rest and recover properly.

“Are you satisfied now, kid?” Autumn’s expression was dark.

“No.” Dustin shook his head. “There’s no sincerity. I want him to kneel.”

“Don’t push your f*cking luck!” Autumn spat out. They’d humiliated themselves already by apologizing in

public. Getting them to kneel was going too far.

“Kneel!” Spring suddenly raised his voice.

Autumn’s eyes widened in shock. “Spring?”

“Someone help Torben get on his knees.” Autumn gestured, wanting to get things over with quickly.

Soon, a few people carried Torben off the stretcher and dropped him on the ground, getting him on his knees. It aggravated his wounds, and his face contorted in agony as he howled in pain. Autumn could only glare fiercely at Dustin, unable to utter a word even though he **was** enraged.

Spring asked calmly, “Dustin, would that do it?”

“One more thing.” Dustin shook his head.

“What would that be?” Spring responded.

Instead of responding to him, Dustin turned to Abigail and **said**, “Kid, this is the guy that beat your dad up into that state. He’s right in front of you now. It’s time to get your revenge.”

Abigail was silent, but she gave Torben a death glare, her eyes burning with rage.

Dustin comforted her. “Don’t hold back. Take the anger you are feeling now out on him.”

Abigail’s hand slowly formed into a fist. Traces of internal energy were welling up within her. After a while, she relaxed her fingers.

“Hmph, at least you know your place.” Autumn smiled proudly at the sight. “No t anyone dares touch the Hill family. If you dare touch a hair on my boy, then-

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Before he finished his sentence, a clear, loud slap resonated through the room. Abigail had landed a heavy slap on Torben’s face. She **had** put all her strength into that slap, causing Toben to lose his balance and fall head–first to the ground.

Autumn was stunned.

Patrick was stunned.

Mike was stunned.

Nina was also stunned.

Everyone at the scene was frozen to their spots, their faces etched with disbelief. Nobody expected Abigail to actually raise a hand against Torben. Not only that, she had given him a solid slap in public.

That brat must not want to l

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“H– how dare you hit my son?!” Autumn glared at Abigail. He couldn’t believe that a commoner had the guts to slap his son in public.

“If he can hit my dad, why can’t I do the same to him?” Abigail kicked Torben hard, sending him flying a good ten feet away. The sight made Autumn’s blood boil. He seethed. “Y–you You brat!”

Hearing Autumn’s shouts, a couple of martial arts experts from the Hill Family came forward.

“Why? Is that all it takes to piss you off?” Dustin snickered. “Torben’s actions were way worse than what she did to him. She’s only making him pay a fraction of it.”

“Leave, all of you!” Spring spun around and cast a frightening glare that shut everyone up.

“Kid, keep going. You have nothing to worry about.” Dustin nudged her calmly.

“Sure!” Abigail readily agreed to it. She immediately started kicking and punching the crippled Torben. She had been stewing for a while after seeing her father brutally tortured and naturally would not miss the opportunity for revenge. She wasn’t worried about offending anyone at all.

“Is Abigail crazy? She’s hitting Torben Hill!”

“She’s done for! If the Hills were to take revenge, her entire family would be done for!”

“How rash of her to do that!”

Mike and the rest of his group were staring at her outburst in fear and shock. The mighty Hill Family was not an entity that an **average** citizen could take on. Abigail was skating on thin ice.

Autumn’s face was stiff with a grim expression. He wouldn’t have quietly endured the humiliation as he watched his son beaten to a pulp if it weren’t for the orders from his father.

The atmosphere in the room was tense, to say the least, as people watched Abigail beat up Torben with all her might. The heavy beating further added to the grave injuries that he sustained. Finally, she came to a stop when he was at death’s door.

“**Are** you done?” Dustin asked.

Panting heavily, she replied, “Yeah.”

To carry out the revenge, she used up all the internal energy she had previously conserved.

“Great.” He nodded, and his gaze swept past the faces of the Hill Family members. “We’re even now. However, if you want revenge, you can always come at me.”

“Dustin, that’s a ridiculous idea! The Hills **are** known for our good moral character. Since Torben **was** in the wrong, he should pay for his mistakes. We only ask that you spare his life.” Spring flashed a regretful smile at Dustin.

Instead of replying, Dustin punched Torben in the stomach, and the latter let out a scream as a **blood-**stained silver needle pierced out of his back and hit the wall hard.

“Thank you, Dustin!” Spring bowed to Dustin. Dustin replied, “Don’t mention it. The patient needs rest. Gentlemen, you should leave.”

“Sure. We shall not disturb him further.” After exchanging some small talk, Spring and his people left soon. During the entire visit, he did not show any complaints or dissatisfaction.

Mike and his group were left staring agape at the Hill Family members who filed out of the room. At first, they thought that the Hills had dropped by to demand justice, and they believed that Dustin was dead meat when he insulted the family. It turned out that the entourage showed up to beg for leniency instead of going for the kill. None of them uttered a word, even when Torben was beaten up.

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After all, that was Torben Hill, the famed devil incarnate of Millsburg and the son of an elite family. It was absurd to see him beaten up into a pulp like that. They wouldn’t have believed that the Hill Family had a weak spot if they had not witnessed the scene with their own eyes. The fact that Dustin **was** the man behind the Hill Family’s forced submission.

They wondered about his origins and viewed him in a new light. Some were shocked; some were curious; a few were fearful; and more than everything, the

y admired him,
for not many in Millsburg had the power to force the Hills into submission.

That went to show how remarkable Dustin was. Mike and Nina, who had been looking down on Dustin, were now quiet. At the end of the day, they found out they were the naive ones.

At that moment, Dustin's phone started to ring. He picked up the call from Dahlia.

"Where are you? Didn't you promise to come with me on my first day at Nicholson Corp. Are you standing me up?"

"No, of course not. I was held back by something. Be there soon," Dustin explained.

"Where are you? I'll go pick you up."

"I'm at Pinevale Hospital"

After hanging up, he immediately turned around and said to Abigail "Take good care of Mr. Robinson. If

anything happens, just give me a call. I have to leave now."

"Yes, Sir, please be careful!" She reminded him. He smiled at her before leaving. "Don't you worry. The Hills

won't do anything to me."

20 minutes later, a blue Maserati pulled up to the hospital entrance. The car window rolled down to reveal an

attractive woman. "Why are you standing there? Hop on now." She jutted her chin out.

"Right away." He sat in the driver's seat and beamed. "Chairman Nicholson, I see you've been doing pretty well, haven't you? You've got a new car!"

"Cut that out!" She rolled her eyes at him. "I need to talk to you about work. I might run into problems at the

board meeting later. You should prepare yourself for that."

“Problems? You’re the chairman of the group. Who would have the guts to give you problems?” He sounded curious.

“I’m an outsider who joined and became a chairman, and I don’t have a group of people loyal to me there. It’s hard to take control.” She shook her head. “Plus, many are eyeing my position. The **greatest** threat right now is

from this guy called Hank Hoffman.”

“Hank Hoffman. Who is he?” Dustin pressed on.

“He’s the vice chairman of Nicholson Corp. and a man loyal to Madam Alma, Regulus’ first wife, because she has supported his career. He’s more advanced than me in terms of his seniority and his connections. Hank

has the respect of the whole company.”

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“But his reputation still can’t rival that of your patriarch, am I right? Regulus Nicholson personally appointed you as the chairman. I bet they have to listen to him,” Dustin reassured her.

She nodded and muttered, “I hope so.”

They chatted during the drive and soon arrived at the Nicholson Corp. building. The company, worth tens of billions, was well-known and reputable in Millsburg. The Nicholson Corp. building was located in the bustling

and wealthy prime area downtown.

When Dahlia and Dustin entered the office, they made their way to the meeting room. There, they found that the meeting room was packed with senior executives and shareholders.

The middle-aged man sitting at the head of the table had a beer belly and a mole at the corner of his lips. His nose was as red as Rudolph’s, and his eyes were mousey. Overall, his freckled fa

ce could only be described as unappealing. The man was Hank Hoffman, the vice chairman of Nicholson Corp.

“Dahlia, you’re late. The board meeting has started. Get yourself a seat.” Hank sat in the chairman’s seat leisurely, not showing any sign of vacating it for her. He indirectly provoked her with that disrespectful move.

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Dahlia couldn’t help but frown when she stared at the unbothered faces of the people around her as they chatted away merrily. She made sure to arrive earlier for the board meeting, so Hank’s accusation of tardiness was absolutely baseless. **From** the moment she entered the room, the attendees remained seated. No one stood up to greet her— not even saving a seat for her. Clearly, they did not take her seriously.

“Hank, what’s this supposed to mean?” She whispered while keeping her composure. She knew that Hank was laying **down** the law from day one.

“What do you mean?” Hank lit himself a cigar and crossed his legs on the table, seemingly treating the

meeting room as his own office.

“I am sure you have received the news from the family’s patriarch. I’m the new chairman of Nicholson Corp. **as**

of today.” Her voice was laced with warning.

“And?” He gave her a mocking smirk.

“You are in my seat. You’ve crossed **a** line here.” She rapped her knuckles on the table.

“Your seat? Do you have evidence of that?” He shrugged and acted unreasonably. “Everyone here knows that this has been my seat forever. It was you who entered the room and immediately demanded my seat. What

right do you have?”

“Yeah! What right do you have?”

“Mr. Hoffman is the person in charge of **the** company! How **dare** a newcomer wrestle that seat from him? What

a joke!”

The meeting attendees started to make **a** scene. As they were in the same boat as Hank, they **would** never allow the young lady to be in command.

*Please get your facts straight. I am the largest shareholder in this room and the chairman of the company. Here’s my notice of appointment. If anyone here is dissatisfied, you may check with Regulus Nicholson!” With a hardened expression, she slapped

a document on the table. She had come prepared, but the situation seemed more dire than she had expected.

“A notice of appointment? Haha! Who **are** you fooling with this?” A disdainful Hank added. “Even **a** general on the battlefield, as the primary decision-maker, might disregard the King’s command! We’re not in Glenstead.

Your tricks don’t work here!”

“Are you rebelling against me now?” She slammed a hand on her table, unable to contain the rage in her.

“No, we won’t rebel, but we are against your appointment.” Hank **was** straightforward with his dislike for her.

“That’s right! We do not acknowledge It!”

“You have neither connections in the field nor personal relationships with prominent figures. And you are lacking in capability. Why should you be our chairman?”

“Hmph! As long-timers in the company, we despise those who get in through the back door!”

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The animated attendees tried to get a word in, and they were harsh in their criticisms.

“First, this is Regulus Nicholson’s decision, Like it or not, you have to accept it .” She put on an icy look. “By the way, you were asking why I should be the chairman. I will go into detail on that topic. After looking into the company’s financial statements, I found out that the company is crumbling on the inside despite its glamorous facade. Corruption is rife—using company funds for personal matters, lining your pockets through contracts and deals, and even selling company secrets—these are commonplace.”

She finally added, “Regulus Nicholson sent me here to execute a quick shake up. If you’re unhappy with the decision, you may turn in your resignation letter!”

The most senior executives instantly slammed their hands on the table upon hearing her words. “Who are you trying to threaten? We can always leave!”

“That’s right! I, for one, would love to know how the company operates if we resign collectively!”

“What goes around comes around! There will be a time when you need to beg us for help!”

While complaining, the group of senior executives headed toward the exit. Given their positions in the company, they knew that a collective resignation would lead to a halt in company operations and, even worse, bankruptcy. That was the reason for their confidence.

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“You may resign if you wish, but that doesn’t mean you won’t be held accountable for your dishonest practices in the past.”

Dahlia proceeded coldly. “Mr. Levin, if I recall correctly, you dipped your hands into 20 million worth of company funds, and you have not paid it back yet. For this, you will need to serve out a long sentence in prison.”

Hearing that, a man with a bald spot who stood as the head of the group leaving instantly froze and sweated profusely. He wondered how Dahlia learned about his action when he made sure he carried out the crime seamlessly.

She ignored his question and continued, “Ms. Wagner, as the Director of Finance, you are in the greatest trouble. The company makes profits annually, but after you took charge, the books showed that we were making losses. Not only that, you have been asking the headquarters for money for your personal use. Your greed knows no bounds!”

“Y— you! That’s nonsense!” A woman dressed luxuriously suddenly screamed at Dahlia, resembling a cat who **had** its tail stepped on.

“You don’t believe me? Have a look for yourself.” Dahlia didn’t bother to explain further and threw a few files containing **the** results of her investigation onto the table.

“What?” The woman took a good look at the files and instantly appeared ashen-faced as a chill ran up her spine.

That was not the end of it yet. Dahlia scanned the room, and for each person she laid her eyes on, she’d announce the misdeeds of **that** individual. “Mr. Price, you are saddled with huge debts from gambling, right? If not, you wouldn’t have sealed a deal worth 100 million for a mere 30 million!

“And you, Mr. Gillis, your son, wife, cousins, and other relatives are working in the company. Do you think they can stay if you resign?”

“Oh, one thing almost slipped my mind. Mr. Regan, you seem quite close to the ladies from the human resources department. How would your wife **react** to that?”

Then, she rattled off the tainted records of most of the senior executives. The attendees were dismayed to learn that she had accessed all the information. She had obviously come prepared!

“Ladies and gentlemen, I will not stop you from resigning, but I will send the evidence I collected to Regulus Nicholson. Your fate will be in his hands, be it bankruptcy or jail time. However, you have another choice, which is to stay and work under me. If so, I will not hold you responsible for your dirty deeds in the past. Now, it’s your choice to stay or leave.” With that, Dahlia finished her speech and stood at the side.

The senior executives exchanged sheepish looks, each one trembling in dread. It was at that moment that they realized the fearful character of the new chairman. Any hint of disdain from earlier was replaced by fear.

After moments of hesitation, the group of executives who staged a walkout quietly returned to their seats, their heads hung low, and their arrogance was wiped away.

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“Amazing.” Dustin secretly admired Dahlia’s strategy of utilizing both the carrot and the stick to subjugate

most of the protesting staff.

“Mr. Hoffman, do you have anything more to add?” She turned her attention back to Hank, knowing that the

only way to be in complete control was to bring Hank Hoffman to his knees.

“That’s very impressive indeed.” Laughing, he clapped his hands. “Dahlia Nicholson, I have to admit that

you’re quite something. But you

need more than a few tricks.”

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“Oh? Mr. Hoffman, what brilliant ideas do you have now?” Dahlia asked. She had collected evidence against most of the senior executives except for him. That did not mean Hank Hoffman was innocent. Instead, he covered his tracks very well to the point that his misdeeds couldn’t be traced back to him.

“On the topic of brilliant ideas, I do have some advice for you.” With a cigar in his mouth, he went

on, “To be our chairman, you need to build your reputation **and** capability. In short, you’ll need to make profits. That way, we will approve of you.”

The executives all nodded upon hearing that. Money makes the world go round. Their ultimate goal was to profit more.

“I have enough confidence in myself to take up the role of the chairman,” she answered nonchalantly. “I can’t promise you much, but now that I’m the chairman, all the senior executives here will see a salary increase of

50% and a **20%** increase in their annual bonuses. How does that sound?”

The people started murmuring among themselves after hearing her proposal, A 50% increase in pay **and** a 20% increase in bonus would be considered generous.

“Dahlia, we’re practical people who do not like empty promises. Anyone can make promises.” Hank shrugged

again.

Dahlia asked, “So, what do you want me to do?”

“The company is facing three huge challenges now. If you resolve all three, we will accept **you** as our new

chairman. If not, you shall vacate the position for a more suitable candidate.” Hank started giving her trouble.

She raised a brow at his words. “What are the three? Tell me.”

“Firstly, you need to get the Flame Dragon Gang to pay their 70 million dollars worth of debt within seven days,

Hank declared with a smirk.

“The Flame Dragon Gang?” She was pensive. A gang that owed the Nicholson Corp. that amount of **money**

must be difficult to handle.

“Why? Are you scared? You can turn it down if you’re scared,” Hank challenged her. However, Dahlia ignored his taunts and went straight to the point. “Tell me about the second challenge.”

“Secondly, you have to secure the Brooks Corporation’s project, which is worth 500 million dollars.”

“What about the third challenge?”

“Hah! I’ll tell you after you complete the two challenges. It would be useless otherwise.” He chortled.

“Sure. I will not shy away from challenges that involve the company. I hope that you make good on your promise.” Dahlia reminded him.

“I am a man who keeps his word. I will approve of you if you’re capable of completing all the challenges.” He tossed his head back.

“Great. We shall see.” She scanned the room for one last time and left, knowing that she had to show Hank

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what she was capable of to win him over. Otherwise, the bunch of old senior executives would never listen to her.

“Ladies and gentlemen, do you think that little girl can do it?” The people in the meeting room **started** gossiping.

“No way! We failed to get the 70 million back from the Flame Dragon Gang. How could she do it in seven days?”

“Right? Everyone knows that the Flame Dragon Gang is brutal. They’ll tear her limb to limb if she knocks on their door for the money!”

“The first challenge is daunting enough for her. On top of that, she has to deal with that stubborn Brooks Corporation.”

“Mr. Hoffman, your idea of killing with a borrowed knife is pure genius!”

Hank merely smiled with the cigar between his lips in the face of the discussion in the room. He believed that a member of a Nicholson Family branch was no match for him.

Meanwhile, just as Dahlia and Dustin took their seats in the chairman’s office, a good-looking woman in uniform wandered into the office, her heels clicking as she walked.

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When they took a better look, they realized that it was Julie Amberson.

“Dustin, why are you here?” Julie was surprised when she spotted him.

“Why can’t I be here? I’m the Chief Security Officer.” Dustin grabbed an apple and munched on it.

“Chief Security Officer? Dahlia, are you serious? I’m just a secretary, but you appointed him as chief officer.

Why?” Julie was aghast.

“I don’t need to explain my decisions to you.” Dahlia snapped at her with a stern look.

“By the way. I’m surprised that you can still call yourself a secretary. You were 32 minutes late on your first day at the job. How unprofessional of you!” She gave Julie a chance to grow and improve her skills after being

pestered by Florence and her aunt on the matter, but she was disappointed by Julie’s attitude.

"I was stuck in traffic just now. I had no choice! Anyway, I was only late for half an hour. That's not a big deal, is it?" Julie did not take it seriously.

"Did I not ask you to wait in the meeting room with the materials half an hour before the meeting? Look at you

now. You were nowhere to be seen even after the meeting ended. How dare you say that it's not a problem?" Dahlia slammed her hands on the table in anger.

"What? Is the meeting over?" Julie went blank.

"Thankfully, I memorized the details before the meeting. I would have to keep waiting if I had relied on you."

Dahlia was irked. Her first day as chairman was crucial, but her secretary was not concerned at all.

"Dahlia, it's my fault. I will be careful in the future." Julie's cheeks reddened in shame.

"I'll let this slip, but you'd better not repeat your mistake!" She warned Julie, who nodded furiously. "That's

enough for now. Go do research on the Flame Dragon Gang for me."

"The Flame Dragon Gang?" Julie's pupils wavered at the mention of the gang.

"Dahlia, how did you get involved with them? They're merciless bastards!"

"Why? Have you heard of them?" Dahlia raised a brow in curiosity.

"Of course! The Flame Dragon Gang is famous for being evil in this region. Whoever gets on their bad side will suffer a horrific death!" Julie explained with a grave expression.

"They sound powerful." Dahlia frowned.

"Dahlia, what was the debt thing you mentioned just now?" Julie prodded cautiously, and Dahlia summarized everything that happened during the board meeting.

After the brief explanation, Julie's face fell. "D— Dahlia, are you kidding me? Are you asking the Flame Dragon Gang to pay their debt?!"

"That's right. It's only fair to pay your debts," Dahlia responded with a serious face.

"Oh, Dahlia, it's always the Flame Dragon Gang that chases after their debtors. No one has done it the other

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way around!" Julie was gripped by fear. "A billionaire once reported the Flame Dragon Gang because he was angered by their lawless behavior. Guess what happened to that guy? His family of eight vanished overnight, and their bodies have not been found until now! Hank Hoffman is clearly sending you to your death by asking you to demand that the gang settle its debts! You can't fall for it!"

"I have promised to settle this issue. I need to see this to the end," Dahlia said somberly.

"Dahlia, is money or life more important to you? You're putting yourself at risk by asking the gang for debt payments!" Julie panicked in the face of Dahlia's naive determination.

"That's enough. Stop fighting." Dustin, who had finished his apple, dusted his hands and stood up. "The Flame Dragon Gang isn't a big deal at all. I'll get them to pay the 70 million in debt. I promise that you'll get back every single cent the company has been owed!"

"You?" Julie froze before sneering. "Who do you think you are? You have some balls to ask the Flame Dragon Gang for money!"

He smiled at her. "To tell you the truth, I'm the leader of the Flame Dragon Gang."

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Julie was taken aback before she collected herself and stared at Dustin like he was an idiot. “Are you, now? Dustin, can you stop bluffing? Who do you think you are? The audacity to claim that you’re the leader of the gang!”

“Dustin quit it. You need to behave.” Dahlia glared at him. She didn’t look convinced either. After all, Dustin had only arrived in Millsburg a few days ago. It was impossible to claim the leadership position within that time frame.

“Why would I lie to you about this? If you don’t trust me, just go with me to the Flame Dragon Gang. I’ll get your money back for you,” Dustin swore.

“Hmph! Do you take us as fools? We’ll die if we ask the gang for our money back!” Julie told him off.

“Whatever. How about I go to the Flame Dragon Gang headquarters alone without the two of you?” He couldn’t be bothered to argue with the ladies, and he thought they were overreacting to a small issue.

“Wait! I’ll go with you.” Dahlia sprang up when she noticed that Dustin was leaving.

“Dahlia, are you crazy? Are you seriously going to follow this dude and meet with the Flame Dragon Gang?” Julie was frightened and wondered if Dahlia ever listened to her warnings.

“No matter what, we need to give it a try.” Dahlia had a serious look on her face. “In the best-case scenario, we get them to pay their debts. If we can’t, well, we’ll come up with a Plan B.”

“But

“No buts. If you’re scared, you don’t have to go together.” Dahlia held up a hand to stop Julie from talking them

out of it.

“Yes, I’m scared, but I can’t let you face danger alone!” Julie let out a **long** sigh. “I’ll have to reach out to some

of my contacts for your safety.”

While speaking, she made a call to someone. “Hey, darling. I need you to do me a small favor...!

Three minutes later, Julie hung up with a calmer demeanor. “Julie, I called up Terrence. He promised to help you out. He can’t guarantee that you’ll get the debts paid, but he can assure your safety.”

“Great. Thanks for going through the trouble for me. We’ll leave now. True to her word, Dahlia left with Dustin

soon after.

At noon, Nelson and Hank were enjoying a casual tea break at the office of Flame Dragon Properties. A s*xily-

clad secretary was tending to the men with great attention.

“Lord Horst, this **is a** limited–
edition Rolex for a successful man like you. Check it out. Do you like it?” Hank

handed Nelson a gift box, which carried a watch gilded with gold.

“Not bad, Mr. Hoffman. That’s thoughtful of you.” Nelson beamed in satisfaction and asked, “What brings you here? I don’t think you’re just here to send me the watch.”

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Chapter **501**

“It’s all thanks to you that our company is doing well. It’s only fair to get you a gift.” Hank suddenly changed the topic of the conversation. “But I ran into some trouble recently, and I’ll need your help.”

“Oh? What trouble? I’m all ears.” Nelson downed the drink in his cup.

“Well, the headquarters sent a new chairman to keep us in check. The new chairman is pretty slick. To defeat her, I issued her a challenge to get you to pay the 70 million in debt. If she fails, she’ll have to vacate the

position.” Hank offered a loaded description of the problem.

“I got it.” Nelson caught up fast. “You want me to teach her a lesson. Is that it?”

“Indeed!” Hank nodded with a grin. “Do whatever you like to her, as long as you keep her alive!”

“What’s the background of that new chairman?” Nelson demanded more information before he agreed to it. Although the Flame Dragon Gang **was** notorious in the region, they could not afford to offend certain entities- for example, the branch families of the Fabulous Five or the disciples of the Tremendous Three.

“Lord Horst, I have looked into **her**. She’s nothing.” Hank was confident.

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Dahlia might have the backing of Regulus Nicholson, but the patriarch in Glenstead was too far away from

Balerno to pose any threat.

“Oh, it shouldn’t be a problem if she’s nothing special.” Nelson chuckled. “She’d better not show up! If she ever does, I’ll make it tough on her!” It **was simply** ridiculous for a person who wasn’t rich or powerful to demand

money from him.

“Lord Horst, I’ll have to trouble you for this. When it’s done, I’ll send you a gift.” Hank bowed to Nelson.

“Haha! Not a problem. We’re brothers. Take it easy.” A wide smile appeared on Nelson’s face. Based on his past experiences, the mention of a “gift” would imply at least a million dollars in monetary **reward**.

“Lord Horst ...” One of Nelson’s men knocked on the door during the conversation. Nelson raised his brows unhappily. “What? Can’t you see that I’m in a business meeting with my client?”

“A few visitors demanded to see you. They would like you to pay your debts,” the man reported the situation.

“Oh, they sure act fast! Speak of the devil!” Nelson rubbed his chin.

Hank cracked a smile. “Lord Horst, I shall be the audience for your show.”

“Open your eyes wide and see how I teach her a lesson!” With a slap on the table, Nelson rose and marched out of the room. At the same time, Hank went to the window and watched the situation unfold from the gap

between the curtains.

Meanwhile, Dahlia was standing at the entrance to the Flame Dragon Properties with Dustin to her left and

Julie to her right.

“Dahlia, should we call it off? Look at the men in there! They are scowling and glaring at us. It’s so terrifying!” Julie cowered behind them and swallowed hard in fear. The Flame Dragon Gang was known for its

ruthlessness, and she was gravely concerned that the gang might s*xually assault her after she entered their

nest.

“We’re already at the entrance. We can’t give up at the last minute, right?” Dahlia, however, was calm and

composed.

“Dahlia, the gang is violent! What if Julie stammered because, at that moment, she saw Nelson emerging with a bunch of men in tow, ready to fight. She was shaking at the sight of his contracted brows and his deathlike stare.

“Who’s the daredevil who asks me to pay up?” Nelson marched forward fearlessly.

“It’s me.” Dahlia took a step forward and announced in a shrill voice, “Lord Horst, it’s only fair to pay your debts. It’s time for you to pay the 70 million you owe to my company.”

“Haha! You’re quite bold!” Cackling, Nelson gestured at the men. “Someone get me my saber!”

“Yes, Sir!” The men replied and immediately hauled out a brass ring saber for him.

“Crap! We’re done for!” Looking pale, Julie seemed ready to faint. Similarly, Dahlia was nervous about Nelson’s

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actions.

“Hmph! They overestimated themselves!” A gleeful smile spread on Hank’s face as he stared down from the

windows above.

“Nelson Horst, are you seriously going to slash people when you’re in the wrong for not paying your debts?” Dustin suddenly emerged from behind Dahlia.

“Hmm?” When Nelson saw Dustin, he appeared to be struck by lightning and dropped the brass ring saber

onto the ground. Realizing the gravity of their situation, he turned around and slapped one of his men on the face as he yelled, “Why the f*ck did you even bring that saber to me? Quick! Get me a check!”

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Chapter 503

“What?” The man was in a state of confusion after being slapped. He held his cheek, looking lost. The other

men exchanged looks of shock. No one had expected that outburst from Nelson, who one second ago was

screaming about slashing the visitors. And the next second, Nelson appeared frightened, as though he saw

ghosts. What was going on?

“What are you doing there? Hurry up and get me the check!” Nelson gave the frozen man a nervous kick.

“Okay...” The man hurriedly stumbled his way back to the office. He had no clue about the situation, but one thing was for sure—Lord Horst was fearful.

During the wait, Nelson went up to Dustin and squeezed an apologetic smile. “Sir Rhys, when did you arrive? You should have informed me earlier, so I could send someone to pick you up.”

“Sir Rhys?” Dahlia and Julie were stunned by Nelson’s obsequious behavior. They looked at each other in disbelief. Why would the cruel Lord Horst of the Flame Dragon Gang act in such a humble manner after meeting Dustin?

“Nelson Horst, it’s only fair that you pay off the debts of the Flame Dragon Gang. Understood?” Dustin scolded Nelson. The latter nodded fervently as he wiped the sweat off his forehead. “Right, Sir Rhys, you’re right. I was acting without thinking just now. I promise I won’t do that again.”

“That’d better be the case. By the way, you were a hooligan just now. You should apologize to the debtor.”

Dustin warned him.

“Chairman Nicholson, I’m very sorry. I was rude to you just now, and I can only hope that you show me grace and forgive me this time.” Nelson plastered a smile on his face as he continuously bowed and apologized. However, his behavior came unexpectedly for Dahlia. She had mentally prepared herself to fight a gangster, but never had she expected the fierce-looking Lord Horst to turn into a tame animal this soon.

She wasn’t the only one who received a great shock. To be honest, Julie was at a loss for words as well. She

questioned if Nelson Horst was still the same man as the notorious and formidable Lord Horst she knew.

“Lord Horst, I’m only here to collect the debts. Please forgive me if I offended you in any way.” Dahlia politely

responded to him.

“Don’t say that! It’s all my fault for owing you the payments in the first place.” Nelson was rather surprised and moved by her manners. Anyone could tell that at Dustin and Dahlia shared an unusual relationship. Nelson revered and feared his new leader at the same time.

“Lord Horst, the money’s here.” The man returned in a hurry, carrying a check in his hand. Nelson wiped the sweat off his forehead and carefully handed Dahlia the check.

He said with much respect, “Chairman Nicholson, this is the amount I owed you. Please take a look.”

“80 million?” When she checked the figures, she was slightly surprised at the extra money. “Lord Horst, did you accidentally pay me more?”

“No, no, I didn’t. I’ve owed you the money for a while now. Just see it as interest payments.” Nelson smiled at her.

Chapter 503

Dahlia was speechless; this was just perplexing and troubling. She was grateful and lucky enough to have

recovered the 70 million in debt, but now, she received 10 million more.

“Dahlia, since it’s for the interest payment, you should accept it,” Dustin chimed in.

“That’s right. Chairman Nicholson, please accept the check, so I can sleep well tonight.” Nelson had a pleading look on his face.

“Well, okay then. Thank you, Lord Horst, for your generosity and help.” No longer insisting, Dahlia pocketed the check. She could tell that Dustin was the sole reason behind Nelson’s humble attitude, and she couldn’t help but wonder if Dustin was telling the truth earlier today.

“Nelson Horst, keep in mind what you said today.” After warning Nelson once again, Dustin left with Dahlia

and Julie.

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Chapter 504

“Have a good day, Sir Rhys!” Nelson bowed deeply to the trio as they left.

“Have a good day. Sir Rhys!” The members of the Flame Dragon Gang mimicked Nelson and chanted loudly.

Hank had run down to the first floor from his viewing point when he figured that something was off. He confronted Nelson. “Lord Horst, what’s wrong? Why did you pay her back?”

Nelson had promised to teach Dahlia a lesson, but upon the meeting. Nelson obediently paid the debts without a word of protest. Since when were the Flame Dragon Gang such losers?

“Oh, ‘why’ you f*cking ask?” Nelson turned around and glowered as he hissed, “Did you know who’s the guy beside that lady just now?”

“Wasn’t he just a bodyguard? What’s so special about that?” Hank frowned, confused by Nelson’s reaction.

“Just a bodyguard?!” After the initial shock, Nelson smacked Hank hard on the back of his head and rebuked, “You blind f*ckwit! That’s our new gang leader!”

“What? Your new gang leader?” Hank was stunned.

“Son of a b*tch! I almost died because of you. Don’t you ever show up in front of me. Now, get lost!” Incandescent with rage, Nelson flung the Rolex watch in Hank’s face. Hank was simmering with anger but dared not talk back. So, he left with his tail between his legs. Never had he expected Dahlia to be acquainted with a powerful figure like Dustin.

“Dustin, are you really the new leader of the Flame Dragon Gang?” Unable to suppress her curiosity, Dahlia blurted out the question. She was still in disbelief, but she figured out that something was not quite right judging from Nelson’s behavior.

“You saw it with your own eyes just now. How could that be fake?” Dustin shrugged his shoulders.

“I mean, how did you become the leader?” She **gave** him a funny look.

“I was acknowledged for my outstanding moral integrity. Did you seriously think I fought my way to the

position?” He asked her with a straight face.

“Is that true?” She shot him a doubtful glance. He gave her a half-smile. “What do you think?”

“Whatever. I don’t care how you ended up as the leader, but I only have one thing to ask of you—do not stir

trouble!” She stared at him with a serious face.

“Don’t worry. I won’t hurt others as long as they don’t hurt me. From now on, the Flame Dragon Gang will not

commit any sort of crime,” he vowed.

“That’s good to hear that.” She let out a relieved sigh. Before this, she was genuinely worried that Dustin had been led astray and committed crimes like murder or robbery.

“Dustin Rhys, I couldn’t tell that you were related to the Flame Dragon Gang!”

Julie

suddenly spoke up. “But you shouldn’t get ahead of yourself. The gang isn’t made up of good guys, and they will get themselves into

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trouble sooner or later. I advise you to get back on the right path before you get arrested and jailed for some crime.”

“You don’t have to worry about that. Just take care of yourself,” he replied blandly.

“Hmph! You little ingrate!” Julie pouted. Even though she held Dustin in higher regard, he was still far behind Terrence.

“Alright now.

Stop the bickering. We have settled the first challenge, but that still leaves us with the second challenge—

the business deal with Brooks Corporation.” Dahlia steered the conversation.

“Dahlia, I can’t promise to be of help in most cases, but I can totally help you out on this one!” Julie patted her chest confidently.

“What’s your plan?” Dahlia was curious to know.

“Have you forgotten that my Terrence is a manager at the Brooks Corporation? If he’s willing to speak up for us, there’s no deal we can’t seal!” Julie sounded proud.

“Is that so?” Dahlia’s eyes lit up with joy.

“Of course!” Julie put on a smug smile. “Given Terrence’s connections, he’ll only need to put in a good word, and it’s a done deal!”

Hearing that, Dustin smiled wryly and gave them a shake of the head. “Oh, you shouldn’t get ahead of yourself, Julie. Terrence can’t even save his own ass in that company. How is he going to help Dahlia?”

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Chapter 505

“What? What do you mean he can’t save his own ass?! What nonsense is that?” Julie glared at him crossly. She was annoyed with the way Dustin had poured cold water on her suggestion.

“If I’m not wrong, Terrence Stone will be fired by the Brooks Corporation today,” Dustin proclaimed breezily.

“Bullshit!” Julie was irked by his prediction. “Our Terrence is good at his job. Why would he get fired?”

“Whether you believe it or not, it’s all up to you. Anyway, Terrence Stone can’t help us on the second challenge.” Dustin shrugged.

“If he can’t help, are you saying that you can do it? What a joke! Julie stared at him icily, thinking that he was only a reckless man who shouldn’t be bragging around.

“Sorry to tell you, but I can do what Terrence Stone can’t.” Dustin grinned at her.

“Oh, you’re getting cocky now, aren’t you?” Julie was burning with rage.

“Dustin Rhys, I wanted to respect you, but if you’re such an arrogant twat, I’ll prove you wrong!” Then, she immediately made a call to Terrence and told him the situation, albeit embellished with dramatic elements.

“What? Is he saying that I’d get fired? That’s hilarious! I’m in a position of authority in the company. No one

can touch me here!” Terrence scoffed with arrogance.

“Terrence, this brat is looking down on you. Why don’t you show him the power of your professional

connections today?” Julie fanned the fire.

“No problem! It’s just a business contract, right? I’ll make a call to Mr. Suzman, the manager of the Sales Department, and I’ll get him to settle it for you. Just come to the office and sign the contract!” Terrence was bursting with confidence.

*Terrence, thank you for your help!” Delighted, Julie hung up and tossed her hair. “Weren’t you acting all smug just now? Do you want to go with me to the Brooks Corporation office?”

“I don’t see why not.” Dustin was nonchalant.

“Great! I will show you the difference between you and Terrence today.” Julie sneered at him. Brook Corporation, with hundreds of billions worth of assets, was the most prominent company in Millsburg. Even

the notorious Flame Dragon Gang was nothing compared to Brooks Corporation. Terrence was not only the manager at the company—he had strong backing from some higher-ups there. Openly challenging Terrence

was a futile and humiliating attempt.

30 minutes later, the elevator doors at the entrance of the Brooks Corporation Sales Department slid open with

a chime, and the trio emerged from the elevator.

“Dahlia, this is the place. Terrence has given them a **heads**—up. I’m sure everything will go fine.” Feeling confident, Julie went to the front desk and rapped her knuckles on the tabletop in a conceited manner. “Hey

Get Mr. Suzman for us! Just tell him that his guests have arrived.”

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Chapter 505

“Excuse me. Do you have an appointment?” The front desk staff inquired politely.

“Only regular visitors need appointments. We don’t.” Julie argued.

“I’m sorry. Our manager has informed us not to let any visitors in unless they have made an appointment.” The

secretary shook her head.

“You need to be more sensible! Do you know who I am? Or who my darling is? How dare you speak to me like

that?” Julie glared at the secretary.

At that moment, a slightly overweight middle-aged man walked out of the office. Dressed in a suit, he

appeared **distant** and authoritative. “What’s with the commotion?”

“Mr. Suzman, you have a few visitors who insisted on meeting you despite not having an appointment,” the secretary hurriedly explained.

“Haven’t I told you before? I’m not seeing anyone without an appointment! Get them out of here!” The man waved his hand impatiently. He would have no time left if he were to entertain every single visitor who didn’t

have an appointment.

“Sir, madam, please leave, or I’ll have to call security.” The secretary urged them to leave.

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Chapter 506

“Wait!” Julie ran up to the middle-aged man just as he was about to leave. “Mr. Suzman, you might not know me, but you must know Terrence Stone.”

*Terrence Stone?” The man lifted an eyebrow. “What do you three **have** to do with him?”

*Terrence is my boyfriend!” Julie beamed proudly. “Mr. Suzman, I believe that he has already given you **a** heads

-up. Now, can we go to your office?”

“No, you can’t.” The man put on a frosty look. “I’ll repeat: you have to make an appointment to meet with me.”

“What?” Julie was slightly taken aback by his attitude. “Mr. Suzman, did you not **hear** me? I’m Terrence’s

girlfriend, **and** I’m here to talk business.”

“So what?” The man snickered. “Even if it were Terrence who came to see me, he’d have to make an

appointment too!”

“You-

” Julie choked on anger and refused to believe that Mr. Suzman would shut her out. He wouldn’t even

budge at the mention of Terrence.

“Julie, it looks like name-dropping won’t work around here.” Dustin flashed her a half-smile. Her **eyes**

twitched, and her expression crumbled. She showed up confidently, only to be let down.

Still she glanced at the man. “Mr. Suzman, you’re colleagues with Terrence. Do you **want** to get on bad terms

with him?”

“So what? Get lost now, or else!” The man bellowed at them. Julie’s cheeks burned in shame **as** she huffed

and puffed. “You’re a bully!”

“Cole Suzman! Acting like you’re something, aren’t you?” Terrence snorted and marched toward the group.

Julie was overjoyed to see her boyfriend and instantly went up to him and started complaining. “Terrence, you came at the right time! I was bullied by that guy just now!”

“Yes, I saw everything. Let me handle this from here.” He nodded and cast a sharp look at the middle-aged man. “Cole Suzman, you’re getting bolder these days. I haven’t seen you in a few days, and now, you don’t even show me respect.”

“And who are you? Why do you **deserve** my respect?” Cole Suzman wore an indifferent expression,

“Hah, you’re acting like you don’t have a clue.” Terrence sneered at him. “Suzman, apologize to my girlfriend now, or I’ll make you regret it! Don’t blame me for not giving you a chance!”

“Hmph! Did you hear him? Apologize to me **now**! Julie grinned gleefully. Although both men were managers. Terrence had stronger support from upper management. Getting on top of Cole Suzman **was a** piece of cake for him.

“Terrence Stone, are you dumb or what? Do you think you deserve an apology from me? Who do you think you are, the human resources manager?” Cole merely smirked at the ridiculous demand.

“What?!” Frowning, Terrence questioned, “What was that?”

“Ah, it looks like you’re still in the dark. The company issued a notice this morning to fire you and put you under investigation immediately. You are no longer **a** manager now.” Cole informed him.

“What did you say? Fired and put under investigation? How could that be?!” Terrence’s expression stiffened.

“Don’t trust me? Just check your phone. They should have sent the notice of termination to you by now.” Cole snickered.

Terrence quickly checked his phone, and he seemed to be struck by lightning. Sweating profusely, he realized that he had indeed been fired.

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“H—how could that be? I— impossible!” Terrence’s eyes were bulging with disbelief. Although he did not put much effort into the job, at least he didn’t make any mistakes. On top of that, he **was** carefree during his time

with the company because he had the backing of the higher—ups. Given his social connections, it wouldn’t

make sense for him to get fired. He couldn’t wrap his **head** around the situation.

“Terrence, you’re fired?” Julie was bug—eyed when she noticed the change in Terrence’s expression. He had promised her the business contract, but how did he end up losing his job instead?

“It looks like there’s trouble.” Dahlia furrowed her brows and appeared pensive. She had pinned her hopes on Terrence, but he wouldn’t be of any help anymore.

“Cole Suzman, be honest— were you playing dirty behind my back?” Terrence fixed **his** gaze on Cole.

“Why would I do so when there’s nothing between us? Plus, even if I wanted, I wouldn’t have the power to do that. You should look at yourself for the reason,” Cole said impassionately. He had long been frustrated by employees who were coasting at work, and he was more than pleased to see Terrence fired.

“Bullshit! No one else could have done that except for you! You must have rattled on me!” Terrence glowered at him. He had embezzled money when he was on the job, and Cole must have found the evidence.

“Well, if you insist on thinking so, I can’t do anything about it.” Cole could not be bothered to explain himself. After all, he couldn’t care less since Terrence was no longer an employee.

“You’re wicked, Cole Suzman!” Terrence’s features contorted into a threatening scowl. “If you think you’ve won, you’re wrong! I’ll let you know— I have backing within the company. Even if I’m fired **today**, I will get rehired tomorrow!”

“Oh, really? And who’s that person backing you?” Cole questioned him.

“You might want to sit down for this. My uncle is the CEO of the company!” Terrence announced proudly.

“That explains why a guy like you would work your way into a managerial role. It’s all thanks to your connection!” Cole’s expression fell. He heard about Terrence’s jaw-

dropping social connections, but he never thought that Terrence was a relative of the CEO. He worried that he might be in trouble.

“Are you afraid now?” Terrence sneered.

“Suzman, if you were the one who ratted me out, you made the dumbest mistake in your life. Apologize to me now, or you’ll be the one who’s kicked out tomorrow!” Given his uncle’s authority in the company, getting rid of a manager was an easy task.

“Terrence Stone, don’t be smug. Do you think you can do as you wish just because you have connections?” Cole frowned disapprovingly.

“That’s right! I can do anything I wish with the backing of my uncle. Why? Are you unhappy about it? What are you going to do?” Terrence threw his head back and laughed, knowing that he’d be fine in any crisis as long as his uncle was in the company.

“Terrence, I didn’t know your uncle was the CEO! That’s amazing!” Julie gave him a look of adoration. A department manager was nothing compared to the CEO.

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“Hmph, I’m doing well in the company, it’s all thanks to my connections!” Terrence held his head high.

“**See** that. Dahlia? That’s how amazing Terrence’s connections are! He can easily take **care** of a business

contract for us!” Looking conceited, Julie turned her attention to Dustin. “Dustin, do you have anything else to

say? Are you convinced now?”

Dustin just smiled back at her. At first, Terrence was the only one who got into trouble. After this commotion,

Terrence unknowingly dragged his uncle down. He bet Terrence's uncle would cry at the thought of **having**

Terrence as his nephew.

“Suzman, what are you standing there for? **I** said to apologize to me now! I can take **everything** from you by making **just** one call!” Terrence grew aggressive.

“You’d better not go too far!” Cole shot him a stern look.

“So what if I do? I can afford to do that anyway!” Terrence snickered.

Cole stammered at his audacity. “Y–you–”

Terrence wasn’t wrong—
he was able to do what he liked with the CEO’s backing.

“You ran into a wall didn’t you? It’s all your fault for being cocky, and it’s too late to regret your actions now!” Julie smirked gleefully.

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Chapter 508

For Terrence, it was an exciting moment for him to show off his authority in front of everyone.

However, things changed when Cole received a text on his phone. Cole was momentarily caught off guard by the content and checked it a few times before breaking into a grin.

“Why are you smiling?” Terrence had a haughty look on his face.

“Terrence Stone, say goodbye to your good life. I just received a company-wide notice stating that your uncle has been terminated as well. You’re both on a sinking ship together. You’re finished!” Cole declared boldly.

“Bullshit!” Terrence shot him a glare. “My uncle is the CEO. Who would have the guts to fire him?”

“Mr. Brooks did that, of course.” Cole said righteously.

“Nonsense!” Terrence refused to believe it. “My uncle is one of Mr. Brooks’ right-hand men. Why would he be fired for no good reason? You should stop spewing lies!”

“It’s up to you if you believe it or not.” Cole didn’t want to waste time with Terrence anymore. Although he had no clue about what happened behind the scenes, it was clear that Terrence and his backing within the company were both removed.

“Are you trying to trick me now? Great! I’ll call my uncle now and get him to teach you a lesson.” While speaking, Terrence pulled out his phone, ready to tell on Cole, but he was stopped short when he heard a

scream coming from the entrance. “Terrence Stone!”

A man dressed in a **suit** with a bald spot on his head charged in.

“Uncle?” Terrence’s eyes lit up in delight, and he cackled. “Suzman, you’re dead meat! My uncle’s here. No one

can **save** you now.”

Then, he readily jogged toward the man. “Uncle, you showed up at the right time! That Suzman guy is a two-faced snake. He’s purposely shifting the blame onto me. You’ve got to stand up for me this time!”

“Stand up for you? How about you f*ck off!” The man’s nostrils flared, and he slapped Terrence across the cheeks, sending the latter tumbling onto the ground. One might think he had a vendetta against Terrence

based on his furious expression.

“Why did you hit me?” Terrence pressed a hand on his cheek helplessly. Julie and the others quietly exchanged looks of confusion.

“Oh, if only I could tear you into **pieces!**” The man unleashed his wrath on Terrence. “Who the f*ck did you

insult this time? I am in hot water because of you!”

“What happened?” Terrence **was** utterly lost.

“How dare you f*cking **ask** me?” The man was a ball of fire **as** he gave Terrence

a second slap. “Mr. Brooks fired me all because of you! I have to clear my desk; worst of all, I’m about to be investigated!”

“What? What happened?” Terrence froze. How could his uncle, the pillar of support for the company, be kicked

out all of **a** sudden?

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“Don’t you know what you did?” The man continued impatiently. “Didn’t you call Mr. Brooks yesterday and

insult him in **various ways?**”

“Yesterday?” After a slight pause, Terrence suddenly came to a realization. He recalled that he had chided a man named Big Bucks Brooks over Dustin’s phone. **Was** that guy the real deal, not a scammer **as** he had believed?

“Oh, I’m done for thought Terrence, who slumped onto the floor with a ghastly **look** on his face.

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Chapter 509

“How could that happen?” Terrence slumped onto the ground as he grew despondent. He did not expect Roderick Brooks, his boss, to be the subject of his wrath yesterday

day. Not only was he fired, but he also dragged his uncle down with him as they got kicked out of the company.

“You brat! What are you standing there for? Come with me to apologize to Mr. Brooks now! The man grabbed Terrence by the hair and violently dragged him out. The whole time, a cowering Terrence didn’t utter even a single word of protest.

“What?” Julie’s jaw dropped to the ground at the sight of it. It **was** hard to fathom how Terrence had fallen from a place of authority and honor to one of shame.

“He totally deserved that! It was his fault for acting like a thug!” Cole scoffed and disappeared into his office.

“Your dear Terrence can’t even save himself,” Dustin remarked with amusement.

“It’s all because of you and your stupid predictions! He wouldn’t have been fired if it weren’t for you!” Julie started to lose it.

“How do you even pin that on me? You’re unbelievable.” Dustin shook his head, thinking that Terrence deserved everything that had happened. One could see it coming because of Terrence’s impudence, which was fueled **by** his faith in his uncle’s power and backing.

“That’s enough. Can both of you shut up for a **moment**? Our top priority is to figure out a solution to that challenge!” Dahlia reminded them of the matter at **hand**.

“Dahlia, I think we have no choice but to get back and brainstorm. Terrence is fired, and Mr. Suzman isn’t going to budge.” Sighing. Julie decided that this was her unlucky day, suffering one loss after another.

“What’s the point of heading back when we’ve already made our way here? Isn’t it just a business deal? Leave it to me,” Dustin remarked.

“You?” Julie scanned him from head to toe with a disdainful look. “Who do you think you are? Do you think you could do whatever Terrence failed to do? Stop kidding me!”

“He failed to help, but that doesn’t mean I’ll fail too.” Dustin smiled at her. “I’m acquainted with Roderick Brooks. This shouldn’t be too difficult.”

“You? How could you be a friend of Roderick Brooks? You’re a fool.” Julie did not believe any words that came from him. Roderick Brooks was the top business magnate in Millsburg. A man of his wealth and power was godlike and out of reach for the **average** citizen.

“You don’t believe me? I’ll call him up.” Instead of explaining further, Dustin immediately went into action.

“Hello? Mr. Brooks; I have a favor to ask of you. A friend of mine wanted to collaborate with Brooks Corporation. I hope you’ll consider her proposal.”

“Mr. Rhys, don’t mention it! A business deal is just a small matter! I can even hand the company over to **you** if that makes **you** happy. Where are **you**? I’ll send someone to pick you up.” Roderick sounded very friendly.

“It’s alright. I’m at the **Sales** Department of Brooks Corporation. Just send a word and get Mr. Suzman to

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assist me.” Dustin replied,

“No problem! On it!”

“Thanks.” After exchanging some formalities, Dustin hung up and turned around. “It’s done. We can sign the business contract soon.”

“That’s some good acting. Do you really think that someone will agree on a 500 million dollar megadeal over a phone call? Stop daydreaming!” Julie smirked.

“Oh well. Let’s head home now. We’ll talk about the business deal tomorrow.” Dahlia gave Julie a soft shake of the head. They were at the center of attention at that moment, and with each second they stayed there, they’d only humiliate themselves more. She did not take Dustin’s words seriously, thinking that he was only putting on the act for his ego.

“What’s the rush? We’ll get it done if we wait for a little while.” Dustin reassured them.

“Are you telling me to wait here?” Julie snickered. “Even if you kneel here for a day, you will not get the attention of Mr. Suzman.”

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Chapter 510

Right after that, they heard a click as the door to the manager’s office flung open. Then, Cole ran out in a great

hurry and almost stumbled over.

“Who’s Dustin Rhys? Is there a Mr. Rhys here?” He searched high and low with an anxious look.

“That’s me.” Dustin took a few steps forward.

“Mr. Rhys, I’m so sorry for not recognizing you just **now**. I didn’t properly greet and receive you and **your**

guests. Please forgive me.” Cole jogged up, his previous arrogance wiped off as he bowed deeply at Dustin.

His respectful demeanor came **as** a surprise for Julie and Dahlia. A while ago, Cole was acting all righteous and refused to show Terrence leniency. Why did he suddenly grovel at Dustin? They were left scratching their heads at the reason behind his abrupt change.

“Mr. Suzman, that wasn’t necessary. Let’s talk business.” Dustin went straight to the point.

“Right, right Cole nodded furiously and plastered a smile on his face. “Ladies and gentlemen, this way. please.”

“Ladies first.” Beaming, Dustin led a confused-looking Dahlia into the manager’s office. Cole immediately served tea and ordered his secretary to print out the contract. He was extremely attentive, **as** he was told they were VIP guests of Mr. Brooks. Ten minutes later, they had a deal following a smooth discussion.

When Dahlia wandered out of the office with the signed contract in her hand, she felt like she was deep in a daze. Never in her wildest dreams had she expected the deal to proceed this smoothly. Without unnecessary exchanges, the staff from Brooks Corporation merely asked for her signature on that 500 million deal. In fact, it was so ridiculous that she would question the **veracity** of the process if she had not witnessed it.

“Dustin, how **did** you pull that off?” Dahlia glanced at the hero of the day with a bewildered expression.

“I told you I am acquainted with Roderick Brooks, and he’d probably do me a favor,” Dustin was cool about it.

“A— and how did you get to know him?” Julie blurted out. It was unbelievable that Dustin would be acquainted with Roderick Brooks.

“I treated his illness, which I mentioned to you yesterday, but you didn’t believe me.” He shrugged.

“You treated him? That’s some dumb luck!” Julie shot him a funny look.

“That’s why you shouldn’t look down on people.” Dustin casually reminded her .

“What’s so great about that?” Julie rolled her eyes in disdain. “You treated Big Bucks Brooks’ illness thanks to some dumb luck! Sure, he repaid your help **by** doing you a favor, but it won’t be easy to ask him for help the second time!”

Roderick Brooks had returned the favor to Dustin, and common sense dictated that it wouldn’t be appropriate to keep asking for favors after that. Dustin might have played the hero on that day, but that might not happen again the next time.

“No matter what, we have to thank Dustin for his help today.” A smile lightened Dahlia’s face. ‘Tell me your

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wish, and I’ll try my best to fulfill it.”

“My wish?” That suggestion caught him off guard. “I haven’t thought of any. I’ll let you know when something pops **up**.”

“Sure. I owe you one.” She chuckled.

While they were chatting, Dustin’s phone started ringing. When he picked up, he heard Natasha’s voice from

the other end. “Dustin! This is bad! Our family’s in trouble!”

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Chapter 511

It was afternoon when Dustin arrived at the Harmon estate in a hurry after getting the news. He was greeted by the sight of armed soldiers surrounding the compound. Hundreds of armed men from the elite forces of the Harmon Family guarded the entrance in what appeared to be a standoff, and both sides weren't about to back down.

"Harmons, I will make myself clear—hand over the suspect, or we'll subject everyone to the same punishment!" The commander-in-charge bellowed, his full voice echoing through the compound. Behind him, the soldiers stood stiffly while holding their guns. Once the commander gave his orders, these soldiers would shoot mercilessly.

"What's all this about?" Dustin frowned at the violent confrontation. He wondered how the Harmons **got** involved with the military.

"Sir, what calls for the mobilization of these forces?" Dustin went up to him **and** questioned.

"I was ordered to capture the suspect. Unrelated personnel please leave the grounds right now!" The commander barked in his face.

"Mr. Rhys, you're here! Please, come on in!" Jack, the butler, immediately spotted Dustin and asked that the elite forces make way for Dustin to enter. The crowd parted before swiftly closing up the path again after Dustin made his way into the building.

"Listen up, people in there! I'll give you half an hour. If you **refuse** to **hand** the suspect over, do not blame us **for**

forcing our way in there!" The commander **gave** his final warning, but the elite forces did not budge at all, even

if **they** had to risk death.

"Mr. Rhys, Ms. Harmon is in the meeting room. Please come with me." Jack ignored the

commander's threats **and** led the way. A perplexed Dustin followed closely behind him.

The meeting room of the Harmon estate was filled to the brim. The core members of the family convened at

the venue. They were whispering to each other.

Meanwhile, Trent Harmon sighed with a troubled expression while Jacob Harmon paced the **room**, apprehensively. Natasha and a few others stayed by the side of an unconscious Hector Harmon.

"Natasha, what's wrong?" Dustin showed up in the room with a solemn look.

"Dustin, you've arrived at the right time! Please check on my dad!" Natasha's face lit up, and she frantically

pulled Dustin over to a pale and sweaty Hector, who had blood stains on his outfit.

Without further ado, Dustin performed a detailed checkup on Hector and announced, "Your dad is weak

because he **has** recently recovered from a grave illness. To top that off, he **was** drinking like a fish, and that's

why he fainted. He should be fine."

"That's good to hear." A relieved sigh escaped from Jessica's lips.

"Can you wake him up?" Natasha asked.

"**Yes**, but I wouldn't recommend that. It would be best to just let him rest," Dustin replied.

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"We're running out of time! We need to wake him up, or else the family will be **doomed!**" Natasha did not look like she was joking.

“Is it that serious?” Eyes twitching, he immediately took three needles and inserted them into Hector’s

pressure points between the brows, near the front hairline, and right under his nose. Soon after, Hector’s eyes fluttered open.

“Dad! Do you recall what happened last night?” Natasha immediately asked.

“Last night?” Hector rubbed his head and said groggily. “Last night, it was the birthday event of the regional deputy chief, Sir Moran. I was drinking at his place. Why?”

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“Dad, did you do anything else than drink?” Natasha pressed on.

“What do you mean?” He was puzzled by her questions.

“Dad, think carefully! You can’t make a mistake here!” She was dead serious.

“I think I blacked out from drinking. I can’t remember a **thing**. What happened?” Hector frowned softly. Natasha finally dropped the bomb. “Dad, Sir Moran’s daughter was dead!”

“She’s dead?” He was stunned by the news. “How did that happen?”

“We don’t have the details yet, but rumors had it that you were the murderer!” Natasha informed him.

“Did they say I was the murderer?” He was completely lost. Eyes bulging, he shook his **head** vehemently.

“No, that’s impossible! No matter how drunk I am, I would not kill someone!” He might be a lightweight, but he was a well-behaved drunk. Normally, he’d be dead asleep after he was drunk and never made a scene.

"I don't believe them either, but witnesses claimed they saw you murder her. Sir Moran's forces are at our door, and they will force their way in at any time! Think carefully! Did you do it or not?" Natasha growled. The regional deputy chief was the third-in-command in Millsburg, and he had the power to ruin the Harmons with a command.

"I— I really can't recall a thing, but I believe that I would never do that." Hector furrowed his brows.

"Gosh, Hector, what's that good for? Sir Moran doesn't believe that!" Trent shook his head slowly.

"Yeah, Trent, how could you black out from drinking at someone's birthday event? You do not have self-control at all!" Jacob seemed disappointed and furious at his sibling. The family had enough on their plate, and the new accusation added insult to injury.

"Uncle Hector, turn yourself in if you were the culprit. Don't drag your family into it." At that moment, a slender and alluring beauty emerged from the crowd. She was Trent's eldest daughter, Kate. Trent **had** a son and daughter, but after Quentin's death, Kate immediately came to her father's side from Stonia.

*Kate Harmon, stop spewing nonsense! My dad is not a murderer!" Ruth glared at her cousin.

"Better not get ahead of yourself. It's not uncommon for drunk people to commit crimes accidentally. If Uncle Hector is innocent, why would Sir Moran send his men to arrest him?" Kate remarked as if stating the obvious.

Ruth was dumbfounded, "You—"

The accusation might be hard to believe, but there was always a dreadful possibility that it might be true. The problem was that Hector could not recall any memories from that night.

"Could someone have pinned the murder on him?" Dustin blurted out.

Natasha, deep in her thoughts, said, "The possibility has crossed my mind, but I don't have evidence for now. We need a detailed investigation," It **was** too

much of a coincidence for the murder to happen at that point. She had reason to suspect foul play.

Chapter 512

“I heard that Sir Moran’s daughter was murdered after being s*xually assaulted. Uncle Hector, did you get

horny after you were drunk and took advantage of her?” Kate dropped another odd speculation.

“Bullshit! My dad is not a rapist!” Ruth instantly jumped up and **down** with **anger. Natasha and** Jessica, though

quiet, both frowned at the allegation, Kate was an impertinent young lady.

“Kate, stop that nonsense!” Trent berated his daughter. “Your Uncle Hector is a good man. He’ll never do

anything like that. Someone must have framed him!”

“You’ll never know what a man’s like behind the back. Who knows?” Kate’s reply was loaded.

“That’s enough! Are you going to add to the mess that this family is already in?” Natasha **finally** chastised

Kate.

Kate merely sneered. “You shouldn’t be yelling at me. Start worrying about cleaning up your dad’s mess.”

“You” Natasha was on the verge of an outburst when Jack ran in with urgency. “Ms. Harmon, things are bad!

The soldiers out there have barged in!”

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Chapter 513

“They barged in?” Natasha’s expression dropped. “Quick! Get Deone to stop them!”

Before the truth prevailed, she would never allow them to **arrest** her dad.

“Stop!” Suddenly. Hector yelled at Jack, “Let them in. No one shall stand **in** th eir way!”

“Dad, what are you doing?” Natasha frowned.

“The truth will speak for itself. I have nothing to fear if I didn’t commit the crime .” Hector declared loud and clear.

“But

“Have you ever given it some thought? If I make a move now, I’ll never clear my name.” Hector wore a somber

expression on his face. Fighting against Sir Moran’s forces could be perceived as resisting arrest, or, worse,

staging a revolt. The Harmons could not afford to be accused of this grave crime.

“Hector’s right. We can’t butt heads with them. Tell all the Harmon disciples to stand aside!” Jacob yelled.

“Yes, sir.” Jack helplessly took the orders. Natasha and the rest were worried, but they were **aware** of the

importance of not **adding** fuel to the fire. Otherwise, the confrontation might spiral out of control

“Where’s Hector Harmon?” The commander, dressed in uniform, marched up to the doors of the meeting room

with a large number of armed soldiers behind him. These were troopers who were in service, and their

murderous air sent chills down one's spine.

"I am Hector Harmon. Sir, **what** are you here for?" Hector calmly greeted the commander and his men.

"You sullied Sir Moran's daughter and brutally murdered her! We are under orders to arrest you for trial!" The

commander announced icily.

"Nonsense! My **dad** never killed a soul. You must have gotten it wrong!" Ruth instantly protested.

"Sir, my husband has been a morally upright man. He couldn't have committed such a huge sin. He must have been framed!" Jessica fought for her husband.

"That's right! Our patriarch must have been framed!" The family members immediately voiced their support **for** Hector Harmon, who was known for his honorable character. No one else in the family could claim to be more

virtuous than Hector.

"Framed him? That's a joke!" The commander's face was taut. "We have solid evidence that clears all the doubts. Those who are not involved, please leave the scene now!"

"Sir, you claimed that my dad is guilty. But where's the evidence? You need a reason to arrest him, isn't that

right?" Natasha questioned the commander.

He bellowed, "The **witness** account is clear evidence of Hector Harmon murdering **the** young lady when he

was drunk!"

"A witness can be bought. With money, one can forge a witness statement. It's pretty common," Natasha

argued. She was displeased by how they wanted to **charge** Hector over the words of a few witnesses.

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“Is a witness’ account unreliable? Alright, then! I’ll show you some physical evidence!” The commander **played**

a video on his phone. The angle of the footage resembled that of a surveillance camera. In the video, one could see a stocky man assaulting a young lady in her prime. First, he sullied her, followed by suffocating her

to death. His actions were inhumane and would incur wrath from anyone.

After choking the lady to death, the man turned around and showed **his** face. It was Hector Harmon.

“H—how is that possible?” Everyone looked horrified when they saw Hector in the footage. They never expected that he was the real criminal after all! One could buy off witnesses, but it **was** hard to create physical evidence out of thin air! Still, the revelation was too shocking, and everyone struggled to process it.

“T— that’s impossible! My dad would never kill someone!” Ruth shook her head forcefully as the color drained

from her face.

“How did it turn out this way?” Jessica’s eyes widened in disbelief.

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Chapter 514

Jessica had always believed her husband, but the result at the moment had left her completely stunned.

“Hector, look at what you have done!” Trent was exasperated.

“Y—

you son of a b*tch! You’re not worthy to be the patriarch!” Flying into a rage, Jacob threw a punch at Hector’s face.

Such a scandal was going to bring extreme humiliation to the entire family.

“Dad, you...” Knitting her brows. Natasha wanted to say something, but the words were stuck in her throat. At first, she firmly believed that her father had been framed. However, looking at the pieces of irrefutable evidence now, she was at a loss as to how to defend him.

Even Hector was inexplicably shocked. It was indeed his face that appeared in the video. On top of that, the way that person dressed up was also just like his.

“Did I really kill someone after getting drunk?” Hector muttered inwardly. At the thought of that, Hector coughed up a mouthful of blood, not able to withstand the shock. His face was ashen white.

“Dad!” Natasha wanted to support him subconsciously but was stopped by him.

“Natasha, I’m sorry for dragging you all into this mess. Now that I’ve done something like this, how can I continue to live with myself?” As soon as he finished speaking, he snatched the gun from the commander and pointed it at his own head. He pulled the trigger, attempting to **use** his death to make up for his mistake.

“Dad!”

“Patriarch!”

Everyone at the scene **was** taken aback by that. They wanted to stop him, but it was too late.

As the loud gunshot pierced the air, the bullet missed its target and brushed past Hector’s forehead by a hair’s breadth, leaving a streak of red on his skin.

It was Dustin. He had seized the gun in Hector’s hand.

“Mr. Hector, we haven’t gotten to the bottom of the situation yet. There’s no need to go to this extreme.” Dustin

frowned.

He did not expect Hector to be so cruel to himself. Hector directly sought to end his life because of a crime

that had not been confirmed. If Dustin hadn’t been fast enough, Hector would’ve been dead by now.

“It’s normal to be punished **for** making a mistake. Only by paying it with my life can I make up for **my** sin.”

Hector had been upright throughout his entire life. How could he carry on with his life when something like

this had happened?

“Mr. Hector, there’s something fishy about this matter. Don’t act recklessly. Let’s wait until we get the **ins** and

outs of it,” Dustin said solemnly.

“That’s right! You’re not going to solve anything by dying. As the patriarch of the Harmon family, **how** could

you seek death to **escape** your responsibilities?” Natasha reproached.

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Chapter 514

“I...” Hector was at a loss for words. He had only wanted to save his family’s reputation, so he didn’t think

about it too much.

“**Dad**, give us some time. I believe we can bring the truth to light,” Natasha said. She felt that something **was** amiss about this matter.

Right then, the commander uttered coldly. “Alright, I have no spare time to see how affectionate your father- daughter relationship

is. Hector, you've committed murder, and the evidence is indisputable. Now you need to come with us to assist in our further investigation."

Then, the commander waved his hand. Two soldiers stepped up at once and cuffed Hector.

"Dad, it's easier to die than live. Take care of yourself. We will definitely save you!" Natasha was serious.

Hector nodded, not saying anything more.

"Take him away!" With that, the commander led the rest of his people and left the place.

"Sis, what should we do now?" Ruth was in a fit of panic.

"This is a serious crime. If we don't save Dad in time, his life is probably going to be at stake," she thought.

"Quick! Assemble all the resources we have and look into this matter comprehensively! Don't miss out on any clues or details!" Natasha ordered.

Hearing that, everyone immediately began to take action. This matter had caused chaos in the Harmon family.

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Chapter 515

The fact that Hector was arrested caused quite a stir among the members of the Harmon family.

Everyone was rushed off their feet, using whatever connections they had to prove Hector innocent. Hector was the patriarch of the Harmons; he represented the family. If he was really charged with murder, not only would he be ruined, but the whole Harmon family would also be terribly criticized by the public.

After giving out the order, Natasha called some of the trustworthy people to her room to

discuss the countermeasures. Not everyone in the family stood on the same side. Trent and Jacob

harbored their own thoughts. She naturally didn't trust them.

"What do you think about this matter?" Natasha asked, glancing around.

"Could it be that Dad got sloshed for real, so he..." Ruth trailed off.

Before Ruth saw the video, she was sure that her father was not the kind of person who would commit such a crime. However, now that the evidence was right before her eyes, she couldn't help but doubt his innocence.

"Your dad is well aware of his alcohol tolerance level. But why did he drink so much this time that he couldn't even remember what he did after that?" Jessica's expression didn't look good.

"Ms. Natasha, saving Mr. Harmon is what's most important right now," Jack said worriedly.

It was going to be hard for Hector to clear his name anytime soon. Hence, keeping him safe and sound for now was their top priority.

"Dustin, what do you think?" Natasha looked at him.

"I don't think it's a coincidence that this matter happens at this time. Your dad is probably being set up by others," Dustin replied.

Ruth

furrowed her brows. "That's what we hope too, but all the evidence is directed at Dad. No one

will believe us."

"Sometimes, what we see might not be the truth, so we mustn't just look on the surface," Dustin said, shaking his head.

"You've gotten a clue?" Natasha asked.

"Those who have been around will know that there's a special skill in this world, which is called Face—

Changing Art. I suspect that someone has impersonated your dad and committed the crime.”

“Face–Changing Art?” The rest of them exchanged glances with one another, shocked by Dustin’s words.

“Remember the Dark Lord’s disciple who showed up at the annual gathering that day? She had used Face–Changing Art to disguise herself as Celeste,” Dustin explained.

“That’s right! When she escaped, I think she left behind a human face mask!” Ruth said.

“That is to say, Hector might be framed for real?” Jessica’s eyes brightened.

Although they knew nothing much about Face–Changing Art, this speculation was their only

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hope at the moment.

“Are you saying that the Dark Lord is behind this?” Natasha’s expression turned cold. This wasn’t just about dirtying Hector’s good name; it was also about ruining the reputation of the Harmons and bringing the family to the brink of collapse.

“What a merciless move!” Natasha muttered inwardly.

“It’s possible, but there’s also someone who we mustn’t leave out,” Dustin reminded.

“Who?” Natasha narrowed her eyes.

“Tyler.” Dustin’s voice was flat. “He was rejected at the annual gathering. Judging from how the Grant family conducts themselves, it’s impossible for them to gloss over the matter.”

“Seriously?” Ruth frowned in thought. “The Grant family is one of the top three most prominent families. It’s impossible for them to do something like this. Moreover, framing my father won’t bring them any benefits.

“It’s just my guess. If we want to catch the culprit, it’d be best to investigate from here as a start,” Dustin said.

“Jack, get the shadow guards to look into these immediately!” Natasha gave the order directly. “Noted!” Jack obeyed and left in a hurry.

Right then, a glint of silver light surged from the window all of a sudden and landed fiercely on the wall. It wasn’t until they had taken a closer look that they realized it was a silver hairpin with a piece of paper attached to it.

“Miracle doctor, I know who the culprit is. Come alone to Lilyrius Restaurant tonight at 8 pm. See you then.” The note was signed off by someone called Azalea.

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Chapter 516

“Azalea?” Natasha arched her brow. “Do you know her?”

“If I guessed it right, it was her who disguised herself as Celeste,” Dustin said. The fragrance lingering on the silver hairpin was exactly the same as that of the woman from that day.

“It’s her?” Natasha frowned slightly. “Could it be she’s the one behind this?”

“We’ll know more about it after I meet up with her tonight.” Dustin narrowed his eyes. Since that person had invited him out, it was clear that she must have known something.

“This woman is full of guile and good at using poison. Do you think this is a trap?” Natasha was worried.

“Don’t worry. Even if it’s a lion’s den, I’ll be able to come out unscathed.” Dustin smiled faintly. “No, it’s too dangerous for you to go alone. I’ll send a group of shadow guards to protect you,” Natasha said with a solemn expression.

The Dark Lord's disciple was nowhere near kind. Natasha didn't want Dustin to risk his life. With how insistent she was, Dustin didn't refuse her anymore. "Okay."

As a retro-style restaurant, Lilyrius Restaurant was usually lively. However, it seemed surprisingly deserted that night.

After getting out of the car, Dustin entered the restaurant and looked around. There was no customer. He casually chose a seat next to the window and enjoyed his drink while waiting for Azalea to show up.

"Quick! Go and catch the person inside!" At that time, several SUVs roared and pulled up outside the restaurant. Equipped with weapons, a group of black-clad, masked men got out of the cars and rushed into the place fiercely.

When the man in the lead saw Dustin, he took several steps forward and jammed his machete into the table. "You're Dustin?" Steven Lewis asked maliciously.

"You've been following me for half an hour. You can't possibly still not know who I am, can you?" Dustin held his cup, looking calm.

He had sensed that he was being watched the moment he stepped out of the Harmon residence. However, instead of alerting the other party, he kept quiet about it to see who was behind it.

Steven smirked. "You've got some guts. I didn't expect you to be so composed."

"Who are you? What do you want to do?" Dustin demanded.

"I heard that you have the flower of Crimson Gem. Hand it over, and I'll spare your life today," Steven said. He had been keeping a close watch over the Harmon residence for two days to catch

him.

"Flower of Crimson Gem? You're someone from the Grant family?" Dustin raised his eyebrow. Only a few people knew that he had the flower, and Jayla was one of them.

“Hmph! Cut the crap! Are you giving or not?” Steven’s face darkened.

“No.” Dustin gulped down his drink.

“Then, you’re just asking for death!” Steven flew into a rage and was about to launch an attack on

Dustin.

Right then, a charming female voice floated across the air. “Have you asked for my permission to make a scene at my place?”

When everyone looked over, they saw a veiled woman in skimpy clothes slowly descending the stairs.

Although her face couldn’t be seen clearly, her body figure was extremely hot and seductive—well-developed breasts, curvy buttocks, and a slim waist. She looked like a masterpiece, especially when she walked with her hips wiggling, exuding her alluring charm.

The group of men in black were stunned. With their eyes lit up, they couldn’t help but swallow their saliva repeatedly.

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Chapter 517

“Whoa, I’ve never seen such a hot body before!”

“I don’t need to look at her face. Her fair and slender legs alone are enough to get me hooked for a year!”

“Damn, I can’t take it anymore! She is fucking seductive!”

The moment the veiled woman showed up, all the black-clad men had a hard time holding back their lusts. The sexy curves of her figure were flawless, especially her wonderfully-proportioned legs. They were literally perfect for those with foot and leg fetishes.

Rubbing his chin, Steven ogled at her. “Hey, beauty. Are you the owner of this restaurant?”

“That’s right. What do you want to eat?” The woman wore a sweet smile and slowly walked up to them.

“What a nice smell!” The men kept sniffing, immersing themselves in her fragrance that was tickling them pink.

“Can I eat you?” Steven gave her a lascivious grin.

“Me?” The woman chuckled. “I’m a thorny person; I don’t think you’ll be able to stomach me.”

“It’s okay. There is no rose without a thorn,” he uttered, licking his lips.

Really? Let’s see if you can walk your talk.” She smiled mysteriously.

Steven tugged at his clothes, looking like he was in dire need of devouring her whole. When the rest of the men saw that, they burst into laughter and began to tease her.

“You’re lucky today, beauty! Steven is extremely good at this!”

“It looks like your man must’ve failed to satisfy you. No worries, you have our company tonight!

As they laughed, they had already trapped the veiled woman in the middle.

Smiling, she pointed to Dustin. “Compared to you, I like the handsome man over there more.”

“Hmph! He is only pleasant to the eyes but of no use!”

“Exactly! Look at how thin he is!”

The men scoffed at Dustin.

“Do you want to play with me, Mr. Handsome?” The veiled woman ignored the other men.

“No, thank you. Go ahead and play with them.” Dustin continued enjoying his drink, completely unfazed.

“Did you hear that? He doesn’t have the guts!” With an evil grin, Steven reached out to grab her buttocks, but she easily dodged his touch.

“You’d better keep your hands to yourselves, or else I’ll get angry,” she warned.

Hearing that, Steven got even more excited. “

Angry? Haha! Come on, show me how angry you can get!”

“Sure.” The woman crinkled her mouth into a slight smile and gently blew into her palm.

Right then, a puff of red smoke came through and permeated the air, enveloping everyone in

it.

“What’s this? It smells so good.” The men sniffed the scent subconsciously. However, in less than three seconds, they felt dizzy and were struggling for breath.

“This is bad! The smoke is poisoned!” Steven’s expression changed, and he immediately covered his mouth and nose.

Unfortunately, it was too late. Those who had inhaled the smoke fell to the floor, their faces contorting in pain as blood oozed out from their mouths and noses.

“Bit*h! How dare you poison us! I’m going to kill you!” At the sight of his subordinates flumping down one after another, Steven flew off the handle and drew his machete to attack her. However, as soon as he moved, he lost his balance and tumbled to the floor.

“I wasn’t lying when I said that you wouldn’t be able to put up with me.” The veiled woman Smirjed

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Chapter 518

“You-” Steven was seething. He spat out a mouthful of black blood and died on the spot.

In three minutes, all the black-clad men collapsed to the floor and kicked the bucket. “Miracle doctor, I’ve helped you get rid of all the nuisances. It’s only

two of us now.” The veiled woman came over with a charming smile and sat beside Dustin. “Don’t you think you should thank me for solving your problem?”

“Well, they were not really a problem to me. Let’s get down to business. What’s your motive for calling me here?” Dustin asked.

“I’m just a weak lady; what kind of motives can I have? Don’t think of me so badly.” Azalea teased. “If that’s the case, tell me. Who framed Hector? And where is the killer?” Dustin cut right to the chase.

“Nothing comes for free in this world. You’ve got to pay a price if you want to know the answer to that.” Azalea stretched out her finger and stroked his chin intimately.

“What do you want?” Dustin pushed her hand away.

“Can I have you?” Azalea shot him an alluring smile.

“I’m not interested in you.” Dustin refused her, unfazed by her advances.

“You’re indeed different. There aren’t a lot of men who can resist my seduction.” She chuckled. Alright, I won’t tease you anymore. Actually, I hope that you can cure my disease. I’ve witnessed your medical skills. Needless to say, they are exceptional.”

“You don’t look ill.” Dustin sized her up. Judging from her overall well-being, she seemed to be in the pink of health.

“To tell you the truth, my mentor has put a venomous curse on me. I will feel extremely terrible when it comes to the middle of the night. I hope that you can help me remove it.”

Dustin was a little surprised. “A mentor poisoning his disciple? It’s my first time hearing something like this.”

“My mentor is a person who suspects everyone. He doesn’t trust anyone but himself, so he uses the venom to control his disciples,” Azalea explained.

“I can neutralize the poison for you, but you have to first tell me who the murderer is,” Dustin said. “No can do. What if you go back on your word after

"I've told you the truth?" The world was full of danger. Azalea dared not trust anyone easily.

After a moment's thought, Dustin agreed in the end. "Fine, I'll remove it for you first. You'd better not come up with any tricks."

"I'm just a weak lady. Do you think I'm capable of doing that?" Azalea rolled her eyes.

"Open your mouth," Dustin said, not intending to waste his time talking to her anymore. Azalea lifted her veil slightly, revealing her delicate lips.

Dustin flicked a pill into her mouth with his fingers. Then, he took out a silver needle and poked it at her body a few times at lightning speed. Once the medicine began to take effect, he thrust his palm out all of a sudden and slapped her back hard.

Azalea coughed up a mouthful of black blood. A centipede that was as thick as a pinky could be seen wriggling in the pool of blood.

"Miracle doctor, you're indeed amazing. I didn't expect it to be settled this fast." Azalea was overjoyed; she had never felt so relaxed before.

She carefully put the centipede aside to keep it for future use. There was a subtle connection between the venomous curse and the person who planted it. Once the centipede died, her mentor would immediately know about it.

"I've removed the venom. So tell me, who is the murderer?" Dustin asked calmly.

"What are you talking about?" Azalea acted like she didn't know anything.

"How dare you trick me?" Dustin frowned, exuding a malicious mien in an instant.

"Miracle doctor, hadn't anyone told you before that you shouldn't simply believe a woman's words, especially the beautiful ones?" Azalea smiled playfully.

Dustin's expression darkened. All of a sudden, he reached out and grabbed Azalea by her neck, lifting her up from the floor. "If you aren't telling me about it, then don't blame me for being merciless."

Laughing in the middle of her cough, she said, “Miracle doctor, I advise you not to act recklessly. If you get me killed, your lover, Natasha, is going to die too.”

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“What are you talking about?” Dustin tightened his grip around Azalea’s neck, suffocating her so hard that her face flushed.

Without feeling any ounce of fear, Azalea smiled and said in a hoarse voice, “If I die, not only you won’t be able to catch the murderer, but Natasha will also suffer. You’d better think about it properly.”

“Are you threatening me?” When Dustin narrowed his eyes, a touch of murderous intent was laced in his gaze.

“I dare not. This is just my advice to you.” Azalea curled up the corners of her lips.

“What exactly do you want?” Dustin demanded coldly.

Instead of saying anything, Azalea pointed at her neck.

Her message was loud and clear.

With a slight frown, Dustin still let go of her neck.

Azalea slumped down on the floor in an instant and panted heavily. “It hurts. Miracle doctor, I was just joking. Why did you have to be so rough?”

“I have no time to joke with you. You’d better tell me everything that you know.” He shot her a piercing glare.

“Fine. Since you want to know about it so badly, I’ll just tell you the truth.” Patting her clothes, Azalea sat beside him and took a sip of his drink. “You’ve guessed it right. Hector is framed, and the one behind this is the Grant family.”

“The Grant family?” Dustin raised his brow. “Where is the evidence? How am I supposed to know that you’re not lying?”

This woman in front of him was too unpredictable. He couldn't bring himself to believe her.

"What's the point of lying to you?" Azalea rolled her eyes.

"Do you even need a reason to tell a lie?" Dustin's expression was frosty.

"You know me well!" She chuckled. "But I'm telling the truth this time, and I even have the murderer's location with me."

"Where?"

"A hidden safe house." With a flick of her wrist, a piece of paper fell on the table. "Here's the address."

Dustin took a look at it. "Is this the real address?"

"You have my word. However, I can only guarantee you that the murderer will be there for an hour. After that, the murderer will move to a different place," Azalea said.

Dustin nodded his head, his expression relaxing as he lowered his guard slightly. Judging from Azalea's body language, she didn't seem like she was lying. As long as he could catch the culprit, Hector would probably be safe.

"By the way, you said that Natasha was in danger. What do you mean by that?" Dustin suddenly asked.

"Do you want to know? Lift my veil, then." Azalea smiled meaningfully.

"What's so hard about that?" He reached out and grabbed her veil, slowly pulling it upward.

"Oh, I forgot to tell you that there is a rule in my family; whoever lifts up my veil will have to marry me."

"You're crazy!" Startled, Dustin immediately withdrew his hand. Fortunately, he had only pulled it up halfway through, so he didn't manage to get a clear look at her face.

"Scared? What a boring man you are!" Azalea teased, grinning from ear to ear.

“Childish!” Dustin snorted and turned around to leave.

“She’s too good at playing with people’s minds,” Dustin thought.

“Hold on,” Azalea called out to him. “Miracle doctor, why are you in such a hurry? Actually, I have spies at the Grant residence. Not long ago, I received news that someone wanted to harm Natasha. Those who followed you earlier were just the beginning of their plan. The Grant family’s real target is Natasha.”

When Dustin heard what she said, he stopped his steps all of a sudden and looked at her. “The Harmon residence is heavily guarded now. It’s not easy for the Grants to barge in.”

“True enough, but what about luring the target away?” Azalea quirked her lips.

“What do you mean?” He frowned.

“Well, if I’m someone from the Grant family, I can simply find a reason to lure Natasha to leave the house.” Azalea shot him a half-smile.

Right then, Dustin felt a wave of uneasiness.

At the moment, the Harmon family was leaderless, and on top of that, it was in a mess.

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Natasha would definitely do whatever she could to save Hector, and her concern for her father would only make her fall into traps easily.

At the thought of that, Dustin immediately took out his phone and dialed Natasha’s number. However, the line couldn’t get through.

“She’s not picking up? In that case, it seems like the Grant family has made their move,” Azalea remarked.

"Miracle doctor, time is tight. You have to choose whether to go to the safe house to catch the murderer or to save Natasha. You can't have your cake and eat it too."

"Only kids will choose. I want both!" As Dustin spoke, he made a hand gesture at the window.

Soon, Isfrid hurriedly walked in with a few shadow guards.

"Mr. Rhys, we are at your command," Isfrid said respectfully.

Dustin handed the piece of paper with the safe house's address to Isfrid. "This is where the murderer is hiding. Bring your men and head over there right now."

"What about you, Mr. Rhys?"

"I have something else to do. Hurry up and go," Dustin urged.

"Yes, Sir!" Isfrid dared not hesitate and immediately left the place.

Seeing that, Azalea fell silent with a smile on her face.

Upon walking out of the restaurant, Dustin called Ruth. "Ruth, is your sister at home?"

"She left with a group of shadow guards after receiving a call not long ago. What's the matter?" Ruth replied.

"She left? Where did she go?" Dustin continued asking.

"I think she went to Basilisk Hall."

"Your sister is in danger. Send help over immediately!" Then, Dustin hung up the phone and drove straight to Basilisk Hall.

A masquerade party that was only open to the cream of society was going on in Basilisk Hall. Everyone was getting wild. After all, they were all unrecognizable with the masks on. Hence, they were seizing the chance to indulge themselves in debaucherous fun.

With a cigarette in her mouth, Jayla sat on the couch and watched the skimpy guests on the dance floor, who were getting amatory with one another.

As a whole, the party looked like a dissipated one.

Right then, a bodyguard walked up to her and reported in a low voice, "Ms. Grant, Natasha is here."

"Oh, that's fast. Bring her in." Jayla put on a playful smile.

"Yes." The bodyguard obeyed and went away.

Seconds later, Natasha came in with the bodyguard. Looking at how wild the atmosphere of the party was, she couldn't help but frown.

"This is way too much. They don't have any self-restraint at all," Natasha thought.

Jayla stood up with a glass of red wine in her hand. "Natasha, I didn't expect you to have the guts to come over."

"I came here only for the truth; who exactly framed my father?" Natasha demanded.

Before this, Natasha received a call from Jayla and was told that the latter had a way of saving Hector. Hence, Natasha immediately rushed over.

"Well, get down on your knees if you want to know the answer," Jayla said with a mocking smile.

"Do you

think this is fun?" Natasha furrowed her brows.

"You don't want to kneel? I thought you cared a lot about your father, but now it seems like I'm wrong." Jayla sneered.

"Will you tell me the truth if I fall to my knees?"

"It's not your place to negotiate with me. If you don't want your father to die in prison, do as I say!" Jayla shouted.

After hesitating for a while, Natasha finally kneeled on the floor. She knew Jayla was humiliating her on purpose. However, for the sake of Hector, Natasha had no choice but to swallow her pride.

"What a good daughter!" Jayla curled the corners of her lips into a nasty smirk.

"Now, take off your clothes."

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“What did you say?” Natasha knitted her brows.

“Didn’t you hear me? I said, take off your clothes!” Jayla repeated with her voice raised.

“Don’t you go overboard!” Natasha’s expression was cold. How could she possibly remove her clothes in public? That was extremely humiliating for her!

“So what if I do?” Jayla sneered. “I hold something over you right now, and you got no choice but to listen to me!”

This was the reason she sent Hector to jail-demeaning Natasha.

Jayla muttered inwardly, “This is the price to pay for refusing to get married into the Grant family!”

She needed to make Natasha suffer in order to vent her anger.

“Jayla, you’d better not overstep the line,” Natasha said in a deep voice.

“Natasha, haven’t you figured out what the current situation is?” Jayla laughed wildly. “You’re in my territory. Whatever happens to you depends on me. Hurry up and take off your clothes!”

“Take off!”

“Take off!”

The masked guests began to shout in excitement, and most of them were under the influence.

“It looks like there’s nothing for us to discuss. I’m leaving now.” Natasha turned around to leave, not intending to waste her time anymore.

Jayla was obviously giving her a hard time on purpose.

“Stop right there! Did I say you could leave?” Jayla shouted.

Right then, two female bodyguards stepped forward and blocked Natasha's way.

"Do you

think that I came alone?" Natasha turned around, her face darkened. Natasha knew there would be danger, so she brought a group of shadow guards with her when she left the

house.

"Of course, I knew you came here prepared. But sadly, it's useless." As Jayla spoke, she clapped

her hands.

Soon, a group of formidable masked guards walked in, dragging a few corpses with them.

When Natasha took a closer look, her expression changed in an instant. They were her shadow guards!

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"Are you surprised?" Jayla laughed mockingly. "Your shadow guards are dead. You are on your own now, and I can do whatever I want to you!"

"Jayla, do you know what you're doing?" Having blatantly killed the Harmons' shadow guards was no longer just a simple provocation, but a war declaration.

"Stop making much ado about nothing. It's going to be your turn soon." Jayla shot her a cold smirk and gestured to the guards. "Guards! Hold her down!"

The two female bodyguards obeyed and immediately restrained Natasha from moving around.

"Since you aren't willing to strip off, let me help you, then." Suddenly, Jayla stretched out her hands and ripped Natasha's coat into pieces, exposing her black bra.

"What huge breasts you have, b*tch! No wonder so many men like you." When Jayla saw how busty Natasha was, a hint of jealousy flashed across her

eyes. Not only was Natasha beautiful, but her body figure was also sumptuous.

“She’s indeed a temptress!” Jayla thought.

“Jayla, you’d better not do anything absurd!” Natasha shouted.

“So what if I do? Haven’t you been using your good looks to your advantage? Today I’m going to destroy your face and see how you’re going to live in the future!” With an evil smile, Jayla took out a knife and scratched Natasha’s fair and delicate face fiercely.

Natasha groaned in pain, breaking out in a cold sweat.

“Bitch, this is the consequence of rejecting the Grant family. Since you aren’t willing to get married to Tyler, I’m going to ruin you today!”

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Clenching her teeth, Jayla chewed Natasha up while scratching the latter’s face mercilessly.

“Ahh!” With an ear-piercing wail, Natasha finally passed out due to extreme pain. Her beautiful face was now covered in fresh blood. It was a ghastly sight.

“That was fast, but I haven’t had enough fun yet.” Jayla smiled evilly. “Strip off her clothes and hang her up!”

“Yes!”

The two female bodyguards obeyed and immediately removed Natasha’s clothes until she was only left with her underwear. Then, they hung her in the middle of the dance floor and poured a bucket of icy water down her head.

Natasha shuddered, gradually regaining consciousness.

“Natasha, haven’t you been acting noble and virtuous all the while? Today I’m going to show you what it feels like to be humiliated!” Jayla continued, “See

these people around? They'll be accompanying you tonight. I'm going to take a video of the whole process and send it to your boyfriend for him to enjoy."

"Y-you monster!" Natasha gritted her teeth, her eyes reddening.

"Go ahead and curse me as much as you want." Jayla sneered and turned around to look at the masked men below the stage. "Everyone, I'm sure you have heard of how pretty the daughter of the Harmon family is. Her face is disfigured now, but her body is still flawless. Anyone here wants to take her back to be your servant?"

"Me!"

"No, me!"

"Damn it! She's mine! Don't you try to fight for her with me!"

Overwhelmed by excitement, the men began to fight over Natasha. They, of course, knew what a beauty she was. Hence, how could they possibly give up on the chance of messing with their goddess, who was known to be out of their league?

"Well, since so many of you are interested, whoever pays the highest price will have the opportunity to have her as your servant." Jayla offered with a smile.

"I'll

go first! One million dollars!" A man with a sheep-face mask raised his hand.

"One million only? I'm giving five million!" said another man who had a cow-face mask on.

"Eight million dollars from me!"

"Ten million!"

The men shouted one after another, and the price kept getting higher and higher. They were all from wealthy families. What they lacked wasn't money, but excitement in their lives. As long as they could buy excitement, they were willing to spend a fortune on it.

"Y-you..." Natasha was filled with resentment.

The sheep-masked man suddenly shouted, "50 million!"

Right then, the crowd quieted down in an instant. 50 million dollars wasn't a small amount. Since the man was willing to pay such a high price for something, he shouldn't be underestimated.

Pointing to the sheep-masked man, Jayla said, "Well, it looks like that's the highest price for now. In that case, you are going to be the first." Then, she continued, "As for the rest, queue up for your turns.

As soon as she said that, the crowd erupted in cheers.

"Spending 50 million dollars to make such a sumptuous woman my servant is simply worth it. "The sheep-masked man walked up the stage and sized Natasha's s*xxy body up with his lascivious eyes.

"I'm warning you; don't do anything nonsensical. Otherwise, the Harmons won't let you go!" Natasha squeezed out the words through her gritted teeth.

"Well, at least I won't leave the world with regrets. Moreover, you don't even know who I am, "the man said.

The ones under the stage egged the man on.

Natasha fell into utter despair. She kept struggling to break free but to no avail. Other than watching the man get closer to her, there was nothing else that she could do.

"Here I come, beauty!" The sheep-masked man laughed loudly and pounced on Natasha. "Stop!" Right then, a thunderous, angry shout rang out.

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"Stop!" A thunderous voice rang out, causing the crowd to fall into silence in an instant.

Startled, everyone looked over at once and saw a tall figure walking in, exuding an overwhelming wave of murderous intent. Tension immediately

ensued in the atmosphere, which was on fire just a moment ago. Those who were in revealing clothes couldn't help but

shudder.

"Dustin?" When Natasha saw who it was, a wave of joy flooded her, as if she had found a life

savior.

"So it's you!" Jayla snorted upon taking a closer look at him. "Why do you have to bring trouble on yourself when you can easily avoid it? Today I'm going to let you watch your woman being humiliated!"

"All of you deserve death!" Seeing Natasha being hung up and covered in bloody scratches and wounds, Dustin clenched his fists hard, his expression darkening. A great sense of wrath flooded his soul so intensely that he almost lost his mind.

"Rhys, are you furious? But so what? Your woman is in my hands right now. I can do whatever I want to her." Then, she turned to the sheep-masked man. "Hey, what are you waiting for? Go ahead and enjoy your time with the beauty. You don't have to hold back. Serve her well in front of her man!" Jayla cackled presumptuously.

"I'm loving this!" The sheep-masked man was pumped up.

As he rubbed his hands like he couldn't wait to devour her whole, his body began to tremble in excitement at the same time.

"If you dare to lay a finger on her, I guarantee you that you will have a tragic end!" Dustin

threatened.

"Haha! Not only do I want to touch her, but I also want to lick her all over. What can you do about that?" The sheep-masked man stuck out his tongue deliberately and licked Natasha's leg.

"You're asking for death!" Dustin's face fell, and he flicked his wrist abruptly.

With a swish, a silver needle shot out in an instant and directly pierced the spot between the man's eyebrows.

The sheep-masked man froze; the next second, he collapsed to the floor, having breathed his

last.

That was a bolt from the blue. The remaining guests were scared out of their wits and

screamed in fear.

“How dare you kill someone in my territory? You must have gotten tired of living!” Flying

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A group of bodyguards obeyed at once and dashed over with their weapons drawn.

“Whoever stands in my way will die!” Dustin’s eyes were red as he continued making advances instead of retreating.

All the bodyguards who approached him had their heads severely injured by just one punch from Dustin. None of them survived, and blood was all over the floor. Clearly, Dustin wasn’t

showing them any mercy.

Looking at Dustin, who was soaked in blood, the onlookers scattered away in fear of being the

next target.

After getting rid of the group of bodyguards, Dustin immediately ran up the stage and broke the chains tying Natasha up.

“Are you okay?” When Dustin saw her disfigured face, his heart bled for her. Taking off his coat in a hurry, he wrapped it around her petite body, which was shivering due to the cold.

“We can’t stay here for long. Let’s leave!” Natasha staggered to stand up.

Since the Harmons’ shadow guards had been killed so easily and without anyone knowing, there were obviously skilled fighters hiding in this place.

“Do you think you can leave?” Jayla snorted. “Listen up, lupine guards! Kill this man for me!”

Right then, ten black-clad figures suddenly walked out of the shadows. All of them were masked and had an intimidating aura.

They were the ones who finished off the shadow guards earlier.

“Lupine guards are made up of the best elites. Each of them has fought in countless battles and possesses exceptional fighting skills. With them around, today is going to be the day of your death!”

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“He should feel honored for being able to die at the hands of the lupine guards!”

When the Grants’ highly skilled guards appeared, the rest of the guests became excited, as if they were watching a show.

“This is bad!” Natasha’s expression changed. “Dustin, you don’t have to care about me. Hurry up and leave! Get help from the Harmon family!”

She knew Dustin was strong, but lupine guards were experts when it came to fighting. She would just weigh Dustin down if they tried to escape together.

“What are you talking about? How can I possibly leave you alone here?” Dustin reached out and grabbed her hand.

“But it’s going to be difficult to escape if you bring me along.” Natasha frowned. She didn’t want Dustin to risk his life because of her.

“Who said that I was going to escape?” Dustin looked around with a piercing gaze. “I’m going to kill all of them tonight!”

“Stop being insolent! Do you even have the ability to do that?” Jayla sneered.

All the lupine guards were carefully selected by Tyler. Even the Harmons’ shadow guards were not a match for them, let alone a country bumpkin.

“You can see for yourself.” Dustin provoked, his expression indifferent.

“Well, since you’re so desperate to die, I don’t mind making your wish come true.” With a wave of her hand, Jayla ordered, “Elton, kill him!”

The leader of the lupine guards, Elton Pearson, obeyed and directly drew out his weapon, closing in on Dustin. Although the former wasn’t making any sound, he was emanating a strong and overwhelming aura.

As soon as Dustin was within his attack range, Elton immediately sped up and swung his machete to strike at him. “Die!”

It was a powerful charge.

However, the moment Dustin threw a punch at him, Elton’s attack fell apart at the seams in an instant. His simple and straightforward punch directly pierced Elton’s chest before the latter could swing his weapon down for an attack.

Elton widened his eyes in shock at the sight of Dustin’s bloody fist that had penetrated his body. It had all happened too fast. Elton barely had time to react.

Then, Dustin swung his arm and hurled Elton to the wall, leaving a patch of blood on it.

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Everyone was dumbfounded at the sight before them. Elton was an extremely formidable existence, but now he had been killed by Dustin in just one move.

It was simply hard to believe!

“H-how is this even possible?” Looking at Elton’s corpse, Jayla was stunned. Her face was full of disbelief.

“That was the powerful leader of the lupine guards, and now he’s dead?” she muttered inwardly.

“How dare you kill our leader?”

“Today is going to be your death day!”

After recovering from their shock, the remaining nine lupine guards flew off the handle and surged forward at him with their weapons drawn.

Expressionless, Dustin stomped his foot all of a sudden.

With a loud boom, the floor cracked the next second. A burst of violent true energy then presented itself in an instant and smashed fiercely onto the guards.

As if they had been knocked down by a train, the lupine guards were sent flying across the air, blood gushing out of their mouths. All it took was a stomp, and every one of the lupine guards died before they could even land on the floor.

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Instantly, silence ensued.

Looking at the lupine guards who had drawn their last breath, everyone was so terrified that they were lost for words. They couldn't believe that all nine guards had lost their lives because of Dustin's stomp.

When Jayla came back to her senses, she blew up at once and shouted, "How dare you kill my lupine guards!"

Each and every one of the lupine guards had been carefully trained by the Grant family. Now that ten of them were dead, how could Jayla possibly put up with it?

"It won't end with just their deaths; you are going to pay back for what you did!" With a cold expression on his face, Dustin slowly walked closer to Jayla, his eyes darkening.

"W-what do you want to do? I'm warning you; don't do anything absurd!" Jayla took two steps back in fright.

As if she felt that it was embarrassing to retreat, she stopped at once and held her head high, putting on an arrogant look.

She was the daughter of the Grant family. Why was she afraid of someone like Dustin?

“You’ve got to pay back twice the harm you’ve inflicted on Natasha!” Dustin threatened.

“Don’t you dare!” Jayla shot daggers at him. “I have the Grants behind me. If you lay a finger on me, even a divine being can’t save you!”

“Really?” Suddenly, Dustin grabbed Jayla by the neck and lifted her off the floor.

Kicking her legs frantically, Jayla began to cough violently. She struggled to break free from his grip but failed. It was getting difficult for her to breathe. Soon, the fear of death gradually flooded her mind.

“L-let me go! Or else, you’re going to have a miserable death!” Jayla shouted.

“Dustin, don’t hurt her!” Right then, Natasha couldn’t help but stop him.

Although she hated Jayla, the latter wasn’t someone who could be easily provoked. If Jayla was hurt, it would lead to the Grant family seeking revenge on them.

“She’s too arrogant. She will only continue to overstep the mark if she is not taught a lesson.” Dustin tightened his grip around Jayla’s neck.

Jayla’s face flushed; she couldn’t breathe.

“Stop!” A loud shout suddenly came from the door.

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“Stop!” A loud shout suddenly came from the door.

The next second, Jacob rushed in fiercely with a group of elites from the Harmon family.

When he saw the lupine guards lying dead on the floor, his expression changed at once.” Dustin, let go of Ms. Grant immediately! Stop making mistakes!”

“She has disfigured Natasha’s face, not to mention the barrage of insults. Today she has to be given a tit-for-tat,” Dustin said coldly.

Shifting his gaze to Natasha, whose face was covered in blood, Jacob couldn't help frowning. After a moment's hesitation, he bit the bullet and said, "Don't worsen the situation, Dustin.

first!"

Let her go

"Let her go?" Dustin turned around. "As an elder, aren't you supposed to protect Natasha? She has been severely injured, and now you're telling me to free the perpetrator?"

"You can't afford to offend Ms. Grant. Don't drag us down!" Jacob shouted.

"That's right! Let go of Ms. Grant now!" The rest of the Harmons echoed.

Jayla was Tyler's sister. If something bad were to happen to her here, the entire Harmon family was going to suffer the consequences.

"What if I refuse?" Dustin narrowed his eyes.

"Don't force me to attack you!" Jacob's face fell.

Most of the people with him slowly drew their weapons, their gazes filled with hostility. In an instant, Dustin ended up being their target.

At the sight of that, Jayla laughed complacently. "Rhys, do you see this? Even the Harmons have no guts to offend me. Get your hands off of me right now! Who do you think you are to mess with me?"

No matter how strong a fighter was, in front of the powerful Grant family, they would still

have to bow down to them.

"Are you going to stand by and do nothing when your family member has been attacked? Is the Harmon family so weak?" Dustin glanced around with a piercing gaze.

Those who met his eyes couldn't help but feel a little guilty.

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“Rhys! An outsider like you is in no place to boss us around!” Jacob was exasperated.

“Since none of you has the guts to stand up for Natasha, I’ll do it, then! I don’t mind offending the Grants!” Dustin opened his hand, and a steel knife slid into his palm. “Today I’m going to take an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth! No intercession is allowed!”

As soon as he finished saying that, he scratched Jayla’s face with the sharp blade, leaving a deep, bloody mark.

“Ah!” Jayla exclaimed shrilly in pain.

“Don’t you dare!”

“You son of a b*tch! Stop right now!”

Jacob and the rest of the members of the Harmon family shouted, their facial expressions changing drastically.

However, Dustin didn’t care about them at all. He drew another line across Jayla’s face, forming a huge “X” on it.

“Rhys, do you know what you are doing? If you hurt Ms. Grant, even the Emperor won’t be able to save you!” Jacob was furious.

Dustin remained silent as he continued to wave his knife at Jayla, destroying her looks.

“Ah! My face! Ahh!” Jayla screamed in agony.

It was not only physical pain but also mental torture. Every woman cared about her appearance. Now that her face was ruined, how was she going to live her life in the future?

After making ten scratches on Jayla’s face, Dustin finally stopped. At the moment, Jayla was already covered in blood, looking acutely harrowing.

“This guy is crazy!”

“Do you know how distinguished Ms. Grant is? You are going to be done for disfiguring her face!”

Everyone was startled by Dustin’s action. Although they were angry at the same time, they dared not step forward.

“You’re dead meat, all of you! How dare you ruin my face! I’m going to make your entire family pay for this!” Jayla screamed, looking as ferocious as a devil.

“Ms. Grant, this has nothing to do with us! It’s all on him!” Jacob hurriedly explained.

“I don’t care! Unless you kill him for me, I’m going to destroy the Harmons!” Jayla yelled.

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Hearing that, Jacob and the rest were stunned. After recovering from their shock, they shifted their fierce gazes to Dustin. It seemed like they were going to do as Jayla ordered.

“Move! Out of my way!”

While Jacob and his people were dithering, a series of noises came from the door. Then, a butler of the Grant family rushed in with a group of elite guards.

Seeing that, Jayla laughed wildly. “My reinforcements have arrived. Today, all of you are going to die!”

Jacob and his group were in a blue funk. If they hadn’t hesitated earlier in taking Dustin down, the Harmons would’ve been able to stay out of trouble.

“Rhys, weren’t you arrogant earlier? Why aren’t you saying anything now? Let me tell you, it’s too late to be scared! I’m going to make you pay me back a hundred times for what you did to me! It’s over for you!” Jayla roared maliciously.

“Your life is in my hands now, so you’d better not push my buttons.” Dustin’s voice was cold.

“So what if I do? Do you dare to take my life? Go ahead, then! Otherwise, I’m going to kill you! Not only do I want you dead, but I also want you to witness how I would torture your woman! I will make her suffer!” Jayla cackled like she would be having the last laugh.

“Well, since you wish to die, I’ll grant your wish, then.” Raising his weapon, Dustin directly slashed her neck.

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“Dustin, don’t!”

“Mother f*cker! Don’t you dare!”

When Dustin raised his weapon, everyone was shocked and immediately yelled to stop him.

However, Dustin turned a deaf ear to their shouts and decisively struck at Jayla.

Jayla’s wild laugh came to a stop in an instant. The next second, her head fell from her neck, rolling on the floor like a ball for a while before it stopped.

Her widened eyes were filled with disbelief. As if she didn’t expect Dustin to kill her for real in front of so many people. The power and status that she had been bragging about were completely of no use at this moment.

Everything was over for her.

“S-she died?”

Looking at Jayla’s chopped-off head, everyone was scared out of their wits. That was the daughter of the Grant family, who was also Tyler’s sister, and at the moment, she had gone the way of all flesh.

“This is bad!” Natasha paled.

If Dustin had only killed the lupine guards, there were still chances to turn the situation around. However, he murdered Jayla. This was a crime that nobody could afford to bear.

“This guy has really lost his mind!”

“Fuck! How can he kill Ms. Grant? He’s daring alright!”

A short moment of silence later, the scene went into an uproar. Everyone had their eyes fixed on Dustin as if they were looking at a crazy man.

After all, who else would have the guts to provoke the Grants other than someone who had gone insane?

“Scourge! He is a scourge!” Jacob was hot under the collar.

Dustin had already committed a severe crime by disfiguring Jayla, and now he even finished her off! It seemed like the Harmons were doomed to be in the soup this time.

“Bastard, how dare you kill Ms. Jayla!” The butler of the Grant family roared.

Now that Jayla had died, those at the scene wouldn’t be able to steer clear of the consequences.

“She wanted death; all I did was grant her wish,” Dustin said indifferently.

1/2

“You’re still acting so arrogant when your last hour has come?” With a wave of his hand, the butler ordered, “Guards! Tear him limb from limb to avenge Ms. Jayla’s death!”

“Attack!” The group of elites immediately drew their weapons and charged forward.

“Let me see who has the guts to attack Sir Rhys!”

Right then, Nelson led a large group of Flame Dragon Gang members and rushed in aggressively.

“Damn, how dare you attempt to attack Sir Rhys? You’re courting death! Everyone, attack!” Nelson raised his weapon and dashed over upon seeing Dustin trapped in the middle.

Right then, hundreds of Flame Dragon Gang members broke into a fight with the elites of the Grant family. Although the latter were well-trained fighters, the former had the strength in numbers. It didn’t take long for the Grants’ guards to be defeated.

“Where did these people come from?” Jacob exchanged confused glances with his men.

“Mr. Jacob, it seems like they are from the Flame Dragon Gang,” someone replied.

“Flame Dragon Gang? Why are they meddling in this?” Jacob found it a little strange.

Although the Flame Dragon Gang was quite well-known in Millsburg, they weren’t a match for the Grant family. After all, the Grants had the authority to mobilize the troops. Hence, how could the Flame Dragon Gang fight against them?

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The brawl finally ended ten minutes later.

Although dozens of Flame Dragon Gang disciples were injured in the process, they managed to completely annihilate the Grants’ elite men.

“Sir, I did not fail you. I have eliminated all these pests!” Nelson and his men rushed toward Dustin eagerly.

“Well done. It must have been tiring.” Dustin nodded.

“Not at all. It’s our honor to serve you!” Nelson responded with a grin.

“Clean this place up. Don’t leave any evidence behind.” Dustin ordered.

“Yes, Sir!”

“Boys, it’s time to clean up!” Nelson hollered at his men, and they immediately got to work.

“I didn’t know you were the Flame Dragon Gang’s leader.” Natasha’s surprised expression quickly turned into a frown. “Still, even with the gang’s help, we can’t win against the Grants. We’re in real trouble this time.”

“The Grants might be powerful, but that doesn’t mean they can’t do whatever they please. There’s always someone more powerful than them,” Dustin replied nonchalantly.

“As if it’d be that easy. In the Southern province, the only two families who have a chance of winning against the Grants are the Murray family and the Hill family.” Natasha sighed. “You were too reckless this time, Dustin. Killing Jayla was a terrible move!”

“They wouldn’t have let me live anyway, so I might as well get rid of them first.” Dustin seemed unbothered. Since they already had their eyes on him, he might as well make it worthwhile.

“But…” Natasha didn’t know what to say.

“Let’s forget about this. We should focus more on your injury. Let’s go and treat it.” Dustin gathered her into his arms and walked outside. His needle might have stopped the bleeding, but medication was necessary to prevent her lacerations from scarring.

“Hold it right there!” Jacob shouted. “Do you think you can just leave after getting into such a huge mess?”

“Don’t worry. I’ll take responsibility for my actions,” Dustin responded before walking out.

“Follow him. Don’t let him escape.” Jacob ordered two of his men.

“Yes, Sir!” The two men answered in unison and went after Dustin and Natasha.

There was no way the Grants would take this matter lightly. If Dustin were to run away now, the Grants might shift their target to the Harmon family instead, so they had to make sure to keep a close eye on him.

“Lord Horst, quite a few of our men died today. What a loss.” Nelson’s men grumbled softly.

“Of course, it isn’t a loss! Men are supposed to be wild like this!” Nelson thumped his chest proudly. “I’m sure today’s battle showed Sir Rhys just how strong we are and improved our image!”

Just then, one of his men rushed over in panic. “Bad news, Lord Horst! We’re in trouble!”

“What’s all the fuss about? You act as though it’s something I can’t handle.” Nelson huffed, judging that his men must still lack experience given how easy it was to scare them.

When will they ever grow up?

“Look at this, Sir!” The other man shakily held out a badge.

“It looks familiar.” Nelson was puzzled.

“Of course it is! It belongs to the Grants!” His subordinate wailed.

“The Grants? What do you mean?” Nelson was still confused.

The subordinate delivered the shocking news. “The men we just killed were the Grants’ elites!”

“What?! The Grants?” Nelson exclaimed, wide-eyed. “A-are you serious?”

“I would never joke about something like this. Just look at the badge!” His subordinate whimpered. “Sir, you’ll have to take care of this mess now.”

“Take care of it? Yeah, right. I’m just dead meat now.” Nelson fell to the floor dejectedly. He would soon disappear from the face of the earth.

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Meanwhile, at the Grants' mansion, Tyler Grant was practicing with a terrain model.

As a gifted individual, he excelled in everything he did, including terrain model training. Since few could compete against him, he usually trained by himself.

"Something terrible has happened, Mr. Grant!" One of the butlers barged into his study anxiously.

"Get out," Tyler ordered icily without looking at the butler.

"But-

The butler swallowed the rest of his words when he received Tyler's menacing glare and scuttled back to the door to wait patiently.

It took a while for Tyler to finish his practice. When he was finished, he asked, "What is it?"

"Sir, we just received news that Ms. Jayla was killed!" The butler cried in despair.

"She was killed?" Tyler's brows furrowed. "What happened?"

"She wanted to take revenge for you, so she set up a trap for Natasha Harmon." The butler quickly briefed Tyler on what happened.

"That idiot. How could she do something like that without permission?" Tyler humphed, indifferent to the news.

"What?" The butler was dismayed.

Shouldn't Tyler be boiling with rage and start looking for the murderer right now? Why was he so calm? And how could he call his sister an idiot? He was being too cruel.

'Sir, Ms. Layla was killed because she wanted to get even at Natasha Harmon for breaking off the engagement with you." The butler pressed.

"When did I ask her to meddle in my affairs?" Tyler retorted coldly, rendering the butler speechless.

The butler couldn't help feeling that his master was becoming more cold-hearted these days.

"Who killed her?" Tyler asked abruptly.

"An asshole named Dustin Rhys!" The butler told him.

"Dustin Rhys?" Tyler raised an eyebrow. "Natasha's little boy toy?"

"That's him!" The butler nodded his head. "That reckless bastard dared to chop off Ms. Layla's head right before everyone's eyes!"

"Alright. You can leave now." Tyler waved the butler away indifferently.

"Sir, don't you plan to avenge her at all?" The butler couldn't stop himself from asking.

"I have my plans. I don't need you to tell me what to do. Get out." Tyler responded calmly.

"Yes, Sir." The butler left with his head lowered and without saying another word.

He can't understand why Tyler was being so calm despite knowing who the murderer was. It was too peculiar.

"She may be an idiot, but she's still a Grant." Tyler lifted his cup of tea and softly called out. Euria."

Instantly, a woman donning black clothes and a raindrop-designed mask appeared.

"Master, you called for me?" The woman responded, kneeling on one knee before him with her head bowed.

"Have some fun with this Dustin, but don't kill him so quickly," Tyler ordered. "Yes, Master," Euria answered before disappearing without a trace, like a ghost.

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Chapter 530

Back in the Harmon estate.

“There, all done. You’ll be fine in a few days.” Dustin carefully applied medicine to Natasha’s wound and bandaged it up nicely.

Although the wound was shallow, it would still hurt.

“Will it leave a scar on my face?” Natasha picked up a mirror and examined her face worriedly.

“Why? Do you doubt my skills?” Dustin asked in mock displeasure.

“I’m just worried I’ll look ugly if I have a scar, and you won’t like me anymore,” Natasha answered seriously.

“Don’t be silly.” Dustin was amused. “I promise you, your face won’t scar. Besides, even if it does, you’ll still be the prettiest person in the world to me!”

“Hmph! Such a sweet talker.” A small smile appeared on Natasha’s face, and her worry eased. Although she wasn’t as superficial as other ladies, she was also afraid of turning ugly.

“Dustin, get your ass over here!” Someone suddenly roared, sending the door flying with a powerful kick, and a group of people led by Trent instantly filled the room.

“What are you doing, Uncle Trent?” Natasha asked with a frown.

“It’s none of your business! We’re here for him!” Trent pointed at Dustin and yelled. “How dare you kill Ms. Layla! I’m here to drag you to the Grants. You better apologize to them immediately!”

“But Dustin did that to save me!” Natasha argued.

“Why are you still defending him?” Trent seethed. “Do you know that if we don’t hand him over to the Grants, we’ll have to face their wrath instead?”

"I don't care. All I know is that Dustin saved me, so I need to protect him. You want to get to him? Over my dead body!" Natasha stepped forward, her glare menacing.

"Y-you're hopeless!" Trent exclaimed, livid.

"Natasha Harmon! Do you intend to ruin our entire family because of him?" Jacob yelled.

"He should pay for what he did. Since he was the one who caused this mess, we shouldn't have to bear the brunt of his mistakes!"

"Exactly! We must arrest him and hand him over to the Grant!"

Members of the Harmon family continuously shouted out in anger and indignation.

"Shut up!" Natasha roared.

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“Shut up!” Natasha roared.

“If it weren’t for Dustin, all of you would have died during the family gathering! It’s bad enough that you aren’t helping him in times of need, but how could you guys add fuel to the fire instead?” Her words silenced the arrogant people.

“Forget about those righteous views of yours, Natasha. One must pay for their crimes. Dustin made a mistake, so he should be punished!” Kate sneered.

“She’s right. We don’t want to suffer just because of him!” The crowd echoed.

They couldn’t care less about Dustin’s previous contributions and were willing to sacrifice him if it meant placating the Grants.

“A-are you guys going against me?” Natasha demanded agitatedly.

“Enough with the nonsense. For the sake of our family, we must arrest him today!” Jacob incited. “Give the command, Trent!”

“Don’t hate me, Dustin. You have yourself to blame for making such a huge mistake.” Trent gestured to the others and commanded. “Tie him up!”

“I’d like to see who dares!” Suddenly, Natasha fished out a gun from the bedside and pointed it toward the group of people.

“You wretch! Are you trying to rebel against us?” Trent yelled.

“Don’t force my hand, Uncle Trent!” Natasha warned.

“Well, I don’t believe you have the guts to shoot us!”

Jacob began to step forward confidently, and without hesitation, Natasha pulled the trigger.

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There was an ear-splitting bang as the bullet embedded itself inches before Jacob's foot, making the man jump back in fear.

"H-how could you pull the trigger on me?" Jacob cried, outraged. He never expected Natasha to be the type to do something like that to her elder. If the bullet's trajectory had been slightly off the mark, he would've lost his foot!

"You better not mess around, Uncle Jacob." Natasha threatened frostily.

"How dare you!" Trent roared. "Natasha Harmon, he is your uncle! You'd be disgracing our family if you had hurt him just now!"

"I don't want to hurt anyone, so you better not force me to," Natasha responded unrelentingly.

"Y-you bastard! Do you intend to betray your family for that boy?" Trent was furious.

The Harmon family had always lived by a rule-nothing mattered more than the family's interests, which meant that they could sacrifice anyone if it meant saving their family. Therefore, Natasha's contradictory actions were seen as a sign of disloyalty.

"All I care about right now is protecting Dustin." Natasha stood her ground.

"How many bullets do you have, Natasha? Do you even have enough to kill all of us?" Kate taunted.

"You can try." Natasha abruptly turned the gun toward Kate, making the latter pale and hide behind her father, worried that Natasha might actually do something outrageous and reckless

out of love.

"Are you out of your mind, Natasha? We are your family!" Jessica could no longer remain silent. She was worried her daughter might impulsively hurt someone, making her the family's enemy.

When Natasha didn't respond, Jessica turned to Dustin and snapped. "Dustin, are you going to drag my daughter into the mess you created?"

"Natasha, put the gun down." Dustin reached out and pressed the gun downward to lower it, before turning to face the rest of the people. "I was the one who killed Layla, so the Grants will naturally look for me if they want revenge. Why are all of you so worked up?"

"Hmph! As if things are that simple. Who knows whether you'll drag our family down with you?" Kate snorted.

"I'm not even close to your family, so why would I drag you down with me?" Dustin answered nonchalantly. "You guys being afraid of the Grants is none of my business, but if you're trying to capture me to get in their good graces, I'm afraid that's impossible."

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"Nice speech, but what makes you think you have a say in this?" Jacob sneered. "Why not? I've always made the choices for my own life." Dustin responded.

"This is our territory! We decide your fate!" Jacob declared haughtily.

"I don't want to fight, but I'll have no choice if you continue to provoke me," Dustin warned.

"You sure are a stubborn one. Let's see how strong you are!" Jacob drew his blade and swung it toward Dustin.

"Stop!"

Out of the blue, a solemn voice boomed. Slowly, a white-haired elderly man strode in with the aid of a walking cane.

"Father?"

"Grandfather?"

Everyone was visibly taken aback to see the old man, who had stepped back from the limelight eight years ago and no longer concerned himself with family affairs. They were puzzled as to why he was there.

"What are you doing here, Father?" Trent welcomed his father hurriedly.

Jacob stopped mid-attack and stood to the side respectfully as well.

“You guys would have destroyed this place if I hadn’t come!” Andrew humphed.

“Father, we still have some things to take care of. Why don’t you go back to your room and rest if you’re feeling unwell?”

Trent reached out to help but Andrew swatted his son’s hand away. “Are you trying to say that an old coot like me has no right to interfere with family affairs anymore?”

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“Of course not, Father. You will always be the head of the family.” Trent smiled sheepishly.

“Fine. Since you said that, I’ll give you my opinion.” Andrew surveyed the room. “Dustin has saved my life, as well as helped our family multiple times. We are in his debt, so anyone who tries to take him today will be going against me!”

“What?”

The group shared dismayed glances. They never expected Andrew to stand up for Dustin during this crucial time.

“Father, this bastard killed one of the Grants’ daughters! He will only drag us deeper into this mess!” Trent rebutted.

“Trent is right! We’re doing this for the greater good of the family!” Jacob seconded.

“You bunch say such lofty things when you’re just cowards!” Andrew struck the floor with his cane forcefully. “The Grants have been stepping all over us, and instead of standing up against them, you choose to grovel and please them? What an embarrassment to our family!”

“Fath-”

“Silence!” Andrew cut off Trent’s words. “Our family has gone through all sorts of trials since its existence. How could we embarrass our ancestors by losing our dignity because of something like this?”

The Harmons lowered their heads in shame, unable to deny that the Grants had shaken them greatly.

“Listen carefully!” Andrew announced. “Our priority should be to save Hector, and not be sitting ducks!”

He made Hector his successor because of how righteous and brave his son was, but now that Hector was captured, the entire family was thrown into chaos.

“Grandfather, we need to borrow the Grants’ power if we want to save Uncle Hector. Our best option is to hand Dustin over to them in exchange for Uncle Trent.” Kate coaxed.

“Nonsense!” Andrew glared at his granddaughter. “The Grants were the ones who framed and imprisoned your uncle, yet you think they’ll help us? What a joke!”

“What? Mr. Hector was imprisoned by the Grants?”

The crowd was dismayed to hear this. After all, framing the head of another family was not a small matter.

“Father, please refrain from making claims without evidence! There are ears everywhere.” Trent reminded seriously.

“Evidence, you say? Sure!” Andrew turned around and called out. “Isfrid? Bring him in.”

Immediately, the leader of the shadow guards dragged a man into the room. The man wore a hood that made it difficult to identify his face and was tightly bound from head to toe.

“See this man? He’s the real murderer!” Andrew yanked off the man’s hood, exposing a familiar face.

It was Hector’s face!

“Mr. Hector?”

Everyone was puzzled by the sight. Hadn’t Hector been captured? What was he doing here?

“Yeah, right. He’s merely wearing a prosthetic mask!”

Andrew sank his fingers into the man’s face and pulled, revealing skin with a sickly pallor.

“I-it’s fake?” The crowd exclaimed, stunned. They never imagined that something like this existed in real life, and it was shockingly realistic too! It was so well made that it nearly fooled

everyone.

“Do all of you understand now? Hector was framed, and the ones behind this are the Grants! Are you still going to suck up to those treacherous bastards?” Andrew seethed, rendering everyone else silent.

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Chapter 533

The Harmon family had placed their hope in the Grant family’s help before knowing the truth, but now, they finally understood that running away in fear was useless. If the Grants were willing to go as far as to frame the leader of the Harmon family, there was no way they would care about Hector’s survival.

“What? Cat got your tongue? Remember to use your head next time!” Andrew reprimanded them before turning to look at Dustin. “Dustin, I’m so sorry you had to suffer because I didn’t educate them properly.”

“Not at all, Sir Andrew. Thank you for defending me in time.” Dustin smiled in gratitude.

Although the Harmon family had a few ungrateful individuals, there were still people who were reasonable and just.

“I feel so ashamed... I don't know what would have happened to our family if you hadn't helped us catch the real murderer.” Andrew sighed.

Their family prided itself on being a powerful family with countless elites. Yet, when something happened to their leader, it was a young outsider who saved the day.

“Father, it was our shadow guards who caught the killer. What does it have to do with that brat?” Jacob mumbled in displeasure.

“You fool!” Andrew snapped. “If Dustin hadn't used himself as bait to expose the killer's whereabouts, do you think that the shadow guards could have captured that man?”

“What? Dustin caught the culprit?” The crowd was astonished to hear that.

“Dustin helped us so much, yet all of you wanted to harm him instead! What a bunch of ungrateful bastards!” Andrew's blood boiled. “All of you here shall kneel before our ancestral altar and repent your actions!”

Hearing this, the group of people scuttled away dejectedly, letting the room quiet down once

more.

“Thank you for coming, Grandfather, or things would have escalated.” Natasha let out a breath of relief. She had been worried about being caught between a rock and a hard place if the two parties began fighting.

“An old man like me might not be much use anymore, but I can still take care of those brats easily.” Andrew flashed a comforting grin. He had just displayed what it meant to be the head of a patriarchal family.

“Grandfather, how should we deal with this man?” Natasha turned her attention to the

murderer.

“Since we’ve caught the real killer, we must restore your father’s innocence,” Andrew stated

earnestly. “I’ll take a few men with me to visit Sir Moran and explain things to him immediately.”

“Thank you so much, Grandfather.” Natasha nodded.

“Silly girl. There’s no need to thank me. I’ll be off now.” Andrew smiled before leaving with

his men.

“Get some rest, Natasha. I’ll visit you again tomorrow.” Dustin also bid her farewell.

“Can’t you stay with me?” Natasha pleaded, reluctant to be alone.

“I can’t. I’m currently the Grants’ wanted criminal. However, I’ll be coming over to reapply your wound dressing tomorrow.” Dustin consoled her.

“Alright, then. Be careful.” Natasha didn’t press.

“Goodnight.” Dustin smiled and left the room. He was secretly followed by two people, hidden in the darkness.

The night quickly flew by. Early in the next morning, a military vehicle slowly rolled up to the entrance of the Harmon estate.

When the car door opened, a haggard-looking Hector emerged.

“Mr. Hector? He’s back!” The guards at the entrance lit up upon seeing Hector and dashed in to spread the word.

Soon, Natasha and the others came rushing out to greet the man.

“Dad, you’re back! How are you feeling? Are you hurt anywhere?” Natasha fussed over Hector, surprised to see him.

“I’m fine. Sir Moran let me out as soon as they realized that I had been framed,” Hector answered, smiling.

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Chapter 534

The previous night had been a nightmare. Fortunately, the truth was out, and nothing much happened to him.

Suddenly, Hector noticed something, and his smile stiffened. "Natasha, your face..."

"It's just a minor injury," Natasha replied indifferently.

"What happened?" Hector frowned.

"A lot of things happened while you were gone, Hector." Jesicca calmly briefed him on what happened.

Hector was livid. "The Grants again? They're crossing the line!"

It was bad enough that they set him up, but they have even hurt his daughter? That was unacceptable!

"Don't worry, Dad. I'm fine now." Natasha consoled.

"It's my fault, Natasha. You suffered because I was useless." Hector blamed himself. If he had known how despicable the Grants were, he would have never agreed to the marriage proposal.

"Nonsense, Dad. We're lucky just to have you back. Let's talk more inside." Smiling, Natasha took her father's arm and walked into the estate.

Just as they arrived at the meeting room, their butler rushed into the room. "Sir, the Grants just sent us a letter. Please have a look." The butler held up an envelope and passed it to Hector politely.

"What?" Hector's expression darkened after reading the letter.

"What's wrong, Dad?" Natasha leaned closer and soon frowned.

The letter only consisted of a few words, but they couldn't be more threatening. To sum things up,

the Grants were blaming the Harmon family for Layla Grant's death, and they claimed that Dustin was the one who ordered the Harmon family to do so.

Now, the Harmon family had two choices. The first was to hand the culprit over and grovel for forgiveness for three days. The second was to carry out the wedding as planned.

They could only choose one of the two choices. If they refused, the Grants would come at them in full force, wreaking havoc.

"It seems like Tyler intends to use his sister's death as an excuse to force me to marry him." Natasha frowned, surprised. She thought the Grants would use other backhanded methods, so she didn't expect them to be so forward.

The Harmon family now had no choice but to choose between submission and war.

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"Darling, Tyler seems to like you a lot. I think you should marry him." Jessica coaxed. Tyler and Natasha were still engaged, so the best solution would be to use their marriage to resolve this conflict.

"He doesn't like me-he just likes himself. I'm nothing but a tool to him," Natasha retorted icily.

"That's impossible. He's willing to resolve this issue peacefully. Isn't it obvious enough?" Jessica continued to persuade.

"He's someone who doesn't care about his own sister's death. Do you think he's still a good person?" Natasha shot back.

"But..." Jessica didn't know what to say.

"Tyler is a power-hungry person. Natasha would never be happy if she married him. We have to reevaluate this marriage." Hector announced, displeased with the situation.

Previously, he had held out hope for the Grants, but he was now utterly disappointed. There was no way he would watch as his daughter jumped into this pit of fire.

“Hector, it’s clearly written that if Natasha doesn’t marry him, we’ll have to deal with the Grants’ wrath. When the time comes...” Jessica hesitated. She knew that their family wouldn’t be able to withstand the Grants’ retaliation.

“We will face this battle head-on.” Hector inhaled deeply, his gaze turning determined. “If the Grants insist on challenging us, we’ll rise to the occasion. Worst case scenario, our families will no longer be friends.”

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Chapter 535

The next morning, in the president’s office of the Nicholson Corp., Dahlia was sipping a cup of coffee as she went through sheets of financial statements.

Just then, someone knocked on her door.

“Come in.” Dahlia put her

cup

down.

“You called for me, Ms. Nicholson?” Dustin pushed the door open and entered. As Chief Security Officer, he needed to check in at the company every day.

“Where were you last night? I couldn’t reach you on the phone.” Dahlia probed just as he stepped in.

“My friend got into some trouble, so I went to help out.” Dustin grinned sheepishly.

“Your friend? It isn’t Natasha Harmon, is it?” Dahlia’s brow rose in suspicion. “No wonder you were so enthusiastic, it turns out you were on a date with a chick.”

Dustin cleared his throat and quickly changed the subject before Dahlia became jealous. “You didn’t call me over just to talk about this, did you, Ms. Nicholson?”

“As if I’m that bored.” Dahlia retorted and rolled her eyes. “An important client is arriving later, and we have to serve her well. Make sure you take care of all matters related to security.”

“No problem.” Dustin nodded.

“It’s almost time for us to meet at the café downstairs. Let’s go.” Dahlia glanced at her watch before grabbing her purse and walking out of the room. Dustin quickly followed suit.

The two of them went downstairs and walked into the café next door. As soon as they sat down, a bright red Ferrari slowly pulled up to the entrance.

The door swung open, and a woman in a red bodycon dress stepped out. Her vibrant scarlet lips, beautiful face, and voluptuous figure were striking, and her long, smooth legs seemed to go on for miles, and her black, sheer pantyhoses only made her more alluring than ever.

“She’s here!” Dahlia sprung up as soon as the woman walked into the shop. Dahlia extended her hand with a kind smile. “Hello, Ms. Larson. I’m Dahlia Nicholson. Nice to meet you.”

“I didn’t think that Nicholson Corp.’s new president would be a woman. How interesting.” Ms. Larson removed her sunglasses, revealing her surprised expression.

“You flatter me, Miss. Please take a seat.” Dahlia gestured to the seat beside her.

“And who might this handsome man be?” Ms. Larson gave Dustin a flirty smile as she scanned

him from head to toe.

“This is our Chief Security Officer, Dustin Rhys. He’s responsible for our security.” Dahlia

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introduced.

“My safety is in your hands now, Mr. Rhys.” Ms. Larson reached out a hand for Dustin to shake.

"It's my duty." Dustin smiled softly and shook her outstretched hand. "You seem familiar, Ms. Larson. Have we met before?" Dustin just couldn't shake off the feeling that they knew each other.

Ms. Larson giggled. "Your flirting skills still need some work, Mr. Rhys. It's too old-fashioned.

"Dustin!" Dahlia glared, annoyed. How could he flirt with her client in front of her?

"I must have mistaken you for someone else." Dustin smiled apologetically.

"I'm so sorry, Ms. Larson. He's very inexperienced. Please forgive him." Dahlia apologized, embarrassed.

"It's alright. I understand. Men are always like that." Ms. Larson smirked teasingly, slowly crossing her s*x*y legs elegantly.

"Let's get down to business, Ms. Larson." Dahlia quickly changed the topic. "I suggest

building a casino on the newly developed land. Please take a look at my proposal." She handed a document to Ms. Larson.

"Let me see." Ms. Larson accepted the document and began looking through it, but for some reason, she kept peeking at Dustin.

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Chapter 536

Ms. Larson's gaze was lustful as she peeked at Dustin, who met her eyes calmly. He was still racking his brain, trying to recall where he had seen her before.

"Stop looking!" Dahlia quickly realized what was amiss and gave Dustin a warning kick. This was the second time. Dustin had grown bolder during the past few days since he was gone and didn't even bother being discreet anymore.

“Ms. Nicholson, I don’t understand these parts. Can you explain them to me?” Ms. Larson placed the document on the table and pointed at a section of the contract.

“Sure, let me explain.” With a professional smile, Dahlia began explaining everything in detail to Ms. Lardon, who wasn’t actually listening.

Ms. Larson silently slipped off one of her heels and brushed her feet against Dustin’s shoe lightly.

“What?” Dustin raised an eyebrow, puzzled.

When he lifted his head, he was met with Ms. Larson’s teasing and flirty smile. He merely drew his eyes away and pretended to see nothing.

Ms. Larson smirked and took a sip of her coffee before slowly brushing her feet upwards, caressing Dustin from his foot to his thigh, making the man jerk and his breathing quicken.

“What on earth is she doing? How could she do something like this in broad daylight? She’s too bold!” Dustin exclaimed to himself. He inhaled deeply and pulled his leg away, pretending nothing happened.

However, this only encouraged the woman to become bolder. She placed her entire foot on Dustin’s thigh and rubbed back and forth invitingly.

Dustin immediately frowned and shot her a warning glare.

In response, Ms. Larson flashed him a coquettish smile and extended her tongue to sensually lick the coffee off the corner of her lips; her movements were undoubtedly alluring.

Once again, Dustin pulled his leg away to put some distance between them. However, Ms. Larson continued to pester him.

Unable to take it anymore, he grabbed her foot and squeezed it warningly.

“Oh!” She moaned, shooting Dustin a sulking look.

“What’s wrong, Ms. Larson? Are you feeling unwell?” Dahlia caught Ms. Larson’s change in expression and asked.

Dustin thought Ms. Larson would make up an excuse; however, the woman suddenly lifted the tablecloth and pointed at her foot. "Mr. Rhys is hurting me."

Dustin stiffened instantly. What the

"What?" Dahlia looked down instinctively to see Dustin grabbing onto Ms. Larson's foot tightly, painting quite a raunchy scene.

"I-I didn't do anything!"

Flabbergasted, Dustin quickly let go of Ms. Larson, looking guilty. He didn't expect Ms. Larson to be so bold and to play the victim.

"Dustin! Rhys!" Dahlia, whose face was red with anger, seethed through gritted teeth, her expression murderous.

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Chapter 537

"What are you doing, Dustin?" Dahlia's eyebrows arched above her wide eyes, and she had to restrain herself from biting Dustin directly.

At first, she thought he was only admiring Ms. Larson's figure. Never did she imagine he would be daring enough to start messing around with someone he was meeting for the first time while completely ignoring her.

"This is a misunderstanding, Dahlia. She was the one who put her foot out." Dustin blushed. Although he was innocent, he couldn't help but feel a little guilty.

"So what if Ms. Larson stretched her leg? It doesn't mean you have permission to touch her." Dahlia growled.

"I-" Dustin didn't know how to explain himself.

"Hmph! I had a feeling you were up to no good when I saw you staring at Ms. Larson. Were you having dirty thoughts about her?" Dahlia's breathing quickened.

Was she not pretty enough? Why was Dustin paying attention to someone else other than her? What a player!

“It’s not what you’re thinking, Dahlia!” Dustin was exasperated.

“Stop making excuses! I saw everything!” Dahlia was fuming at this point. He dared claim that he was innocent after he was caught molesting Ms. Larson!

“Calm down, Ms. Nicholson. I’m sure Mr. Rhys was just messing around.” Ms. Larson just smiled calmly.

“There’s a limit to how far he can go. He obviously had dirty intentions!” Dahlia humphed and shot Dustin a glare.

“It’s fine. I don’t mind.” Ms. Larson took a sip of her coffee, a playful expression on her face.

“What?” Dahlia was taken aback by the other woman’s response and immediately understood that both parties had consented to this.

Her blood boiling, Dahlia slammed her high heel into Dustin’s foot, making him grimace in pain silently.

Just then, her phone began to ring. She took a deep breath and forced a smile. “Please excuse me while I take this call, Ms. Larson.”

As soon as she got up and left, Dustin finally spoke up. “Ms. Larson, this is our first time meeting. I don’t think what you did was appropriate.”

“Are you saying that it’s fine if I did that after getting acquainted with you?” Ms. Larson smirked teasingly.

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“Of course not!” Dustin immediately refused. “Please mind your manners, especially in public, Ms. Larson.”

“How interesting. Don’t people say that all men are cheaters? Are you going to be an exception?” Ms. Larson giggled, and leisurely stirred her coffee.

“I have no idea what you’re talking about,” Dustin replied coldly.

“I’ll be frank. I’m interested in you, and I want to be your sugar mama, so name your price.” Ms. Larson smirked.

“Sorry, but I prefer to earn my own keep.” Dustin refused without hesitation.

“I don’t mind forcing you, you know?” Ms. Larson tossed her car keys onto the table. “Isn’t that car gorgeous? She’s the latest Ferrari model. You can have her if you like.”

“Are you insulting me?” Dustin’s brows furrowed.

“Is it not enough? Fine. I have a villa in Amethyst Meadows worth 30 million dollars. I don’t have time to stay there anyway, so it’s yours now.” Ms. Larson pulled out another set of keys.

She sure was flaunting her wealth by giving away such an expensive car and villa so easily. It was easy to imagine how many men dreamed of possessing such a beautiful, rich, and generous woman.

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Chapter 538

“Are you trying to bribe me with just a villa? What do you take me for?” Dustin remained indifferent.

“Looks like it’s time to get serious.” Ms. Larson giggled. “How about this? I’ll let you into some insider information. The abandoned buildings in Eastville are going to be redeveloped. Your investment will double tenfold if you can get ahold of them. Of course, how many buildings you can buy depends on your wealth. The more you buy, the more you’ll earn. With enough capital, you’ll easily earn anything between a billion dollars to eight billion. What do you think? Is the offer attractive enough?”

Dustin narrowed his eyes. “Ms. Larson, you’re very generous, but I still don’t understand why you’d tell me about an opportunity that could rake in billions?”

It was their first time meeting, yet Ms. Larson was being extremely generous, even going as far as to offer him a car, a house, and a chance to hit the jackpot. Although Dustin was quite a good-looking guy, it wasn’t enough to

charm every woman in the world. Besides, a rich woman like her would have met all sorts of men before him, so he couldn't help but be suspicious of her.

"Didn't I tell you earlier? You caught my eye, and I want to be your sugar mama." Ms. Larson just continued to smile, her intentions hidden.

"Do you think I'll believe that?" Dustin responded calmly. "I don't know what tricks you're up to, but

you better not mess around with me. I'm not someone who knows how to cherish pretty things."

"How interesting." Ms. Larson laughed, her shoulder shaking. "I didn't expect you to be so on guard, miracle doctor. And here I thought I'd have a chance in bed with you tonight."

"What?" Dustin frowned. "Who are you?"

"Take a guess." Ms. Larson reached out to cover half of her face, leaving her twinkling eyes exposed. "Can you tell yet?"

"You!" Dustin's eyes widened as realization dawned.

Her attire might have changed, but her eyes hadn't. The voluptuous temptress was none other than the Dark Lord's disciple, Azalea!

No wonder she seemed so familiar to her. She was that witch!

"Finally," Azalea Larson smirked. "You didn't expect us to meet again this way, did you?"

"Were you following me?" Dustin demanded with a frown.

"Nope. I'm just here for a business meeting. Me meeting you here was pure coincidence." Azalea said with a smile.

"What do you want?" Dustin growled.

"Take a guess." Azalea tilted her head sideways.

"Dustin..." Just then, Dahlia finally returned after wrapping up her phone call, her expression grave.

“What’s wrong?” Dustin was puzzled.

“Some people beat up my mom, and she’s in the hospital right now, so I have to rush over there immediately,” Dahlia explained.

“She was beaten up? What happened?” Dustin was surprised.

“I’m not too sure, either. I’ll know after going to the hospital.” Dahlia focused her attention on Azalea. “My apologies, Ms. Larson, but this is an emergency. Would you mind if we continued this discussion on another day?”

“No problem. You guys should deal with that first.” Azalea nodded.

“Thank you for your understanding, Ms. Larson.” Dahlia flashed a polite smile and pulled Dustin out of there.

Azalea’s lip curled as she watched the two of them walk away and mumbled, “What a fine prey. I haven’t felt so excited in ages. You’ll be mine.”

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Chapter 539

As soon as Dustin and Dahlia reached one of the wards of Ansdale South Hospital, they were greeted by the ghastly sight of Florence moaning in pain, her body wrapped in bloodstained bandages.

“How do you feel, Mom?” Dahlia asked worriedly as she walked into the room.

“You’re finally here, Dahlia!” Florence immediately burst into tears and wailed. “I’m so sorry. I made a mistake, and I don’t deserve to live anymore.” She slammed her head into the wall several times, tearing up from the pain.

“What are you doing, Mom?” Dahlia quickly pulled her mother in for a hug to stop her from hurting herself. “Can’t we talk this out? Why are you trying to commit suicide?”

“I-I’m too embarrassed to tell you!” Florence thumped her chest sadly.

“James, what in the world happened?” Dahlia looked at her brother, who was standing next to their mother.

“Mom got scammed. Our savings are all gone now!” He cried.

“Scammed? Elaborate further.” Dahlia frowned.

“Do you remember Julie’s boyfriend, Terrence Stone? He’s that manager at the Brooks Corporation.”

“Of course, I do. Why?” Dahlia nodded.

“He lied to us!” James accused. “We were having dinner with Aunt Victoria last night when he suddenly came up to us and told us that the Brooks Corporation had a new real estate project and asked if we would be interested in investing.

“He claimed that the prices would be low since we’d get a special price because he knew an insider. We thought he was being kind, so we agreed. He promised that our investment would double in return after half a year, and the more we invested, the greater our return. We were blinded by greed and signed the contract stupidly, putting all our money in.

“Then, guess what? When we visited the development site this morning, we realized that the so-called new real-estate project was nothing but a cluster of abandoned buildings! It’s been left alone for years, and now we’re in charge of taking care of this mess! Now, besides wasting all our savings, we’ve also collected huge debts!”

James seethed, regretting their decision last night. They shouldn’t have gotten greedy and fallen into Terrence’s trap.

“Where’s Terrence now?” Dahlia interrogated.

“I don’t know.” James shook his head. “He hasn’t been picking up his phone since morning.

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When we went to ask his company, they said he had been fired and was nowhere to be found!" "When didn't you tell me about this right away?" Dahlia was displeased with this issue.

One shouldn't aim too high when they don't possess the necessary skills. Those individuals were the easiest to scam and swindle money out of.

"We didn't know he was a scammer, so we got careless and..." James sighed. They had complete faith in Terrence because he was a manager at Brooks Corporation; they never expected that he had been fired a long time ago.

"How did Mom get all beaten up?" Dahlia asked.

"She couldn't find Terrence, so she went to find the developer instead, demanding they refund us, but they refused, saying that we had already signed the contract, so Mom kicked up

a fuss and got into a brawl with someone," James explained.

"What?" Dahlia frowned. "How much did you lose in total this time?"

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Chapter 540

James merely held out a finger.

"Ten million?" Dahlia took a deep breath and tried to suppress her anger. "It's quite a lot, but

at least we can still pay it back. Treat it as the price of a lesson learned."

"You've got it wrong, Sis. It's not just ten million dollars; it's a hundred million." James mumbled weakly.

"A hundred million?!" Dahlia paled. "Are you serious? Where did you get so much money in the first place?"

“We had a few million in savings. Then, we used our two villas to take out loans. Mom stole the remaining tens of thousands from you.” James shrank back and confessed softly.

“What?” Dahlia’s blood boiled. “A-are you guys crazy? Taking loans and stealing? Who said you could do that?”

Who in their right mind would sell their house to invest in a business? What a fool!

“It’s all my fault, Dahlia. I’m so sorry. I should die instead!” Florence moaned and began banging her head on the wall again, acting so well that she deserved an Oscar.

“Enough!” Dahlia yelled. “Rather than commit suicide, why don’t you think of a way to take care of this mess?”

“You’re the president of Cardinal Group now. A hundred million dollars shouldn’t be a lot to you, right?” Florence asked tentatively.

“Yeah, right!” Dahlia humphed, irritated. “I borrowed ten billion and merely bought a portion of the company’s shares. It’s not time for dividends yet, so I don’t have any spare cash. Besides, I have a one-billion-dollar loan to pay back, so I’ll be in debt for the next three years!”

“What? Is it that serious?” Florence was shocked. She thought Dahlia was living a glorious life after being promoted to President and didn’t know that her daughter was struggling so badly. “Aunt Florence.” Just then, Julie and her mother, Victoria, walked into the room.

“Julie, you’re here. How did it go? Did you manage to find Terence?” Florence sprung up expectantly. Things were still salvageable if they could catch Terence.

“We couldn’t get ahold of him at all. I’m sure he ran away.” Julie sighed.

“Who knew that he was a swindler? Curse our rotten luck!” Victoria spat.

“Julie, Terence is your boyfriend. How do you propose we solve this issue?” James demanded.

“What does it have to do with me? I’m not the one who lied to you!” Julie frowned. “Besides,

we’re victims too! We lost a lot of money as well!”

“Who knows if you guys are working together?” James retorted.

“Hey! What do you mean by that?” Julie sprung up and demanded.

“Enough. We’re a family. It’s not the time to fight right now. We should be working together to get past this storm.” Florence placated. “Dahlia, you’re the smartest here. What should we do now?”

“Admit defeat, I guess. Whatever else?” Dahlia grumbled.

“I have an idea.” Suddenly thinking of an idea, Julie whispered. “Since Terrence lied to us, we can do the same to someone else. As long as we find another scapegoat, everything will be fine.

“That’s a good idea. My daughter is so smart!” Victoria’s eyes immediately lit up. Julie was right. Rather than suffering themselves, why don’t they make someone else suffer? They should just act in their own interests.

“That is a good idea, but where will we find the scapegoat?” James rubbed his chin thoughtfully.

“A scapegoat?” Florence thought about it for a second, and her eyes shot to Dustin. Wasn’t there a perfect one right there?

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Chapter 541

“What?” Dustin frowned when Florence’s gaze swept toward him.

“Why are you looking at me? Are you telling me to be the scapegoat? What the f*ck?” he thought.

“Dustin...” Florence forced a smile. She took an apple out of her fruit basket and handed it to Dustin. “Aren’t you hungry? Here, have an apple.”

“What are you trying to do?” Dustin looked at her warily. It only raised suspicions more with Florence going out of her way to be kind to him.

“Well, you heard what we said, didn’t you?” Florence forced out a sweet, kind smile. “You’ve always been a kind person. I’m sure you can’t bear to see us lose our money like this, so I hope you can do us a favor.”

“What favor?” Dustin had his guard up.

“Don’t you know a few rich women? Why don’t you help us sell off those abandoned buildings?”

”

“You’re asking me to scam people for you?” Dustin raised an eyebrow.

“How could you say that?” Florence feigned innocence. “We’re not deceiving anyone; we’re simply repurposing waste. Those wealthy people aren’t short on money anyway, so think of it as doing a good deed.”

“She’s right!” Julie nodded. “Dustin, the abandoned buildings in Eastville might seem worthless now, but they actually have high potential. We don’t have the financial ability to continue developing them, but they might have a new chance if those who are rich take over them.”

“Hold on.” Dustin raised his hand to stop Julie. “Where did you say the buildings were?”

“Eastville, near the suburbs. Why?” Julie was puzzled.

“The abandoned buildings in Eastville?” After getting confirmation, Dustin smiled. “You guys got lucky. Those buildings are worth a lot of money.”

“Worth a lot of money?” The others exchanged confused glances. They couldn’t understand how that failed investment could be worth any money. Besides, why would they sell those buildings if they knew they were of any worth?

“I heard that those buildings are going to be redeveloped soon, so you guys hit the jackpot this time,” Dustin said with a smile. This was what Azalea had told him earlier at the cafe. He just didn’t expect Florence and the others to be lucky enough to get a head start.

“What nonsense are you spouting?” Julie frowned. “Those buildings have been abandoned for

more than seven years. No one dares to take over it, yet you’re saying that they’re going to be redeveloped? What a joke!”

“She’s right. If they were worth a lot of money, people would have fought to snatch them up instead of leaving them there.” Victoria huffed.

“Where did you get that fake news, Dustin? Shut up if you don’t know anything!” James snapped. It was bad enough that Terrence had successfully scammed them, but did Dustin think that they were idiots? How could he lie to them as well?

“I’m not lying. Those buildings will be astonishingly valuable,” Dustin replied calmly. “There’s a good chance that those properties under your name will multiply in value tremendously in a few days, so you shouldn’t sell them off.”

“Nonsense! Multiply by several times? That’s nothing but wishful thinking!” Julie snapped.

“Even if you’re not going to help, why are you trying to deceive us?” Florence dropped the act, and her tone turned harsh.

“It’s just friendly advice. If you don’t believe me, forget it.” Dustin shrugged. He believed that Azalea wouldn’t tell such a lie, so it was very likely that those buildings were going to shoot up in value soon. It was just that not many people knew about that yet.

"I'm just telling you to find a scapegoat. Why do you keep talking nonsense? You're so useless!" Florence snapped resentfully.

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Florence was sure that Dustin was merely refusing to help them.

Just then, Julie thought of an idea and said, "Dustin, didn't you say that those buildings are worth a lot? We'll sell them to you right now so that you can make a lot of money. What do you think?"

"That's right!" Florence echoed. "You should buy them since you seem so interested. That'll benefit both of us."

"This is your opportunity. How could I take it away from you?" Dustin refused politely.

"It's alright. We're a family. We'll be happy if you make money too." Florence coaxed enthusiastically, gleeful to have found a scapegoat.

"She's right, Dustin. Don't worry about it. You shouldn't miss such a great opportunity."

"Exactly. Just remember to treat us to a meal when you get rich."

Everyone smiled so sweetly and acted extremely enthusiastically after finding such a dumb scapegoat.

"Are you sure you want to sell them to me?" Dustin pressed.

"Of course! We won't take a single penny from you. We just want you to return the principal." Florence frantically nodded.

"Are you sure you won't regret your decision?" Dustin raised an eyebrow.

"I swear it on my life!" Florence swore.

"She's right. We swear it on our lives." The others echoed.

“Alright, then. I’ll buy them.” Dustin smiled. There’s no reason for him to refuse free money.

“Are you crazy? Those buildings are worthless! Why would you purchase them?” Dahlia couldn’t watch this go on anymore. She didn’t expect him to actually buy them.

“We should let him buy them if that’s what he wants. Why are you stopping him?” Julie grumbled.

“She’s right. You shouldn’t stop him from earning big money.” Florence shot her daughter a look, telling her to not stop him from being their scapegoat, or they would lose all their money.

“Enough!” Dahlia frowned. “I don’t care if you try to swindle others, but I won’t allow you to do that to Dustin!”

“We’re not forcing him to buy them; he volunteered.” Julie huffed.

“Don’t buy them, Dustin!” Dahlia warned.

“They’ll be worth a lot of money soon. Just trust me.” Dustin smiled tiredly.

“They’re obviously trying to scam you. Why won’t you listen to me?” Dahlia was frustrated at how stubborn he was being.

“Let them be. I have enough money anyway.” Dustin remained unaffected.

“You!” Furious, she spat. “Fine! Do as you please. I don’t care anymore!” She walked over to the other bed and sat down angrily, ignoring him.

“Forget about her, Dustin. Let’s continue our discussion. Oh, right. James? Hurry up and print out the contract. We should get this over with today.” Florence tugged on Dustin’s arm, worried he might escape.

“No problem!” With twinkling eyes, James dashed out of the room.

“I’ll prepare a contract too.” Julie quickly followed suit.

The contracts were signed twenty minutes later. Dustin received the title deeds, while Florence and the others got back their money.

As soon as they received the money, Florence and the others began cackling and jeering at Dustin, whom they believed was an idiot. They marveled at the idiot they found.

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“Oh, Dustin. You sure are stupid. How can you treasure such worthless buildings?” Florence grinned smugly.

At first, she thought she had wasted all her money, but God blessed them by sending them a scapegoat.

“Thanks, Dustin, or else we’d be doomed.” Florence grinned.

“You’re such a saint, Dustin. I must say, I’m impressed!” James exclaimed delightedly and gave the other man a thumbs-up.

“Remember to treat us to a meal once you’ve made your fortune.” Victoria mocked.

They had been unfortunate to be swindled by Terrence, but they found someone to take the fall. It was their stroke of luck, or they would have lost all their money.

“I hope you don’t come to regret your decision.” Dustin wore a meaningful smile.

“Regret?” They exchanged amused glances and laughed even louder.

How could Dustin still not know that something was wrong? An idiot like him deserved to be scammed.

“Dustin, what on earth are you thinking? You shouldn’t be so reckless even if you have some money, right?” Dahlia frowned. She was confused as to why someone who was usually so smart would act so foolishly.

“Everything I say is useless right now, but you’ll understand soon,” Dustin smiled and said.

No matter how many times he advised them, none of them believed him. However, when things settled down, it would be obvious who was the winner.

“Fine! I don’t care anymore!” Dahlia stomped toward the door and halted. “What are you waiting for? Let’s go back to the company!”

“Can I take a leave of absence? My friend happens to be here, so I want to visit him,” Dustin asked. Mr. Robinson was here as well, so he should visit the older man.

“Do whatever you like!” Dahlia humphed and left.

Five minutes later, Dustin stepped into another ward and saw Abigail feeding her father some soup. The father-daughter duo’s relationship improved after the latest incident.

“Sir, you’re here.” Abigail lit up when she saw him.

“I happened to be in the area, so I thought I’d drop by. How’s your dad?” Dustin inquired,

concerned.

“The doctor said he’s healing very well. He should be able to leave in a few days,” Abigail replied.

“That’s good.” Dustin let out a sigh of relief and sat down next to the bed. “Let me know if you need anything, Mr. Robinson.”

“Thank you, Mr. Rhys. You visiting me made me happy enough.” Mr. Robinson smiled. It was rare for someone to care for minor characters like him.

“This is all my fault. You wouldn’t have gotten hurt if not for me.” Dustin felt sorry.

“Don’t say that, Mr. Robinson. I’m just sorry that I couldn’t carry out your request.” Mr. Robinson shook his head.

“Alright, alright. Can you two stop being so sappy? Let’s leave the past behind us.” Abigail interjected, cutting off their conversation.

The person they should be blaming was Torben Hill. Fortunately, Dustin had avenged them by teaching that man a lesson.

“Abigail.” While they were talking, a gorgeous young lady and an elegantly dressed woman walked in. They must be mother and daughter.

Dustin realized that the familiar-looking woman was Ruby Xenos, the person he met in the bar a few days ago.

“What are you doing here, Ruby?” Abigail lit up, and she quickly went to welcome the guests.

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“I heard that Mr. Robinson was hurt. Of course, I had to visit.” Ruby placed her gifts by Mr. Robinson’s bedside and explained. “These are supplements for you. I wish you a speedy recovery.”

“Thank you.” Abigail nodded her head in gratitude.

“I forgot to introduce you to my mom.” Ruby gestured to the woman next to her.

“Nice to meet you, Mrs. Xenos.” Abigail nodded in greeting.

“Hello.” Mrs. Xenos nodded with a smile.

“You’re here too?” Ruby was surprised to see Dustin. “The Doyle family didn’t bother you, did they?”

“No.” Dustin shook his head. He couldn’t care less about them anyway.

“Mom, this is the guy who helped me in the bar last time.” Ruby smiled.

“Really? Well, thank you very much.” Mrs. Xenos smiled politely.

“It was nothing.” Dustin’s gaze suddenly turned serious. “Mrs. Xenos, may I know if you’ve been feeling dizzy lately?”

“How did you know?” Mrs. Xenos was astonished.

“I could tell since I know a bit of medicine,” Dustin explained.

“I see...” Mrs. Xenos nodded. “You’re right. I have low blood sugar, so I get dizzy sometimes, but it’s nothing serious.”

“I don’t think so,” Dustin replied in a serious tone. “You have bloodshot eyes, shortness of breath, stiff limbs, as well as bulging veins at your temples. If I’m not mistaken, you’re at risk of a cerebral hemorrhage.”

“Cerebral hemorrhage?” Mrs. Xenos frowned; her expression darkened instantly. “You should watch what you say, young man. I had a full-body checkup just recently, and everything was normal. How could there possibly be a cerebral hemorrhage?”

She didn’t expect such a nice-looking person like him to sprout nonsense.

“Mrs. Xenos, I advise you to examine your brain. You could die easily if the condition

worsened.” Dustin advised.

“Nonsense!” Mrs. Xenos humphed. “I’ll let this go since you saved my daughter. Don’t provoke me anymore!” She was unhappy to be told that she might die.

“Mrs. Xenos, your life is at stake here. You should be careful.” Dustin told her seriously.

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"Mrs. Xenos, your life is at stake here. You should be careful." Dustin told her seriously.

"Enough of your nonsense!" Mrs. Xenos turned and walked away briskly. As a woman who people died to please at every moment, she was furious to be cursed by someone.

"I'm sorry. My mom's in a bad mood." Ruby was embarrassed. She didn't expect Dustin and his mother to get into an argument,

"Ruby, we're going home!" Mrs. Xenos yelled.

"I'll be off now, Abigail. Take care of your dad." Ruby left after bidding them farewell.

“You should stay away from scammers like him from now on, or your reputation will be ruined!” Mrs. Xenos snapped.

“Mom, he doesn’t seem to be lying. Why don’t you get it checked out at the hospital?” Ruby advised.

“Do you actually believe him?” Mrs. Xenos glared. “I know my body best. He’s clearly asking for attention. I’ve met countless people like him before!”

“But-”

“Enough! Don’t talk about him anymore. It’s disgusting!” Mrs. Xenos cut off Ruby’s words. Because of her status, people always came up with different ways to butter up to her; this included people like Dustin.

“The weather is nice today.” Mrs. Xenos lifted her head to look at the sun and felt slightly faint.

She barely took a step forward when she felt a sharp pain shoot through her head. The world began to spin, and after a few more steps, her vision turned dark, and she collapsed to the floor.

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“Mom!” Ruby was shocked when Mrs. Xenos suddenly fainted. She quickly helped her up and tried to wake her up while crying for help. However, her mother remained completely unresponsive. “Where’s the doctor?” Ruby carried Mrs. Xenos on her back and ran back into the hospital.

A bunch of doctors and nurses heard her pleas and quickly came over to perform first aid.

An hour later, at the entrance of the emergency room.

“Ruby!” A suited man ran over, accompanied by several bodyguards.

“Dad! You’re finally here!” Ruby was so relieved to see him. “Mom suddenly fainted just now, and they’re still trying to resuscitate her, but the doctor said tha

t things weren't looking good and even asked me to sign a do-not-resuscitate order."

"Why did she suddenly faint?" George Xenos frowned.

"I don't know either. She was completely fine earlier." Ruby looked nervous as well.

"Hurry! Go to Garrison Hospital and bring Dr. Alden immediately!" George ordered the bodyguard closest to him.

"Yes, Sir!" His guard quickly pulled out his phone and began calling someone.

Less than half an hour later, an old man with white hair donning black clothes rushed into the hospital with a team of specialists. Every one of them was a top doctor in Garrison Hospital.

"Mr. Xenos." The old man greeted.

"Dr. Alden, my wife's life is in danger. Please save her." George pleaded solemnly.

"I will do my best." Dr. Alden immediately rushed into the operating room and took over the operation after he showed his identity.

Although the doctors at Ansdale South Hospital were good, they still had a long way to go to reach the level of the doctors at Garrison Hospital.

After several hours passed, Dr. Alden finally emerged from the operating room.

"Dr. Alden! How's my wife?" George sprung up.

"Mrs. Xenos had a sudden cerebral hemorrhage. We've managed to keep her alive for now, but things aren't looking good." Dr. Alden's expression was gloomy.

"Cerebral hemorrhage?" Ruby was surprised to hear that Dustin's words had come true.

"Can you treat it?" George frowned.

"It'll be difficult." Dr. Alden shook his head and explained. "She is experiencing severe intracranial bleeding caused by an accumulation of blood clots, which is putting pressure on her nerves and causing her to stay unconscious. There's a high likelihood that she'll fall into a coma."

"What? A coma?" Ruby paled. She couldn't accept that her mother, who had been alive and well just hours ago, was going to have to stay in bed for the rest of her life.

"Dr. Alden, can't you operate on her head?" George pressed.

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"Unfortunately not. Mrs. Xenos is bleeding extensively in a delicate location. We might accidentally kill her if we operate on her." Dr. Alden sighed.

"How could this be? Is there no other way?" George's expression was pained.

"I'm sorry. I have done everything in my power. Whether or not she can wake up depends entirely on her," Dr. Alden said helplessly.

As if someone poured a bucket of ice over him, George froze up. He couldn't imagine his wife

staying in a coma for the rest of her life.

"Dad, someone I know might be able to help," Ruby said suddenly.

"Who is it?" George broke out of his stupor.

"His name is Dustin Rhys. Not too long ago, he predicted that Mom might have a cerebral hemorrhage. We didn't take it too seriously at first, but his words came true," Ruby explained.

"He predicted the cerebral hemorrhage? Is there anyone in this world who can do that?" Dr. Alden was doubtful. How could anyone detect something like that without the aid of tools?

"It is true! I swear!" Ruby exclaimed anxiously.

“It doesn’t matter if it’s true. Just tell him to come over and do what he can.” George ordered. He wasn’t going to let go of this glimmer of hope.

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“Okay!” Without wasting any more time, Ruby took her phone out to give Dustin a call, and she briefly told him what had happened.

“I’ll be there right away.” Dustin ended the call and rushed over to the hospital.

By the time he reached, Ruby’s mother had already been transferred to the VIP ward . Although she was no longer in critical danger, she remained unconscious. When Dustin entered the ward, he noticed that there was quite a small crowd gathered there. Most of them were doctors, and some were bodyguards.

“Dustin! You’re here!” Ruby’s face lit up with hope when she saw him.

“Is this the miracle doctor that you mentioned, Ruby?” As George looked Dustin up and down, he unconsciously frowned. This man was much younger than he’d thought. How medically skilled could a man in his twenties be?

“Don’t judge a book by its cover, Dad! Dustin might be young, but he’s really good at what he does! It only took him a glance and he knew what was wrong with Mom.” Ruby assured.

“Forgive me for being blunt, Miss Xenos, but maybe it was just a lucky guess,” Dr. Alden said. At Dustin’s age, even if he had been practicing medicine since the day he was born, he’d only have 20 - odd years of experience under his belt. If Dr. Alden himself, who had been practicing medicine for over 40 years, could not tell what was wrong with her, how could this young chap?

“Are you sure, young man?” George asked tentatively.

"I wouldn't be here if I wasn't," Dustin answered plainly.

"Alright then, you'll be handsomely rewarded if you can heal my wife," George told him earnestly. "Mr. Xenos, are you really going to let him treat her?" Dr. Alden asked with furrowed brows. "Mrs. Xenos is not in a good condition right now. What if anything happens to her?"

"It can't go any worse than it already is." George shook his head. What difference would it make whether his wife remained in a coma for the rest of her life or if she were to be dead?

"But-"
"Dr. Alden wanted to continue but was promptly cut off by George. "Please go ahead, young man."

Dustin nodded and walked over to Mrs. Xenos' bedside before reaching out to check her vitals. A short while later, he told them, "Mrs. Xenos is suffering from severe intracranial hemorrhage which is putting pressure on her nerves. If we don't get that sorted out immediately, she might end up in a permanently vegetative state."

Everyone was shocked when they heard what he had to say. Even Dr. Alden, who had doubted his abilities just a while ago, looked astonished. Dustin had simply done a quick check on Mrs. Xenos' vitals and was able to tell them exactly what was wrong with her. Was he really that capable? "Can you heal her, young man?" George was instantly enlivened as he saw a spark of hope. He hadn't held out much hope initially, but judging from what Dustin had just said, he could tell that Dustin really knew what he was doing.

"It wouldn't be difficult. All that needs to be done is to drain out the blood and see that she takes

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her medications on time," Dustin said.

"Draining intracranial blood is no easy feat, young man. Besides, with Mrs. Xenos' condition,

surgery is not an option,” Dr. Alden reminded Dustin. Ultimately, he still refused to believe that

Dustin was better than him.

“Who said anything about surgery? This can easily be done with needling,” Dustin said matter-of-

factly.

“Needling? Are you kidding me?” Dr. Alden frowned. There was a life on the line. This wasn’t a simple task!

“You don’t believe me? Let’s try and see, shall we?” Dustin couldn’t be bothered to explain any further.

Without saying much more, he took out some silver needles and inserted them into Mrs. Xenos’ pressure points. One right on top of the head, one near the front hairline, one by each ear, one above each eye, and finally, one on each side of her nape. After inserting all the needles, Dustin channeled energy from within him and directed it toward the needles. The needles vibrated and gave out a soft buzzing sound. Then, wisps of true energy traveled along the silver needles into Mrs. Xenos’ pressure points.

A brief while later, two streams of black blood trickled out of her nose. The blood flowed out in steady streams until it gradually turned into fresh blood, which was crimson red before it slowly stopped.

“She’ll be fine now.” In one swift motion, Dustin extracted all the needles and kept them neatly in his pocket.

“That’s all? You-

” Before Dr. Alden could complete his sentence, Mrs. Xenos groaned softly, and her eyes fluttered open.

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“S—
she’s awake? Everyone was amazed to see that Mrs. Xenos had come around, and they stared at her wide-eyed with disbelief. Nobody had ever thought that this young man would be able to cure Mrs. Xenos of something that even Dr. Alden found impossible. And he managed to do so with just several needles! The entire process had been nothing special and was just plain old needling techniques, but it was exactly because of how simple everything had been that they found it shocking

“H—
how is this possible?’ Dr. Alden was completely blown away by what he just witnessed. That was cerebral congestion, and she had been diagnosed as a vegetative patient, for goodness sake! It was such a complicated condition, and he managed to cure her with just several needles? He must be joking!

‘She’s awake! She’s awake! Mom’s awake!’ It took Ruby a while to register that at her mother was finally awake, but when she snapped back to her senses, she jumped with joy. She had been utterly devastated when she got to know that her mother was in a vegetative state. It was a miracle that she could come around so soon!

“Honey, how are you feeling?” George forced himself to calm down and quickly went up to check on his wife.

“I feel a bit woozy, but apart from that, I’m fine. What’s wrong?” Mrs. Xenos was confused, as she only remembered what happened before she passed out.

“That’s great! It’s great that you’re feeling fine!” George laughed happily after he was sure that his wife was no longer in any danger.

“You really are a miracle healer, young man! I underestimated you! You have exceptional medical skills. I’m impressed!” George shook Dustin’s hand as a sign of respect.

“Don’t mention it. Just remember that reward you promised,” Dustin said without any arrogance. He had only helped them because he felt that it was fate that they crossed paths, so it went without saying that he’d ask for payment.

“Hahaha! I like how direct you are, young man! How much are you asking for? Just state your price,” George said with a chuckle.

“You pay however much you deem fit.” Dustin left it to him to decide how much he was going to

pay.

So, George generously wrote him a 30-million-dollar check and handed it to him. “Please have this, young man. This is a token of my appreciation to you for saving my wife. If you ever run into any difficulties, just come to me, and I promise I’ll help you out of it!”

“Thanks!” Dustin gave the check a flick and put it away in his pocket.

“What happened?” Mrs. Xenos looked around, still trying to figure out what exactly happened to

her.

“Mom! You nearly lost your life due to intracranial hemorrhage! Dustin was the one that saved you!” Ruby was quick to explain the situation to her mother.

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“Intracranial hemorrhage?” Mrs. Xenos was obviously shocked to hear that. Was it possible that he had been telling the truth all along? Had she wronged him?

At the thought of that, she said remorsefully, “I’m truly sorry, young man. I hope you do not take my offensive words to heart.”

“Don’t worry about it. It’s all in the past,” Dustin said with a shake of his head. Hardly anyone would believe it if someone just came up to them and told them that they were going to suffer from intracranial hemorrhage.

“Thank you, Dustin. Had it not been for you, things would have turned out horribly.” Ruby had nothing but appreciation for Dustin.

“Don’t mention it. I’ve been paid for my work,” Dustin said with a faint smile.

“Your medical skills are out of this world, young man. Would you be interested in joining us? We desperately need talented people like you!”

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Dr. Alden did not hesitate to invite Dustin to join them. His medical skills were truly miraculous, to say the least. It was amazing how he could bring someone from the brink of death back to consciousness with just several needles. Had it not been for his ego, Dr. Alden would have asked Dustin to be his mentor.

“I have no such plans yet. We’ll see when the opportunity arises.” Dustin rejected him nicely.

Then, without anyone asking, he quickly scribbled down a prescription and handed it to Ruby.” Remember to make sure that your mother takes her medications on time. She’ll have to take them for about a month, and she’ll be alright.”

“Thank you, Dustin!” Ruby beamed brightly at him

“I have other plans, so I’ll take my leave now.” Dustin did not stay there much longer and left the hospital soon after. As he left the hospital, Dustin was suddenly reminded that he had yet to change Natasha’s wound dressing today, so he hailed a cab and headed straight for the Harmon

estate.

In the Harmons’ discussion room, Hector was leading a group of the Harmon family’s key members in a meeting. They had divided opinions over the marriage arrangement.

“Are you really going to break off the marriage alliance, Hector? Have you ever considered what

this would mean to the family?” Trent asked with pinched brows.

“I’ve given things serious consideration, Trent. There shall be no marriage alliance!” Hector meant

what he said. The main agenda of the meeting today was to discuss the breaking off of the

marriage alliance. The Grants had gone too far. He could not sit back and act like nothing had

happened.

“The Grants are already livid over Jayla’s death. If we tell them that we’re breaking off the

marriage alliance, they’ll use that as an excuse to give us trouble, and when that happens, there’s

bound to be massive strife between the two families!” Trent warned.

“The strife has already begun. From the moment the Grants framed me and messed with my

daughter, there was already no alliance. What we need to do now is strengthen our defenses and be prepared,” Hector said coldly.

“Must things really come to this? We’ll be in a terrible predicament if we really burn bridges with

the Grants.” Trent’s expression was tense.

“I wish that the family can develop in peace too, Trent. But with the difficulties we are facing, both internally and externally, people out there will only see it as an opportunity to take advantage of us if we do not act firmly. We cannot compromise anymore!” Hector said with a resolute tone.

If the Harmons backed off once, they’d have to do it again in the future, and the Grants would only behave even more ruthlessly at that time.

Hector thought that it’d be better for the Harmons to face the Grants head-on while they still had

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the means to do so. And even if they lost, they’d lose with their heads held high.

“Why are you silent, Jacob? Talk some sense into Hector!” Trent signaled at Jacob frantically to persuade Hector.

“What’s the point? Hector is the head of the family. He has the final say in every matter.” Jacob seemed to have given up on contributing any thoughts.

“Jacob, this is a family meeting. Everyone is free to voice their thoughts. I will consider your suggestions if you come up with any good ideas.” Hector encouraged.

“Alright, then I’ll tell you what I think.” Jacob cleared his throat before he continued. “Hector, I know that Natasha is reluctant to marry Tyler, but the consequences of breaking off the marriage alliance are severe. I think that we should just change our strategy slightly.”

“Oh? Change our strategy? How so?” Hector asked with a lift of his brows.

“It’s simple. There are many eligible young ladies in the Harmon family who are of marriageable age. Since your daughter is unwilling to marry Tyler, then we’ll send someone else to marry him. As long as we have a marriage alliance, it doesn’t matter who marries him,” Jacob said plainly.

“Send someone else?” The rest of the family began whispering among themselves when they heard Jacob’s suggestion. It seemed like a decent enough proposal. Natasha might not agree to marry Tyler, but there were other people who would readily agree to the marriage. Tyler was an excellent candidate that many women would die to be married to.

“But Jacob, there has been so much conflict between the two families. No matter who we send to marry Tyler, we’d be sending her into an extremely risky situation.” Hector was torn as to whether or not he should take Jacob’s suggestion.

“Someone has got to take one for the family. Since your daughter is unwilling to be the one to do so, we’ll just have to get someone else,” Jacob said.

“You’re right, but who else would be good enough for Tyler?” Trent pondered for a suitable candidate. They could not just send any other girl to marry Tyler. He was General Lionheart, a truly brilliant man. Natasha was the only one in the entire Harmon family who was barely good enough for him.

“Me!” Just then, Kate stood up and declared confidently. “Be it looks or ability, I’m not far off from Natasha. I’m the most suitable candidate to marry Tyler!”

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“You?” Trent was caught off guard when he saw Kate step forward. He had never thought that his daughter would come forward in the family’s time of need.

“That sounds good. I think Kate is indeed a suitable candidate. We should consider letting her take

Natasha’s place for the marriage alliance,” Jacob vouched for Kate.

The rest of the family nodded in agreement when they saw Jacob backing Kate up. They were convinced that Kate was just about as good as Natasha, both in looks and abilities. It really wasn’t a bad idea to let her marry Tyler.

“Kate, this is no laughing matter. You should consider it carefully,” Hector warned sternly.

“Uncle Hector, I’ve given it much thought. Since Natasha is reluctant to marry Tyler, I’ll do it,” Kate announced boldly.

“Are you really willing to sacrifice yourself for the family?” Hector asked once again.

“Well, someone has got to do it, so it might as well be me. This is my responsibility as a Harmon!” Natasha declared righteously. Although she put on a dignified and honorable front, she was

actually elated inwardly.

Sacrifice? What a joke! Tyler was powerful, influential, and had a high social standing. He had a promising future! And on top of that, he had the looks to match. It would be a dream come true for Kate if she were to marry such an excellent man!

Since the beginning, Kate had always been indignant that Natasha would be the one

to marry Tyler. Never in her wildest dreams had she ever thought that Natash
a would willingly choose to

break it off.

But now that the opportunity of a lifetime had presented itself to her, Kate was
n't about
to let it go. This was her one chance to step into the elite circle. If she were to
marry Tyler and become the next matriarch of the Grant family, she'd possess
such vast powers!

"You're Kate's father, Trent. What do you have to say about this?" Hector turn
ed to Trent for his opinion before deciding on the matter. From how he saw it,
the Grant household was a dangerous place to be in. He really could not bring
himself to subject his niece to such suffering.

"Well ..." Trent frowned, obviously caught in a dilemma. Under normal circums
tances, it
would have been a great thing to be married to Tyler. But with how things wer
e currently, where both families had had such a major fallout, he couldn't say f
or sure whether it was a good thing.

"Dad! I've put my mind to it. Nothing anyone says can change
my mind. Besides, you're their older brother. You should lead by example!" Ka
te gave her father a wink, signaling him to just go with. it. She was worried tha
t her father might not get what she meant and decided
to turn down the opportunity. After all, chances like these did not come by ofte
n. She did not wish to pass it up.

"Well, since Kate is adamant, I have nothing to say." Trent shook his head. He
was sure that with his daughter's wits, she was bound to have something up
her sleeves. He did not want to stand in

her way.

"What do the rest of you think?" Hector turned to face the rest of the
family to get their say on the

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matter.

“Kate is doing this for the family! We should support her!”

“That’s right! There’s no better alternative anyway!”

The crowd was quick to voice their approval. It didn’t matter to them who married Tyler. All they were concerned about was the success of the marriage alliance to protect the interest of the

family.

“I have everyone’s support, Uncle Hector. Surely you can’t say no?” Kate asked cautiously.

“Sure, I can agree to it. But the question now is, will Tyler agree to it?” Hector suddenly came in from a different perspective. It served no purpose for them to be so worked up over the prospect of Kate replacing Natasha because the final decision rested with Tyler.

“Uncle Hector, I’m not lacking in the looks department, and I’m much more talented than Natasha. I’m certain Tyler will not reject me.” Kate had all the confidence in the world.

“Why don’t we ask him to find out?”

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Jacob stood up and enunciated each word slowly. “I will go to the Grants with Kate to talk about the marriage arrangement in detail.”

“Thank you for backing me up, Uncle Jacob!” Kate was overjoyed.

“I’ll leave the task to you then, Jacob.” Hector nodded at him.

“Wait for our good news, everyone!” Jacob looked around the room and nodded at his brothers before leaving with Kate in tow. Hector seemed deep in thought as he watched them leave.

Over in Natasha's room, she laid on her bed with her eyes closed as Dustin sat beside her, meticulously applying an ointment to her wound. The wound on Natasha's face wasn't severe, and after applying some of Dustin's special ointment, it was clearly much better than it had been

before.

"Sis! I have good news!" Ruth barged into the room excitedly.

"Oh? What's the good news?" Natasha asked with her eyes still closed, enjoying the attentive

treatment Dustin was giving her.

"Uncle Jacob suggested that someone else take your place for the marriage alliance during the meeting earlier on, and Kate stood up and volunteered herself! She said that she would take your place and marry Tyler. Everyone agreed!" Ruth announced with joy.

"Kate offered to marry Tyler?" Natasha sat up in surprise when she heard what Ruth said. "Are you

sure that you heard right, Ruth?"

"Of course! I heard it loud and clear!" Ruth nodded with certainty. "Uncle Jacob and Kate have

already left for the Grants to discuss the matter. As long as Tyler agrees to it, we'll have nothing left to worry about!"

"That's great! Kate has always been after wealth and status, anyway. She'd be the best candidate to marry Tyler!" Natasha was glad.

"That's right! You won't need to suffer; Kate will get what she wants; and both families will be at

peace with each other. We'll be getting the best of both worlds!" Ruth smiled brightly.

"Ladies, it's too early to be happy just yet. I'm afraid things might not be so easy." Dustin put a damper on the situation.

“What do you mean? Isn’t it a good thing that my sister will not have to marry Tyler?” Ruth asked curiously.

“Of course it is, but the question is, would Tyler agree to it?” Dustin proceeded to explain his view on the situation. “I’ve only met Tyler once, but I can tell straight off the bat that he’s an arrogant and conceited person. And people like him rarely accept changes once they’ve made up their mind.”

The Harmon sisters frowned when they heard that.

“So what you’re saying is that Tyler will not agree to the swap?” Natasha probed.

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“He will most likely refuse the notion.” Dustin put his ointment away and handed Natasha a glass of water before stating nonchalantly, “Things would have worked out fine if he had been the one who came up with the idea of swapping, but he would never accept it if others were the ones to suggest it and mess with his marriage.”

“No way, he can’t be so stubborn, can he?” Ruth could not seem to believe it.

“This isn’t about being stubborn. It’s the sense of superiority that he was born with. Simply put, he’s the only person who’s allowed to be in charge, and no one else is allowed to challenge that,” Dustin expounded.

“You say it like it’s already set in stone. Well, what if Kate succeeds?” Ruth challenged.

“Of course, it’s best if she succeeds, but all I’m saying is that you shouldn’t be on high hopes.” Dustin wasn’t entirely sure either.

“Ruth, go wait in the meeting room. Inform me as soon as you get any news,” Natasha instructed.

“Alright.” Ruth nodded and left.

Around dusk, Jacob and Kate finally returned to the Harmon estate. They didn't look too pleased.

"How'd it go, Jacob? Did Tyler agree to it?" Trent immediately stood up and asked Jacob the

moment he saw the two of them coming in through the doors.

"Like hell, he agreed!" Jacob was riled up. "Tyler Grant is as stubborn as a mule! No matter what I said or what offers I made him, he simply refused to agree! He insists on marrying Natasha, and that's the end of the discussion. He even threatened us, saying that if Natasha did not appear as his bride on the day of the wedding, he'd bring his troops in and annihilate all of us Harmons!" A commotion broke out in a split second.

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“What? He threatened to send his troops?” Everyone was startled by the news Jacob brought. They had all thought that things would run smoothly. As long as Tyler agreed to their proposal, the marriage alliance would still be on. Who’d have thought that this was how things turned out?

“I just don’t get it. What am I lacking compared to Natasha? Why would Tyler refuse to marry me?” Kate hissed through gritted teeth, livid. As a woman, she had lowered herself so much by going to

the Grants

to offer her hand in marriage. Not only had Tyler not appreciated the gesture and thrown her out, but he also did not even spare her a glance once the entire time! It was pure

humiliation!

“So Tyler rejected the swap, and Natasha refuses to marry him. Now what?” Someone asked.

“I say we go head–on against them!” Kate exclaimed in frustration. “Since Tyler isn’t showing us any respect, I don’t see why we should honor them either!”

“Watch your words, Kate!” Trent immediately stopped her from continuing. They never knew who might be listening in on them, so they had to practice caution with every word they said.

“You’re the leader of the family, Hector. You decide!” Jacob took his seat huffily and downed an

entire cup of tea. He had been thoroughly put to shame at the Grants earlier on and needed something to calm his nerves.

“Since the suggestion for the swap has been rejected, we’ll have to find other means of getting out of the wedding alliance,” Hector said gravely.

“Here’s my plan. I’ll have my 50th birthday celebration in advance, and hold it on the same day as the wedding. I’ll organize a huge banquet and invite everyone we know.”

“A celebration for your 50th birthday?” Nobody seemed to understand what Hector had in mind. How would it help to have his birthday celebration in advance?

“What you’re suggesting, Hector, is to pressure the Grants into backing off with the celebration?” Trent seemed to catch on very quickly.

“Precisely.” Hector nodded. “Since Tyler insists on forcing Natasha into the marriage, I’ll hold a huge celebration on the same day, and invite all the rich and famous that we know. I’m sure the Grants would dare not act rashly in the presence of all the elites.”

“You make a good point there ...” Trent considered as he rubbed his chin. “We have always made sure to stay in others’ good books and made many valuable connections. It’s time we showed the Grants who we have behind us. It might make them stop and rethink their choices before acting recklessly.”

“Hector, your suggestion is only a temporary solution. At the end of the day, the root of the problem still exists. What will we do if Tyler really sends his troops?” Jacob went straight to the point. The Grants were so powerful because they had strong military backgrounds. That was the only reason why nobody dared to mess with them, and the sole reason why the Harmons feared

them

“I’ve considered that too, so I’ve contacted Sir Moran in hopes that he’d be able to help us,” Hector said. Sir Moran was a regional deputy chief who was immensely powerful, and based on military

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ranks, he was considered Tyler’s superior.

“Will Sir Moran agree to help us?” Jacob had his doubts.

“Jayla had put Sir Moran’s daughter in trouble before. Though she might be dead now, the hatred he has for them will not vanish just like that. We will make use of this and have him help us out,”

Hector explained.

“If you really do get Sir Moran on our side, then there’s still hope for us!” Trent looked hopeful.

“I’ll try my best to persuade Sir Moran before the birthday banquet!” Hector announced resolutely. Sir Moran’s powers were their only hope of getting through the mess with the Grants.

“Why would you need to go to anyone else for help when I’m here, Uncle Hector?” A deep voice boomed in the meeting room. Soon after, a well-built man in a military uniform walked in with his head held high, and trailing behind him were two adjutants.

“Dylan?” The crowd was pleasantly surprised to see the man because he was none other than Dylan Harmon, Jacob’s son!

Dylan was stationed at the country’s borders year-round and would only be home once a year. Nobody had expected him to be back so soon!

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“Why are you back so soon, Son? Weren’t you warding off enemies at the borders?” Jacob quickly went up to his son joyfully once he snapped out of the initial shock of seeing Dylan.

“Everything’s peaceful over at the borders now, so I took a few days off to come back for a bit.” Dylan chuckled.

“Good, that’s good... It’s great to see you back! I haven’t seen you in a year! You look even more ripped now!” Jacob patted Dylan on the back delightedly. He was pleased with his son’s achievements. Out of all the members of the younger generation in the Harmons, Dylan was the most accomplished of all.

“I’ve got good news, Dad. I’ve been promoted! I’m now a high-ranking commander in the Dark Panther Cavalry. I’ve got over a thousand men working under me!” Dylan announced proudly.

“What? A high-ranking commander?” An excited chatter broke out among the crowd, who were all delightfully surprised to hear that. There were also some who were envious of his progress.

As a high-ranking commander, he was just one step away from becoming a deputy general, and Dylan wasn’t even 30 years old yet! To achieve what he had now, especially at such a young age, Dylan had a bright future ahead!

“Hahaha! Great! That’s amazing!” Jacob laughed heartily. “My son is amazing! He’s been promoted again in just a year! I’m proud of you, Son!”

“Like father, like son!” Trent exclaimed enviously. “You’ll be as great as Tyler Grant, if not better than him in the future, Dylan!”

“The Harmon family has produced yet another amazing talent!” Hector was pleased too. Dylan wasn’t far off from becoming a general if he was already a high-ranking commander before the age of 30.

“Congratulations, Dylan! You’ve attained the greatest heights out of all of us! Don’t forget about me when you make it big one day!” Kate sucked up to Dylan.

“What are you saying, Kate? We’re family! If you ever need anything, just let me know!” Dylan reassured with a pat on his chest.

“Hahaha! You’re the best!” Kate giggled.

“Right, Dad, you were talking about the Grants. What about them?” Dylan changed the topic.

“Well, this is how things are right now...” Jacob briefed Dylan about everything that went on in the family.

After Dylan heard what had happened, he laughed. “Dad, Uncle Hector, don’t you worry! With me here, Tyler won’t dare to step out of line.”

“You may be a high-ranking commander, Dylan, but Tyler is a general. I’m afraid...” Jacob left his sentence hanging. It was true that his son was capable and brilliant, but he was still lower in power compared to Tyler.

“Dad! Don’t forget that I’m from the Dark Panther Cavalry! Even deputy generals have to treat me with respect!” Dylan boasted conceitedly.

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The Dark Panther Cavalry differed from ordinary units. They were the best of the best, and all the high-ranking commanders from the Dark Panther Cavalry were elites. If they were to be

transferred to other units, they could easily be promoted to deputy generals. That was the prestige of the Dark Panther Cavalry.

“Dylan, Tyler is not just a deputy general. He’s been given the title of General Lionheart, and he’s an official of the third rank!” Jacob reminded him.

“So what if he’s a third-ranking official?” Dylan scoffed condescendingly. “My general is the Scarlet Warrior, who is well-known across the whole of Dragonmarsh! And she’s a first-ranking official!”

“What? The Scarlet Warrior?” Everyone was astonished.

The Scarlet Warrior was one of the two aces of the Spanner family. She was on par with Adam Spanner, the God of War, and was also the only female general in Dragonmarsh, earning her the title of Goddess of War. Her achievements were extraordinary, and she was skilled in both civil and military strategies, which was why she had such high military standing. Almost everyone in Dragonmarsh knew her.

“My son! I never knew that your general was the Scarlet Warrior! That’s awesome!” Jacob was both surprised and elated. It was an honor not only for Dylan himself but even for the whole Harmon family to have him fight alongside the Scarlet Warrior.

“Well, Dad, do you still reckon that Tyler would act recklessly now?” Dylan asked with his chin lifted high. Though he did not exactly hold a high military

position himself, he had the Scarlet Warrior backing him up. With such strong connections, who would dare mess with him?

“Hahaha! Even Tyler has to give way to the Scarlet Warrior! He’s no match for her!” Jacob laughed triumphantly.

“That’s great! There’s hope for us!” The rest of the family cheered.

What a turn of events! With Dylan’s return, the Harmons finally had hopes of turning the tables. The Grants were in for a shock on the day of the birthday banquet!

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Over the next few days, the Harmons began sending out invitations and busied themselves with preparations for Hector’s 50th birthday celebration. As one of the Fabulous Five, the Harmons were a large family with lots of connections, and the leader of the family, Hector, was widely revered. Hence, when news got out that Hector was celebrating his birthday, it sent almost half the city into an excited frenzy. Countless celebrities, wealthy elites, and influential figures were eager to attend the event.

Bright and early in the Harmon estate five days later, the entire household bustled with activity. It was truly a grand affair, as not only was it Hector’s birthday celebration, but it was also the day that Tyler was coming for Natasha. The Harmons needed all the support they could get to pressure Tyler into backing off.

Back in her room, Natasha studied her face in the mirror, admiring how fair and supple her skin was now. She was pleasantly surprised by how well the wound healed. She had steered clear of mirrors for quite a while after her face was wounded, as she dreaded seeing the state her face was in.

But now, there was absolutely no trace of the ghastly wound, and it did not even leave behind a scar. In fact, her skin seemed to glow under Dustin’s careful nursing. It was apparent that Dustin’s ointment was not only capable of healing wounds, but it also had beautifying effects.

“Who’d have thought that your ointment was so effective, Dear? There’s not even the slightest hint of a scar!” Natasha caressed her face in awe.

“I told you that there wouldn’t be a scar, didn’t I? Do you trust me now?” Dustin smiled.

“This is brilliant! Immortunol can restore a person’s beauty, and this ointment can heal wounds without leaving a scar. If we put both of them together, they’d be a hit!” A superb idea hit Natasha then and there, and her eyes lit up. “Can you produce this ointment in large volumes, Dear? With advertising done right, I’m certain this will be our next bestseller!”

“You’ve got such a sharp mind! But I’m afraid I’m going to have to let you down this time.” Dustin shook his head with an amused smile. “The ingredients used for this ointment are too precious. Some of them are worth their weight in gold, so it’d be tough to manufacture them in bulk. I only make them for my own use.”

“What a shame.” Natasha was disappointed at the missed opportunity to haul in yet another fortune. As a self-made businesswoman, it was almost instinctive for her to identify and seize every opportunity to generate income and profit.

“Of course, if you think that it’s got potential, I can change up the formula a bit,” Dustin suggested. “I can swap out the rare herbs for other more common ingredients, and it’ll bring down the cost by

several folds. However, the effects will be affected

“How so? Will it still be able to heal wounds without leaving scars and rejuvenate the skin?” Natasha probed.

“Of course, it will, but it’ll take a longer time for wounds to heal,” Dustin answered.

“That wouldn’t be a problem as long as it could work.” Natasha’s eyes lit up again.

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“Alright, I’ll pass you the formula in a few days then.” Dustin smiled.

“We’ve got a deal! As usual, we’ll split the profit in half!” Natasha beamed at him. She was glad to have found yet another source of income, and she was confident that as long as they advertised it well, this ointment would generate no less income for them than the Immortunol had.

“Sis...” Just then, Ruth came in through the door. “Dad wants to meet you in the meeting room.”

“Okay.” Natasha nodded and was about to bring Dustin along with her.

“Sis, Dad said that he wants to meet you alone,” Ruth said.

“Alone?” Natasha raised a brow.

“Maybe it’s something private,” Dustin said as he shot her a smile. “Run along; I’ll wait for you in the banquet hall.”

“Okay. I’ll be back soon.” Natasha then quickly left with Ruth. Dustin stretched lazily before he left for the banquet hall.

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It was the day of Hector’s 50th birthday celebration, and many elites and prominent figures showed up for the event. Though the banquet had yet to commence, there was already quite a crowd in the banquet hall, and more guests arrived as time went on.

“Dustin? What are you doing here?” Dustin heard a woman ask from behind him. He turned around to see several familiar faces that he had met once, quite some time ago. They were Adriana, Zoey, Gordon, Zeke, and several others. These were Natasha’s classmates from her school days.

The first time he met them, Adriana had some troubles due to her contract and was harassed by a manager working for the Langfords. He had helped her out of the situation and beaten up the manager. After Luis Langford returned to Stonia, Dustin had never met these people again, so it was quite a surprise to meet them again.

“Hey! I asked you a question! Why are you not answering me? How rude!” Zoey was displeased by

his reaction, or rather, the lack of it.

“Of course, I’m here to celebrate Mr. Harmon’s birthday. Why else would I be here?” Dustin stated calmly. Apart from Adriana, this bunch of people had not left a good impression on him.

“Hah! I see you’re still hounding Natasha! Don’t you know where you stand?” Zeke ridiculed.

“I’ve got a piece of advice for you, Dustin. Natasha is the heiress of a wealthy family. She’s way out

of your league, so you better take a good look in the mirror before you come badgering her,” Gordon said meanly.

They saw Dustin as nothing more than a typical boy toy who had no means of providing for

himself and only knew how to sweet-talk women, so they deemed him unfit for their sophisticated circle.

“You should stop looking down on others. How do you know that she’s out of my league?” Dustin

asked.

“Hah! You’re just a country doctor with no social standing, a prominent background, or any skills. How could you ever be good enough for Natasha?” Gordon questioned condescendingly.

“How ignorant.” With a shake of his head, Dustin turned to leave. He could not be bothered to exchange words with such close-minded people. To begin with, it wasn’t like they were chummy, so he saw no need to engage in a conversation with them.

“You stand right there!” Zoey blocked his way and frowned as she reproached him. “What’s up with your attitude, Dustin? Had Gordon not spoken to Mr. Langford on your behalf back when you beat up their manager, they’d most likely have maimed you so badly

that you'd be crippled now! Gordon saved you! But not only are you unappreciative of his kindness, you even give him such an attitude? Do you have any manners?"

"Exactly! You've got Gordon to thank for helping you out! Do you think you'd still be alive had it not been for him?" Zeke echoed.

When Gordon heard what they had to say about him, he straightened up and puffed up his chest proudly.

"He saved me?"

Dustin found them ridiculous. "You lot must be deluded. I did teach the man a lesson; there's no mistaking that. But I definitely did not need any saving from Gordon. Besides, he isn't capable of doing so either."

"What?" Gordon's expression darkened when he heard Dustin's words. "Who do you think you are? And who are you to say whether or not I'm capable of doing anything?"

"Well, am I wrong? If you were capable of saving me, then why didn't you do anything when you were beaten up?" Dustin refuted.

"You-

"Gordon was silenced. It was still embarrassing for him to recall how the Langford manager had busted his head with a bottle.

"Stop spouting nonsense, Rhys!" Zeke glared at him and raised his voice. "They had the numbers, and we were at a disadvantage; that was the only reason why we endured it. We made them pay for it after!"

"That's right! Only a brute would act hastily. Gordon's a gentleman, it's only a given that he wouldn't lower his standards to that of a brute's!" Zoey parroted.

"Better to be a brute than a chicken." Dustin didn't hold back. "You took everything they did to you without so much as a protest; how dare you brag and talk smack to me now?"

They all flushed in embarrassment at Dustin's words.

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“Y-

you, you ... What did you just say?! Where are your manners, you uncultured swine? How vulgar!” Zoey was upset by Dustin’s words. Although Dustin calmly spoke, his words hit right where they hurt.

“You’re right! A country bumpkin will always be a country bumpkin! He’s got no manners at all!” Zeke was livid. With his privileged background and high educational status, he had never been insulted in such a manner, much less by someone who he considered much lower in status than him.

“The way I behave depends on the person I’m talking to. Do you expect me to treat you with respect when you’re blatantly belittling me?” Dustin asked coldly.

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“You!” Zoey clenched her jaws and found that she was at a loss for words.

“Come on, we’re all Natasha’s friends. Let’s not make things ugly over a small matter.” Adriana quickly tried to smooth things over and ease the tension when she saw that things were starting to escalate. It was Mr. Harmon’s 50th birthday celebration today. There was no doubt they’d be creating trouble for the Harmons if they were to have a row there.

“Forget it. Let’s just ignore the loser. We don’t want to stoop down to his level.” Gordon swiftly collected himself and shot Dustin a scornful look.

“You’re right. It’s wasted effort debating with uncultured people.” Zoey shot Dustin a side-eye.

“Hah! He’s just a boy toy with a glib tongue. What else is he capable of?” Zeke insulted.

“Chicken.” Dustin spat before finding a seat by the side and proceeded promptly to ignore them.

“You!” They were so irked that they almost lost their cool again. They had started out intending to disgrace Dustin in order to make him stay away from Natasha and to flaunt their superiority, but in the end, they failed miserably. Not only did they not gain an upper hand over Dustin, he even put them to shame. It was frustrating indeed!

Just as they were still indignant over the unpleasant exchange, a commotion broke out by the entrance. They looked up to see a hunky man clad in military uniform, with two adjutants following behind him. Following close beside him was a charming woman with a shapely figure.

“Hey, who’s the army man? He looks so cool!” Zoey’s eyes lit up.

“If I’m not mistaken, he should be Mr. Jacob’s son, Dylan Harmon!” Gordon answered.

“Dylan Harmon? What a nice name!” Zoey’s eyes remained glued to Dylan.

“As far as I know, Dylan’s a high-ranking commander in an elite unit. He’s just one step away from becoming a general. He has a mighty bright future ahead!” Gordon exclaimed enviously.

Dylan's return had been quite the talk of the town recently. Countless scions of prominent families tried their best to curry favor with him due to his high military position and also because he was from the Dark Panther Cavalry.

"He is hot, comes from a wealthy family, and to top it all off, he is crazy talented. Where do you find a man like this? I think I'm in love!" Zoey swooned over Dylan with hearts coming out of her eyes. He was powerful, rich, and, most importantly, handsome. Was he not the embodiment of the

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man of her dreams?

"Zoey, I don't mean to discourage you, but people like Dylan are bound to have crazy high standards. They won't fall for the regular girl," Gordon reminded her.

"Nothing is for sure. I have the advantage of having Natasha on my side. Who knows? Things might just work out?" Zoey wasn't the least bit discouraged by Gordon's reminder. She wasn't about to let such an exceptional man slip past her fingers now that he had appeared in front of

her.

"Hey Gordon, who's the lady beside Dylan Harmon? She's beautiful and very elegant, I must say!" As opposed to Zoey, Zeke had his eyes on the lady.

"She's Dylan's cousin and Mr. Trent's daughter, Kate Harmon," Gordon introduced.

"Kate Harmon? That's a sweet name!" Zeke rubbed his chin and asked cheekily, "Say, do you think I stand a chance, Gordon?"

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“You have just about as much chance of winning her over as I have with Natasha,” Gordon told him bluntly. Kate was as beautiful as Natasha, so it would not be easy to court her.

Zeke laughed. He said excitedly, “Then we’ll both have to work harder!”

“The Harmon family has such perfect genes! Every one of them looks gorgeous. If I marry Dylan, I’m sure we’ll have such beautiful babies!” Zoey exclaimed giddily. Her words left the rest of them speechless. She had not even so much as spoken a word with him, and she was already thinking about having his babies?

“Hey! It looks like they’re coming our way! Could he have noticed my beauty so soon? Oh no! Is my makeup in perfect condition?” Zoey was overjoyed to see Dylan walking in their direction and immediately whipped out her compact mirror to touch up her makeup. Gordon and Zeke swiftly sucked in their stomach and puffed up their chests, trying to look like distinguished gentlemen. “Dylan, that guy in white is Dustin Rhys, Natasha’s good-for-nothing boyfriend. Had it not been for him, our family would not be in such trouble. Besides, my brother Quentin’s death was also because of him!” Kate caught sight of Dustin sipping on his tea the moment she came in through the door. A cold glint of hatred flashed in her eyes.

“Why is Natasha still hanging around such a pain in the neck? Has she been blinded by him?” Dylan was annoyed by his presence.

“It’s too bad I’m a woman, or I’ll make sure to teach him a good lesson!” Kate egged on.

“Leave the dirty job to me, Kate. I’ll make sure he learns a lesson he’ll never forget!” A wicked smile spread across Dylan’s face as he took a glass of wine from a nearby waiter and discreetly added some unknown powder to it.

“What did you put in the wine, Dylan?” Kate was quick to notice Dylan’s actions as she stood right beside him.

“Nothing much, just a potent laxative.” Dylan smirked. “As soon as he drinks it, he will lose control over his bowels and shit himself within minutes. I like to see if he’ll still have the balls to stick around the Harmon family after that.”

“You have such a brilliant idea!” Kate’s eyes sparkled. Dustin wouldn’t be able to face anyone after wetting and soiling himself in front of an audience. What Dylan was about to pull would absolutely crush Dustin!

“Just wait and see, Kate. I’ll get you your revenge.” Dylan winked at her before approaching Dustin with his men.

“He’s coming, he’s coming! He’s really coming our way!” Zoey was so excited she was on the verge of losing her composure when she saw Dylan approaching. Without waiting any longer, she stood up to greet him. “Mr. Harmon ...” The rest of her sentence was left stuck in her throat as Dylan walked past her without sparing her a glance and stopped in front of Dustin.

“What?” They were all left frozen in place awkwardly, as they had all assumed that Dylan was heading toward them, when in fact, he had been heading toward Dustin.

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“You’re Dustin Rhys?” Dylan looked down his nose at Dustin arrogantly. “I’ve heard that you’re quite close with my cousin, Natasha, and that you’ve helped her out of some tough situations. As a token of my appreciation, I’d like to share a drink with you.”

With that, Dylan handed him the glass of wine he was holding. That left Zoey and the rest of them gaping in awe. It was beyond their expectation that someone like Dylan, who held a high military position and had a promising future, would offer Dustin a drink. Who was Dustin to deserve such a show of respect?

As Zoey, Gordon, and the rest looked on with envy, Dustin glanced at the glass of wine and spat icily, “I’m not drinking that. Get lost.” A deathly silence fell over the crowd.

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“I’m not drinking that. Get lost.” Dustin’s words were short and sweet, but he brought a deathly

hush over the hall.

All eyes were on Dylan the moment he entered. There were numerous people present who would do anything to gain his favor, so when they witnessed Dylan offering Dustin a drink, the onlookers, including Zoey, Gordon, and Zeke, were astonished. Jealous, even. It was definitely something worth bragging about to have someone like Dylan offer you a drink. However, they had never expected Dustin to actually turn him down and even arrogantly dismiss him. What was the meaning of that? Was Dustin really so full of himself?

“What did you just say?” Not only were the onlookers surprised, but even Dylan couldn’t believe his ears. He was a Harmon, a high-ranking commander in the Dark Panther Cavalry, and a future general! No matter where he went, people would fawn over him and go out of their way to please him. Just a smile from him could make someone’s day, so shouldn’t regular people feel honored

that he’d offer them a drink? How dare this rascal turn down the wine he had offered?

“Didn’t you hear me? I said, get lost,” Dustin repeated himself in the same cold manner.

“How dare you?”

“You insolent bastard!”

“You’ve crossed the line!”

The crowd was in an uproar. All those who were trying to get into Dylan’s good books stood up for him, hurling profanities at Dustin. People who weren’t in the know might have thought they held some deep-seated grudge against Dustin.

“Is that scoundrel out of his damn mind? How dare he speak so rudely to a commander?” Zoey was

bewildered. She had never imagined that Dustin would be so daring as to behave with such insolence toward Dylan. He obviously held no regard for Dylan's status and position.

"Hah! He's going to get what he deserves for being so arrogant! I'd like to see how Dylan is going to deal with him!" Zeke gloated gleefully at Dustin's impending misfortune.

"What an idiot!" Gordon shook his head with a smile on his face.

Adriana remained quiet, worry creeping into her eyes. Dustin had left quite a good impression on

her, and she could tell he was a responsible and courageous man. However, she had to admit that

he had acted too rashly.

"You bastard! How dare you disrespect my superior? I'll shoot you in the head!" An adjutant roared furiously, it had taken him a brief moment to react.

"I don't believe you will," Dustin calmly replied.

"You!" The adjutant choked on his words. Had they been at the borders, he'd already have shot Dustin many times over, but with so many civilian onlookers, he dared not act impulsively.

"Do you know who I am, punk? How dare you speak to me like that?" Dylan asked icily, a menacing glint in his eyes. He was not going to let this scoundrel, who had just humiliated him in public, off so easily.

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"So what if I do? My answer remains the same. I'm not drinking that, so buzz off." Dustin wasn't

intimidated by him.

Dylan was so infuriated that he burst out laughing. "I see you want to do this the hard way, you bastard! There has never been anyone who's disgraced me

in such a manner before. Let me make it clear, if you don't finish this glass of wine, there's no way you're walking out that door!" Dylan's

words were clearly a threat.

"Hey, it's an honor to have Mr. Harmon offer you a drink! If you know what's good for you, just take

it, man!"

"That's right! Drink up, or you'll be sorry!"

Many of the onlookers chimed in, taking Dylan's side.

"Dustin, my cousin has quite a nasty temper. You better drink up, or he'll be sure to kick up a fuss,

"Kate egged him

on with a mocking expression. She was dying for things to get out of hand so that Natasha and Dylan would be at opposite ends, and she'd be able to reap the greatest benefit

out of the fiasco, which was having Dylan on her side.

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Chapter 558

"Whoever wants the drink can have it, but it's not going to be me." Dustin remained unfazed by the comments and derogatory remarks hurled his way.

"Well, that's not up to you!" Dylan's expression turned cold. "Boys, make him drink it!"

'Yes, sir!' The two adjutants immediately went up to Dustin, ready to force the drink down his throat

"Buzz off." With two backhanded slaps, Dustin sent the two adjutants sprawling on the ground, blood streaming from their noses and their teeth broken. They scrambled to get back up but failed miserably.

“Holy shit! The guy’s getting violent!” The onlookers were startled and enraged by what they saw. Assaulting military personnel was a major offense, and when the situation called for it, they were authorized to use their guns.

“You’ve got a death wish, you bastard!” Dylan finally had it when he saw the two adjutants being slapped. He swiftly threw a punch at Dustin’s face. As a high-ranking commander of the Dark Panther Cavalry, it went without saying that he was skilled in martial arts. Currently, he was an entry level divine martial artist, considered one of the best among his peers.

Dustin did not duck or sidestep Dylan’s punch. Instead, he grabbed Dylan’s incoming fist with his bare hand. A dull thud resonated as Dylan’s fist made contact with Dustin’s palm. Dylan was utterly shocked, struggling to comprehend how Dustin could achieve such a feat. Though he had yet to exert his full force, he was a divine-level martial artist! Just a light punch from him was enough to send a regular person flying. He was certain that Dustin was also a skilled martial artist.

“I see you’re well-versed in martial arts too. No wonder you’re so arrogant. I suppose I’ll have to show you what I’m capable of today.” Dylan declared, removing his coat. He was ready to go all out. Though Dustin had managed to catch his punch, Dylan still had the confidence that he’d be able to pulverize him.

“I’ve been putting up with you for Natasha’s sake. I do not wish to hurt you, but if you insist on taking advantage of my kindness, I’m afraid I’ll not be so polite anymore,” Dustin said coldly.

“Hurt me? Hahaha! What a joke!” Dylan looked at Dustin contemptuously. “Do you think that you can act so arrogantly just because you think you know some martial arts? Just so you know, I could easily kill you with just a flick of my finger!”

“Is that so? By all means, go ahead.” Dustin remained unfazed.

“Very well, I’ll teach you a lesson today that there are always people out there who are better than you!”

Just as Dylan channeled his true energy and was about to attack, a loud voice boomed throughout the hall.

“Hold it right there!” Hector marched in with several others behind him. “What’s going on here? It’s my birthday celebration today, and you’re at each other’s throats?” Hector’s burning gaze swept across the hall. Anyone who met his eyes immediately lowered their heads, paying respect to the leader of the Harmon family.

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“Uncle Hector, this guy started it!” Dylan pointed an accusing finger at Dustin. “I offered him a drink as a gesture of appreciation, but not only did he refuse it, he even went so far as to insult me! I couldn’t stand it, so I thought I’d teach him a lesson!”

“Is that true?” Hector’s eyes narrowed.

“I can vouch for Dylan, Uncle Hector. Dustin was so proud and rude, and he had completely no respect for the Harmon family,” Kate piped up.

“That’s right, we can attest to that too! The rascal had no regard for propriety, and he really crossed the line!” The onlookers stood up for Dylan. From what they saw, Dustin was clearly the one who picked the fight.

“Hang on, there must be some confusion. I don’t believe Dustin would do something like that!” Natasha defended Dustin.

“Natasha, with so many eyewitnesses here, are you really going to stand up for him?” Kate scoffed.

“Do you have anything to say about this, Dustin?” Hector turned his attention to him.

“It’s true that I refused the drink Dylan offered me.” Hector frowned when he heard that. Even Natasha was caught off guard.

“See, Uncle Hector? You heard it from him. He admitted it himself!” Dylan smirked, shooting Dustin a taunting look.

But what Dustin said next left the smirk frozen on his face. “And that’s because he spiked the drinkK ...

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Chapter 559

“He spiked the wine?” Everyone looked at Dylan in shock. If that was the case , then it would make sense for Dustin to refuse the drink.

“You What nonsense!” Dylan had a sinking feeling, but he forced himself to appear composed as he roared, “Do you know who I am? Why would I spike your drink? You’re dragging my reputation through the mud!” He had no idea how Dustin could tell that the wine had been spiked, but there was no way he was going to admit to doing it.

“That’s right! My cousin offered you a drink, and you not only turned him down , but you even accused him of such dirty tricks? You truly are cunning!” Kate feigned anger.

“Hah! I think someone’s just here to cause trouble!”

“What a heinous crime to slander a military officer!”

“We should just kick him out! He’s despicable!”

In a clamor of voices, the crowd accused and scolded Dustin. With their preconceived notions, they clearly believed Dylan more than they did Dustin.

“Dustin, do you have any proof for claiming that Dylan spiked the wine?” Hector asked.

“Exactly! Don’t go around making accusations without any proof!” Some of the Harmons were indignant.

“You want proof? It’s simple.” Dustin picked up the glass of wine and placed it in front of Dylan. “Since you claim that you didn’t spike it, why don’t you drink it his to prove there’s nothing wrong with the wine?”

Dylan's face fell. He would make a mess of himself if he drank that.

"Why should he? Just because you say so? Who do you think you are?" Kate defended Dylan.

"That's right! Who do you think you are? And what right do you have to make me drink it?" Dylan challenged.

"Oh, so you dare not drink it then?" Dustin sniggered.

"If the wine hasn't been spiked, Dylan, then what's the harm in drinking it?" Natasha had a slight smile on her face. She could tell from his reaction that Dylan had indeed spiked the wine, but Dustin saw through his tricks at once, and that was what gave rise to the conflict between them.

"We believe in you, Mr. Harmon! It's just a glass of wine. Drink it and show him!"

"That's right! Prove it to him that you have done no such thing! Put him to shame!"

"Yes, Dylan, drink it! We're all rooting for you!"

The crowd began cheering Dylan on, acting like they were all that righteous.

The corners of Dylan's lips twitched as he sweated profusely. With so many eyes on him, he'd raise suspicion if he refused to drink the wine, but if he did, he'd lose control over his bowels and make a fool of himself. He'd be in such a terrible mess. Caught in a dilemma, he had no way out of the predicament. He had only intended to teach Dustin a lesson. Who'd have guessed he'd put

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himself in such a difficult position?

"Alright, alright! Let's not cause a scene here!" Noticing that something wasn't right, Trent called out to the crowd to defuse the situation. "Today's a special day. Let's not spoil it over some petty issues! Please be seated, everyone. The banquet will start shortly!"

The crowd quietened down upon hearing his words. Most of them who had their wits around could already guess the truth behind the whole debacle. However, out of respect for the Harmon family, they kept quiet and feigned ignorance.

“Consider yourself lucky, you bastard! I’m only letting you off the hook for Uncle Hector’s sake, as it’s his birthday celebration today!” Dylan spat menacingly before he turned and took his seat. He thanked his lucky stars that his Uncle Trent came out at the right moment to smooth things over, sparing him from an embarrassing situation. But despite the circumstances, he still had to gain an upper hand over Dustin.

The disturbance was finally brought to a halt by Trent’s interference. However, Natasha was left disgruntled. “Dad, Dylan was obviously the one who started it. Are you just going to let it slide?”

“We have more important matters to deal with today. We cannot afford to mess up now,” Hector said gravely as he shook his head. Of course, he could tell what had transpired, but at this point, they were banking on Dylan’s position to put pressure on Tyler, so he could not tell Dylan off even if he was at fault. At the moment, it was crucial for the family to stand united.

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Chapter 560

“That’s it?”

Natasha was extremely displeased. Naturally, she wasn’t willing to swallow her anger when her man was being mistreated.

“Natasha, let’s look at the big picture. Why don’t you sit down?” Hector gave her a look. Then, he led the others to sit at the tables allocated for the Harmons. The ten tables at the very front of the ballroom were designated for the core members of the Harmon family as well as the other bigwigs in the family. The regular guests were relegated to the back.

“Darling, I’m sorry for the injustice. I’ll definitely find an opportunity for a payback!” Natasha said through gritted teeth.

“It’s nothing but a petty issue. Don’t worry about me. Go and keep your father company.” Dustin smiled lightly. Her saying that was already good enough for him.

“What, you don’t want to sit with me?” Natasha raised an eyebrow.

“No, guests shouldn’t sit with the stars of the evening. I’ll just sit here. Not to mention, sitting too close to Dylan might invite trouble.” Dustin shook his head.

The front seats drew too much attention; he didn’t like being noticed by so many people.

“Alright.” Natasha didn’t push him further after he expressed his opinion. After greeting a few of her classmates, she returned to her seat.

After she left, Gordon suddenly said out of the blue, “Dustin, if I were you, I’d apologize to Dylan right now. You can’t afford to get on the bad side of a golden child like him!”

“Really? I guess...” Dustin couldn’t be bothered to entertain the nonsense and gave a half-assed reply.

“Hmph! You’ll find out soon enough!” Gordon chuckled coldly and said nothing more. In his eyes, with that arrogant attitude, Dustin was bound to face consequences sooner or later.

Time slowly ticked by, and more guests arrived to join the celebration. The entire ballroom was alive with chatter.

“Hey, isn’t that Mr. Reynolds from the Goldmore Group? I heard he’s worth billions and is also the top player in the mining industry!”

“Oh? Even the emerald tycoon, Mr. Dane is here?”

“Look, I think that’s Mr. Gills from the Royal Pavilion, also known as the all-powerful lord of the underworld!”

“As expected of the Harmons. I didn’t expect so many bigshots to show up. This is really impressive!”

Seeing these local celebrities enter the ballroom, Zoey and the others were bubbling with excitement. They never got to see such an extravagant display in their everyday lives. Looking across the room, they were met with the presence of prominent figures in their society, whether it was the filthy rich or the magnates in their respective fields.

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Any one of them could cause a huge ripple in the outside world. Yet, they had all gathered there.

Truly, this was an assembly of the elite and the powerful!

‘Not bad. It seems like our family still holds some influence,’ Trend said from the front-row seats, observing the lively ballroom with a wide grin.

‘Why, of course! When our family throws a birthday party, I can’t think of anyone who wouldn’t respect us enough to not attend,’ Jacob said proudly. As one of the Fabulous Five, certain connotations and pride came with it.

‘Trent, Jacob, don’t celebrate just yet. With just these people, I’m afraid we won’t be able to keep Tyler in check,’ Hector said indifferently.

‘Uncle Hector, don’t worry. With me here, Tyler wouldn’t dare act out of line!’ Dylan said haughtily. That’s right! My son holds a high position and has the support of the Scarlet Warrior. Even Tyler will have to show him some respect!’ Jacob laughed. When it came to his son, he had unconditional trust in him.

At that moment, a butler leaned close and whispered, ‘Mr. Hector, I just received word that the Grants have begun to make their move.’

‘Are they finally coming?’ Hector sucked in a deep breath. ‘Since we can’t hide, then let’s meet them head-on. We will stick to the plan!’

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Chapter 561

Meanwhile, at the Grants' mansion, Tyler sat in the study, quietly poring over war strategy books. He gave each and every word on the page his undivided attention.

Suddenly, there was a series of knocks on the door.

"What is it?" Tyler asked without turning his head.

"Mr. Grant, the big day has arrived, We should head out," an elderly voice said from outside the door

Tyler set the book down and got to his feet. After straightening his clothes, he opened the door and walked out. An aged servant stood outside the door, waiting for him with his head bowed.

"How are the Harmons reacting?" Tyler asked with an indifferent look.

"The Harmons haven't started preparing for the wedding yet. Instead, they're throwing a birthday party," the man replied.

"Birthday party?" Tyler's mouth twitched. "Is that supposed to put pressure on me? How amusing."

"Mr. Grant, should we fetch the bride another day?" the man asked tentatively.

"Since the engagement is today, it can't be changed. We'll follow the schedule as planned," Tyler said coolly. "Also, find me a coffin and bring it straight to the Harmons' home."

"A coffin?" The man was momentarily taken aback. "Mr. Grant, what do you want to do with that?"

Weren't they going to pick up the bride? What did the coffin have to do with it?

"The wedding carriage is to escort the bride, while the coffin is for bodies. If the Harmon family agrees to the marriage, I'll naturally use the

carriage. If they don't, then I'll make them lay in the coffin," Tyler said apathetically.

Upon hearing that, the man couldn't help but shudder. He knew that his master was always a man of his word. If the Harmon family didn't know what was good for them, they might end up completely destroyed!

"Why are you still standing there? Go do as I say." Tyler gave him a sidelong glance.

"Yes." Not daring to hesitate, the man immediately left.

"Hmph, you want to play games with me? Well, let's see whether you can hold off my army." Tyler laughed coldly. He didn't mind the Harmons playing tricks, but in the face of absolute power, any wile would be for naught.

At that moment, the Harmon estate was still bustling with excitement. Looking across the room, distinguished guests filled the seats. It was a gathering of the exalted; the wealthy and powerful exchanged toasts and chatted among themselves. Meanwhile, Dustin sat quietly in a corner, looking like an outsider.

In contrast, Gordon, who was sitting at the other table, wouldn't stop greeting people.

"Well, if it isn't Mr. Bolls! What a pleasure to see you!"

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"Oh, Ms. Pickens, you're here too. My father talks a lot about you."

"Hahaha, Mr. Solinsky, what a surprise to run into you here. It must be fate. Let's grab a meal together sometime."

Gordon stood, chatting and laughing with all the guests, showcasing his extensive network.

"Gordon, was that Mr. Bolls, the famous jewel tycoon?" Zeke couldn't help but ask, curious.

"That's right. Mr. Bolls has a net worth of several billions of dollars, and he owns half the jewels in Millsburg. He's a true titan in the industry!" Gordon grinned.

“No way! Gordon, you’re really impressive. How did you get to know people of such high caliber?” Zoey asked with a look of admiration.

Billionaires weren’t the kind of people you could meet just anywhere.

“Heh, not just Mr. Bolls, but Ms. Pickens is also no average Joe. She controls a substantial amount of mineral resources— you could say she’s made of money! Also, there’s Mr. Solinsky. He’s the son of an extremely wealthy man, he’s got a bright future ahead of him and a lot of power!” Gordon introduced each of them giddily, his face glowing with pride.

“Gordon, who would’ve thought you’d been hiding this all along? I have to admit, it’s amazing!” Zeke gave him a thumbs-up.

“Exactly! You’re probably the most spectacular one out of all of us!” Zoey said, buttering him up. As she spoke, she even snuck a glance at Dustin and continued cynically, “Hey, Dustin, did you see that? This is the difference between you and Gordon. Not only is he rich, but he’s also well-

connected. You’ll never reach his level in your entire lifetime!”

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“She’s right!” Zeke added. “Rhys, here’s a word of advice. You’d better leave Natasha as soon as possible, or you’d just be humiliating yourself!”

Dustin wasn’t bothered enough to entertain them. He simply minded his own business, sipping at his drink. Yet, his lofty attitude pissed them off even more.

“Hpmh, weren’t you acting all cool earlier? Has the cat got your tongue? That’s all you’re good for,” Zoey said with a cold laugh. To her, it was obvious that Dustin was feeling ashamed of himself.

“Let it go. Let him keep some of his dignity, or you’ll back him into a corner,” Gordon teased with a smile. Dustin was just a brute who knew a move or two, he really didn’t think too highly of him.

At that moment, Zoey seemed to have noticed something. She pointed at the door and asked, “Hey, who’s that? He’s really good-looking and even has a certain air about him.”

The others turned their heads to look, and their gazes fell upon a handsome man walking inside, holding a folding fan. A faint smile adorned his face, and he carried an air of grace, each movement looked effortlessly elegant.

“Damn! Isn’t that Patrick Hill, the son of the Hill family? Who would’ve thought that he’d show up too?” Zeke couldn’t help but gape at the sight of the man.

“Patrick Hill? Isn’t that one of the renowned Ten Princes of the South Province?” Zoey’s eyes widened.

“Yes, that’s him!” Zeke nodded. “That’s the top aristocrat of Millsburg! His status is even higher than Dylan’s!”

“Hahaha, this is great. Who would’ve thought we’d have the chance to see Mr. Hill here? We’ve really hit the jackpot today!” Zoey’s face lit up with excitement.

The Hill family was one of the Tremendous Three. Their power and influence could overshadow the entire Harmony family from every aspect. Naturally, the son of the Hill family would be of honorable status!

“Guys, to tell you the truth, I’m pretty friendly with Patrick,” Gordon piped up out of the blue.

“What? You actually know Mr. Hill?!” Zoey and the others’ expressions changed.

“Of course. We even had a meal and played golf together,” Gordon replied proudly.

Last year, he had indeed bumped into Patrick at a golf course. However, their interaction had been limited to exchanging greetings, and that was the extent of it.

“What the hell, Gordon? You’re amazing! You actually hit it off with Mr. Hill?” Zeke said with envy.

“It’s Gordon, after all! He’s friends with everyone and can even get along with the most influential people!” Zoey said with a look of excitement.

Hearing the two of them praise him, Gordon felt as if he was walking on air. He loved being the center of attention.

“Look, Mr. Hill is making his way over!” Zoey pointed at him joyfully. “Gordon, is he here to see you?”

“Well, only Gordon here knows Mr. Hill. Who else could it be? Let’s get ready to greet him,” Zeke said, getting excited himself.

“He’s actually heading over here?” Gordon paused briefly, taken aback. Although they had met each other before, they weren’t particularly close.

Could his moment of glory before this have refreshed Patrick’s memory and kindled the desire to befriend him? The thought filled Gordon with joy. He quickly adjusted his tie and approached

Patrick with a bright smile.

“Mr. Hill, it’s been a while,” he greeted, extending his hand.

“Huh?” Patrick raised an eyebrow. “Who are you?”

That single sentence turned Gordon to stone on the spot, his smile freezing on his face.

Zoey and the others were also stunned and confused. Didn’t he say that they were friends? What was going on?

Without waiting for a response, Patrick simply brushed past Gordon. Clearly, he had no interest in entertaining them.

To everyone’s surprise, astonishment, and bewilderment, he approached Dustin and extended his hand with a smile. “Dustin, we meet again. I’m really sorry about what happened before. I hope you can let it go.”

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“She’s right!” Zeke added. “Rhys, here’s a word of advice. You’d better leave Natasha as soon as possible, or you’d just be humiliating yourself!”

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An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 562 -

Chapter 562

"She's right!" Zeke added. "Rhys, here's a word of advice. You'd better leave Natasha as soon as possible, or you'd just be humiliating yourself!"

Dustin wasn't bothered enough to entertain them. He simply minded his own business, sipping at his drink. Yet, his lofty attitude pissed them off even more.

"Hpmh, weren't you acting all cool earlier? Has the cat got your tongue? That's all you're good for," Zoey said with a cold laugh. To her, it was obvious that Dustin was feeling ashamed of himself.

"Let it go. Let him keep some of his dignity, or you'll back him into a corner," Gordon teased with a smile. Dustin was just a brute who knew a move or two, he really didn't think too highly of him.

At that moment, Zoey seemed to have noticed something. She pointed at the door and asked, "Hey, who's that? He's really good-looking and even has a certain air about him."

The others turned their heads to look, and their gazes fell upon a handsome man walking inside, holding a folding fan. A faint smile adorned his face, and he carried an air of grace, each movement looked effortlessly elegant.

"Damn! Isn't that Patrick Hill, the son of the Hill family? Who would've thought that he'd show up too?" Zeke couldn't help but gape at the sight of the man.

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Chapter 562

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An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 563 -

Chapter 563

“What?”

Gordon and the others were dumbfounded by how politely and courteously Patrick had spoken to Dustin. Their eyes were round with disbelief.

The son of the Hill family—
one of the Ten Princes of South Province, dubbed the top aristocrat- had actually greeted that jerk with a smile?

How was that even possible?!

“No way. Dustin knows Mr. Hill?” The smile on Zoey’s face turned to ice. She had initially thought

that Patrick had walked over for Gordon, never in her wildest dreams would she have thought that he was there for Dustin. Not to mention, from the way they were acting, it seemed like they were

close.

“How the hell did that punk climb his way up to become friends with Mr. Hill?!” Shock aside, Zeke was more jealous than anything. What right did a loser have to hit it off with the top aristocrat?

“How could this be?” Gordon was rooted to the spot, astonishment written on his face. It was one thing to be ignored by Patrick, but he couldn’t come to terms with how the person he had to suck up to was so polite to Dustin.

Wasn’t Dustin just a country doctor? How did he get acquainted with a big shot of this caliber?

“It seems like there’s more to Natasha’s boyfriend than meets the eye,” Adrian muttered to

herself as she observed everything from a distance. Curiosity sparked in her eyes.

“Mr. Hill, it’s in the past. Further, it had nothing to do with you,” Dustin answered lightly.

The Hill family had already personally apologized for beating Edmund up, and Torben had also already paid the price. It would do no one any good to keep dredging things up.

“Dustin, you’re truly magnanimous. My grandfather greatly admires stand-up men like you. If you have time, I’d love to host you at my home.” Patrick extended the invite with a smile.

“Sure. When I have time, I’ll definitely pay Sir Hill a visit,” Dustin replied, nodding lightly. He deeply respected the Hill family patriarch, Paul, not just for his p

power but also for his sense of justice, his willingness to help the needy, and his ability to separate kindness and hatred

“Mr. Hill, it’s an honor to have you here, especially since you came from afar!” At that moment, Kate approached them. With a slight smile, she continued, “You’re an honored guest, so it’s only fitting that you occupy the seat of honor. Please follow me.”

“No, thank you. I’ll sit here.” Patrick politely declined with a smile before taking a seat next to

Dustin.

Seeing this, Kate’s smile stiffened slightly, but she quickly regained her composure. “Of course, Mr. Hill. Please feel free to let me know if you need anything at any time.” She didn’t push him. After giving him a final smile, she turned around and returned to her seat. Before she walked away, however, she gave Dustin an inscrutable glance.

“Just who is Dustin? How can he get on so well with Mr. Hill?” Zoey’s expression turned strange as she watched the two men chatting and smiling at the next table.

Chapter 563

“Hmph, what’s so impressive about that!” Zeke said, his voice dripping with jealousy. “To me, he’s just riding on Natasha’s coattails. Otherwise, why would Mr. Hill hold him in such high regard?”

“You’re right!” Gordon nodded in agreement. “Mr. Hill is on a different level. If it wasn’t out of respect for the daughter of the Harmon family, would he give a loser like Dustin the time of day?”

“So that’s what it is...” Zoey suddenly had an epiphany. Disdain colored her face as she said, “I actually thought he was kind of impressive, but in the end, he’s just relying on his rich girlfriend to climb up. Men like him will always struggle to reach the higher circles.”

The three of them took turns belittling Dustin. The way they saw it, it must be because Natasha was close friends with Patrick, and as the gigolo, Dustin was merely riding on her coattails.

All of a sudden, their moods improved.

Time slowly ticked by, and the party finally kicked off. After all the guests took their seats,

Hector, the birthday celebrant, raised his glass and stood. In a booming voice, he said, “Welcome,

dear friends, to my birthday celebration. I’m extremely honored. I hope you’ll enjoy the food and drink to your heart’s content!”

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 564 -

Chapter 564

“Now, I’d like to propose a toast! Hector raised his glass, swept his gaze over all the guests, and

downed his drink.

In response, everyone stood and raised their glass to toast in return.

After some small talk, it was time for the gift-giving segment.

“Mr. Harmon, here are some golden horses that I forged with my own hands. I wish you nothing.

but success in life!”

“Mr. Harmon, this crystal necklace once belonged to an ancient king. I hope you like it.”

“Mr. Harmon, this painting is an authentic masterpiece by Picasso. It’s truly a priceless treasure. That being said, I wish you the best of health and a lifetime full of smiles ahead!”

One by

one, the guests stepped up with their gifts in hand, offering their heartfelt birthday wishes. There were numerous rich and respected people among them, and this gift-giving segment was also a subtle display of comparison and competition.

The one with the rarest and most expensive gift got to show off. They could display their power and foster closer connections with the Harmons. Thus, each gift, consisting of precious treasures or rare items, was carefully chosen. Not to mention, a lot of them couldn't be bought with money alone.

Thank you, everyone, for your kind thoughts." Hector smiled, responding to all the people who had presented him with a gift.

As the room was filled with a joyous atmosphere, a loud voice suddenly rang out, "The Grant family has arrived!"

Instantly, all eyes turned toward the entrance. Under everyone's gaze, a tall, handsome man strutted in with huge strides with a servant in tow. His face was cold, and his gaze was razor-sharp. He gave off a terrifying aura—his entire body was radiating with an intense desire to kill.

All the guests shuddered, not daring to face him directly.

"Tyler Grant? It's actually Tyler Grant?!"

"Oh my god! Who would've thought that the Harmons were so respected? Even General Lionheart, Tyler Grant, personally showed up to celebrate!"

When the guests caught sight of the newcomer, they instantly burst into chatter.

Who in the South Province didn't know Tyler's name? He was widely regarded as a legendary figure. He hadn't even hit thirty yet, but he was already fraternizing with the high-ranking officials and commanded a massive army.

In the entire South Province, he was the best of the best. No one could come close to him, leaving any other genius in his shadow. For someone like him, no matter where he went, everyone kissed the ground he walked on!

"As expected of the number one prodigy of the South Province and the top of the Ten Princes! He's so handsome!" Zoey's eyes sparkled, and her heart began to flutter.

In front of Tyler, Dylan and Patrick weren't even worth mentioning! The man before them was the true prince!

"He's finally here." Natasha narrowed her eyes slightly as her pretty face turned serious. She knew that this matter had to end today.

"Tyler, now that you're here, please take a seat." Hector stood up to welcome him, smiling as though nothing had happened.

"No need," Tyler responded with indifference. "I came here today not to celebrate your birthday but to claim my bride. I want to marry Natasha Hamon!"

As he spoke, he made a few gestures with his hands. With that, eight people carried a large red carriage into the room.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 565 -

Chapter 565

"What's going on?"

The crowd glanced at each other and broke out in whispers at the sight of the wedding carriage being brought in. Wasn't it Hector's 50th birthday? It seemed like Tyler was deliberately stirring up trouble.

"Tyler, what's the meaning of this?" Hector's smile gradually disappeared. He didn't expect Tyler to cut straight to the chase right after his arrival. He was truly relentless.

"In accordance with our marriage contract, I'm picking up my bride today," Tyler stated calmly. "Marriage contract? Bride?"

"It can't be. Tyler and Natasha are engaged?"

"They're both talented and good-looking, so it's not surprising for them to be betrothed. However, this manner of retrieving the bride seems rather abrupt."

The crowd was buzzing in surprise, confusion, jealousy, and curiosity. Picking up the bride at a birthday party was an unprecedented move.

Hector stayed calm and composed. “Tyler, we’ll discuss the details of the marriage agreement later on. It’s my birthday celebration today, so I would appreciate a little consideration.”

“That won’t do, and nobody can change my mind.” Tyler refused immediately without hesitation. “Since I’ve come today, I must take her away. Natasha, please get on.”

As soon as he said that, the crowd was in an uproar. Nobody had anticipated Tyler to be that domineering. He was not only inconsiderate, he was also kidnapping the bride. This hardly resembled a conventional bride pick-up; it was a forced marriage!

“Aren’t you going too far, Tyler?” Hector’s expression turned cold. “Marriage has always been a matter of mutual consent. Aren’t you afraid of public ridicule by resorting to force?”

“I have always acted without concern for others’ opinions. Today, whether through invitation or coercion, I will marry her!” Tyler raised his voice.

“What if my daughter won’t get married?” Hector frowned slightly.

“She won’t get married?” Tyler’s lips twitched, and he snapped his fingers. Very soon, a large, black coffin was carried in by eight people. With a loud thud, they placed it down so that it was in line with the carriage and also pointed at Hector. Tyler stood in the middle, the coffin on his left. and the carriage on his right. The difference in colors was striking.

“These are my presents.” With an expressionless face, he declared, “You have two choices. Either

Natasha gets on the carriage, or you’re going to lay down in this coffin on your own.”

“The audacity!”

“How dare you!”

“Tyler Grant, you’re crossing the line!”

The Harmons protested in righteous indignation at the sight. Gifting a coffin at a birthday party

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was a blatant insult and provocation.

“Damn it! He’s too much! He’s totally disrespecting the Harmons!”

“Though he may be domineering, he undeniably can afford to act that way. It seems like trouble is looming for the Harmons!”

Although

many were upset with his behavior, nobody dared to voice it out openly. That was because no one dared to make an enemy out of the Grants.

“Tyler, are you truly intending to have a fall out with us Harmons in the presence of all my esteemed guests?” Hector frowned.

“I told you. You have two choices. Either Natasha marries me, or you die.” Tyler stood with his hands behind his back, a look of arrogance on his face, showing complete disregard for the crowd. “What insolence!”

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 566 -

Chapter 566

At that moment, Dylan suddenly shot up as he slammed the table. He bellowed, “Tyler Grant, don’t think you can act as you please just because you have some talent. We’re not easy targets!”

“Who are you? Do you have the right to talk to me?” Tyler gave him a cold glance.

“Hmph! Listen up!” Dylan straightened his chest and held his head up high. “My name is Dylan

Harmon

I’m currently a high-ranking commander of the Dark Panther Cavalry. I’ve fought over a dozen wars and slain hundreds of men!”

“A mere commander is challenging me? Where did you get your courage? You’re not even a deputy general. Tyler spoke indifferently.

“Even though I’m only a commander, Scarlet Spanner is my general! I don’t believe you’d dare challenge the Goddess of War!” Dylan responded arrogantly.

“Scarlet Spanner? Tyler frowned slightly, finally betraying a hint of emotion. As Dragonmarsh’s first Goddess of War, Scarlet had not only achieved incredible feats, she came from an influential background and possessed unparalleled martial skills. He indeed considered himself inferior to her. However, that was only for now. He was confident of surpassing her within ten years.

“What? Are you afraid?” Dylan was pleased. “Are your legs weak just by hearing her name? Let me tell you. Don’t think you can look down on people just because of your little achievements. Just so you know, the world is a big place, and there are many people better than you out there!” As soon as he said that, the Harmons clapped in agreement.

“Nicely said!”

“So what if he’s General Lionheart? He still needs to bow down to the Goddess of War!”

“Ha! You must feel ashamed now after acting so outrageously, huh?”

Seeing Tyler being humiliated, the Harmons were filled with renewed spirits, coming out of their

distress.

“He’s indeed my son. He managed to put Tyler in his place with a few words.” Standing

in the front rows, Jacob had a proud look on his face. As his son stood in the limelight, he also basked in the

glory.

“That’s right. Without Dylan here today, nobody would have been able to go up against Tyler.”

Trent flashed a wide smile.

A few other older Harmon family members were also filled with awe. "With a son like him, the

Harmons would be elevated to a higher standing!"

For a moment, Dylan became the center of attention, incomparable to anyone else. Everyone present thought highly of him.

"Hey! What are you still standing there for? Take your men and leave immediately! Don't disrupt the party!" Dylan stepped forward and gestured with his chin, a look of arrogance on his face. A talented genius? General Lionheart? In the end, he still ended up stepping all over Tyler.

Chapter 566

Suddenly, Tyler dissolved into laughter. "Do you think you can scare me by using Scarlet's name?"

"What? Aren't you going to show deference to the Goddess of War?" Dylan rebuked sharply.

"Scarlet Spanner is different from you. You're nothing but her dog! What makes you think you can show off here?" Tyler sneered.

"Y—you, you dare humiliate me?" Dylan's expression darkened.

"So what if I do? Get lost before I slice your head off!" Tyler exclaimed.

Dylan erupted in fury. "You're seeking death!" He stepped lightly, launching a powerful punch as he shot forward. He knew Tyler was a formidable opponent and had exerted all his strength into the punch. He planned on striking first and ending the fight with a single blow.

"Dylan, no!" Hector's expression shifted as he tried to stop him, but it was too late.

"What a fool." In the face of Dylan's attack, Tyler only looked at him in contempt. With a simple

point of the finger, he struck Dylan's chest.

A muffled explosion was heard as Dylan flew a good 30 feet back before crashing on the floor. It

was as if he was hit by a truck. For a moment, he turned pale and spat out blood.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 567 -

Chapter 567

“What?”

The crowd was shocked as they took in Dylan’s seriously injured figure laying on the ground. Nobody expected Tyler to defeat a high-ranking commander of the Dark Panther Cavalry with just a finger. He was too powerful. The concerning thing was that Dylan had Scarlet backing him. When Tyler injured Dylan in public, it was akin to slapping Scarlet. The crowd wondered if he was just tyrannically arrogant or fearlessly confident

“How dare you injure one of us! Do you really think we are easy targets?” After recovering from the shock, the Harmons shot up in anger. They could no longer tolerate being bullied to such an

extent

Tyler Grant! I am a commander of the Dark Panther Cavalry. If you hurt me, Scarlet will never forgive you. Dylan struggled to stand up, feeling shock and anger.

Gifted with extraordinary talents and sharp perceptions since he was a child, he had trained into a divine-level martial artist at a young age. Armed with the abilities he was proud of, he never expected to turn out that weak against Tyler.

It appears like you haven’t figured out where you stand.” Tyler looked at him in contempt. “I’d naturally give deference to Scarlet if she were here. But what are you? You’re just a worthless piece of trash hiding behind someone else’s power. How dare you threaten me? Not to mention, the Dark Panther Cavalry has two hundred thousand troops, and over a hundred of them are high-ranking commanders. With Scarlet’s position, she probably doesn’t even know who you are. What makes you think you can flaunt your power here?”

Dylan's expression shifted with his words. He couldn't believe Tyler saw through him. He was indeed a high-ranking commander of the Dark Panther Cavalry. However, he wasn't even qualified to meet Scarlet on a typical day. As part of the Dark Panther Cavalry, he had gotten used to using Scarlet's name to boast. No matter where he went, he could act as he pleased. However, he hadn't anticipated encountering such a difficult person like Tyler today. He couldn't win against him in a fight and failed to intimidate him. For a moment, he was at a loss.

"Why are you silent? Have I hit the mark? What useless trash." Tyler shook his head in disdain.

"Cut the crap! I'm her trusted aide!" Dylan yelled as he hid his cowardice. He could only continue

the act for now.

"Trusted aide?" The corner of Tyler's lips curved up into a smile. "Alright, I'll give you a chance. I'll let the Harmons go if you can get Scarlet to come here."

"She's stationed at the border. How can she just come here at will?" Dylan yelled.

"She doesn't have to show up, then. Give her a call. If the line connects, I'll consider it a win." Tyler settled on a compromise.

"I..." Dylan's expression froze. With his status, he couldn't even interact with Scarlet, let alone have her personal contact information

"Dylan, stop holding back! Just give her a call. I'd like to see if Tyler would still dare stir up trouble,

Jacob said in discontent.

1/2

"That's right, show him the power of Dragonmarsh's Goddess of War!" The Harmons started

clamoring.

They knew asking her to appear would be difficult, but making a call would be easy. After all, Dylan was a high-ranking commander. He would definitely be taken seriously.

“Fine! I’ll make the call!” Realizing that he couldn’t avoid it, Dylan immediately took out his phone and started his act of needing help.

“Don’t try to tell me that Scarlet is too busy and can’t answer your call,” Tyler interrupted him coldly.

Dylan turned red as he was caught off guard by his words. He was indeed about to make an excuse to deceive him. After being exposed, he stood there dumbfounded.

“What’s the matter? It’s not connecting?” Tyler grew impatient:

“The Goddess of War is extremely busy with work, so it’s expected for her to not pick up. I’ll try again later,” Dylan bit the bullet.

“Stop acting! Get lost!”

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 568 -

Chapter 568

Tyler stomped on the ground heavily, causing a violent surge of energy to strike Dylan. Dylan staggered backward from the impact, spitting out another mouthful of blood. “You” He gritted his teeth, not daring to utter another sound. He knew he had been completely defeated.

“Tyler, you are too much!” Jacob erupted in fury at the sight of his son injured once again.

“Cut the crap! Make a choice—The carriage or the coffin?” With his hands behind his back, Tyler gave off an imposing air.

“Tyler Grant! Do you think you can suppress the entire Harmon family alone? You’re absolutely

crazy!” Jacob retorted angrily.

“Who said I’m alone?” Tyler raised his hand and snapped his fingers. “Come in.” On his orders, the sound of synchronized marching could be heard by the door. As they approached, the noise grew louder. Even the liquids on the table rippled slightly.

To everyone’s astonishment, following the sound was a group of black-clad, masked, and fully armed guards striding in with confidence. The guards were tall and muscular with sharp gazes and carried a strong presence. They looked like they had gone through numerous bloodshed, a

clear indication of them being seasoned fighters. Their presence subdued the crowd, and the number of dark barrels especially left them feeling terrified.

“Huh?” The Harmons’ expression shifted at the sight. Nobody expected Tyler to deploy a group of armed guards as backup on the day to pick up his bride. It was a terrifying sight to behold!

“Whoever is unhappy can step forward.” Tyler scanned his surroundings, looking at the crowd in arrogance and contempt. Anyone that met his gaze dropped their heads unwittingly. Who would dare step out when the armed guards have appeared? They would be seeking their own demise.

Hector frowned slightly, upset. The thing he feared the most had happened at last.

“This guy is truly outrageous!” Jacob and the rest of the Harmons gritted their teeth, but there was nothing they could do. Today seemed like the day the Harmons would face their greatest calamity.

“Oh my God, that’s how General Lionheart is? He’s too much for deploying the armed guards for a small disagreement.”

“Looking at the current situation, it seems like the Harmons are in for a rough time today.”

“Either submit or be suppressed. I wonder what the Harmons would choose.*

The guests whispered and discussed among themselves. They truly hadn't anticipated a birthday celebration to turn into a forced marriage scene.

“Natasha Harmon, nobody can help you today. You are destined to be my woman. Let's go.” Tyler walked up, his gaze threatening. When he moved, the armed guards followed. His menacing demeanor made the Harmons turn pale as they trembled in fear.

Just when everyone thought Natasha would be taken by force, a tall figure blocked Tyler's path, standing right before him with a cutting gaze.

“Have you asked me before taking her away?”

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 569 -

Chapter 569

“Have you asked me for permission before taking her away?” Dustin stood in front of Tyler, blocking his path. He had a frosty expression as he stood unyielding.

“Huh?” The guests were dumbfounded and in shock. They could not believe someone would dare to challenge Tyler. This person must've had nerves of steel.

Zoey's eyes widened in surprise. “What's Dustin doing up front? Doesn't he value his life?” Even if they disregarded Tyler's background, the armed guards behind him were terrifying enough.

Zeke sneered. “Hmph, he must have a death wish to challenge General Lionheart!” Tyler commanded the armed guards with an air of dominance. With just a single command, he could

have Dustin shot into oblivion

“Fool! He thinks he can show off in front of Tyler just because he's friends with Patrick. What a joke.” Gordon looked like he was looking at a corpse. While Patrick held a high s

ocial standing, he had no official position. He was absolutely incomparable to Tyler.

“This is spelling trouble.” Adrianna frowned slightly. Even though she admired Dustin’s courage in standing up for the woman he loved, it was too dangerous in this situation.

“You dare stop me?” With his hands still behind his back, Tyler sized him up. His chilling gaze fixed on him, like that of a predator locking onto his prey.

“Why not? Natasha has every right to refuse to marry you. I won’t allow you to force her to marry you in public,” Dustin stated calmly.

“You won’t agree?” Tyler raised an eyebrow. “So what? Do you really think you can stop me?”

“You can try. But I strongly advise against it. Otherwise, I’ll beat the shit out of you,” Dustin spat,

word for word.

“What?” The guests erupted in an uproar at his words.

“Damn! Is this kid insane? He’s incredibly daring.”

“He’s too brave for his own good!”

“He’s openly challenging General Lionheart! He must have a death wish.”

The guests broke out into a discussion, with Dustin appearing like an idiot to them. Even the Harmons were pressured into silence at Tyler’s appearance. Where did this insignificant kid get the courage to act so boldly in front of such an influential figure?

“Hmph! What an idiot!” Dylan sneered. He wasn’t a match for Tyler, let alone that loser Dustin

“He has commendable courage. Sadly, he won’t be living for long.” Kate rejoiced in his misfortune. She had always disliked Dustin, especially considering her brother’s death had something to do with him. That was why she desperately wished for a tragedy to befall him.

“Hector, you didn’t plan this, did you? What can an insignificant brat like him accomplish?” Trent was frustrated. Dustin was only making things worse by challenging Tyler.

Hector’s brows were locked in a frown as he remained silent. The time was not right, and he had to keep waiting.

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Natasha, on the other hand, sat beside him in worry, at a loss for words.

In the face of his boastful statement, Tyler let out a chuckle. “Do you know what you just said?”

“No matter what I said, I’ve given you a warning. So stop whatever you’re planning. Don’t make me hit you.” Dustin’s expression was unwavering.

“You’ve got balls.” Tyler nodded.

“I admire your bravery. Sadly, you’re not qualified to play the hero in front of me. I’ll give you three seconds. Get lost! Or die!”

The armed guards behind him raised their guns at his words, rows of gun barrels aimed directly at every part of Dustin. They would immediately shoot their target into oblivion upon their general’s

orders.

“Hold it!”

“Stop right there!”

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Chapter 570

Seeing that Tyler was serious, Natasha and Patrick stood up and stopped him.

“Tyler, speak and behave as you wish, but he is my friend. You better not act recklessly.” Patrick stepped forward and stood shoulder to

shoulder with Dustin, clearly taking his side. His actions shocked many. It finally dawned on them why Dustin acted without restraint—he had someone backing him.

“Patrick, no one can stop me from killing my target, not even you.” Tyler’s expression remained cold, not showing any sign of yielding. A rich playboy was nothing in his eyes.

“There’s no reason to go that far. You should forgive sometimes.” Patrick frowned slightly.

Tyler spat out, “Get lost. My bullets don’t discriminate.”

“You-” Patrick’s expression darkened. Even though they were both sons of affluent families, he could never compare to Tyler in terms of status and authority. If Tyler decided to use force, he would be powerless to stop him.

“Mr. Grant, why are you so angry? Can’t things be discussed nicely at a table?” At that moment, a middle-aged man dressed in luxurious clothing walked in with his head held high.

“Hey, isn’t that Roderick, Big Bucks Brooks? I can’t believe he’s here.”

The crowd gasped silently in shock. As the person who controlled the economy in Millsburg, Roderick was undoubtedly the wealthiest man there! His words carried immense weight in the business world, and he commanded deep respect from everyone.

As he walked in, he naturally took a spot beside Dustin, clearly expressing his stance.

“What? Are you going against me too?” Tyler gave him the side eye.

Roderick responded calmly, “I wouldn’t dare. I simply hope Mr. Grant could mitigate the

circumstances.”

“And if I don’t?”

“I may need to reconsider my annual donation of one billion for your military spending.” Roderick

flashed a smile.

“Ha! A lowly businessman is threatening me? Beat it, or I’ll kill you too!” Tyler’s face grew cold. He was getting impatient. What was going on today? Why were all these mediocre people bravely acting up against him?

“I wouldn’t expect anything less from General Lionheart. You sure are mighty!” Suddenly, a commanding voice was heard by the door.

Everyone turned their attention toward the sound and saw a middle-aged man in an army uniform

adorned with stars, indicating his high rank. He strode confidently with a group of armed guards following behind him.

“The hell? That’s Sir Moran! What brings such an influential figure here?”

The crowd buzzed with excitement at his appearance, curious and astonished expressions filling

their faces.

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Sir Moran was a lieutenant general. He controlled nearly half of the army in the Southern Province. In terms of official rank, he stood half a notch higher than Tyler, who was only a major general. He sat at the top of the Southern Province!

The unexpected presence of a high-ranking official left everyone wondering, as it was a rare sight to witness him going racing any event.

“Keith Moran?” Tyler frowned slightly, seemingly surprised. He didn’t expect the Harmons to have the influence to bring forth Southern Province’s regional deputy chief.

“He’s finally here!” Hector couldn’t conceal his joy as the tension in his forehead gradually eased. Hector had bided his time in silence, waiting for the opportune moment. He had reached out to Keith a few days

ago, uncertain if he would stand up for the Harmons. Seeing him arrive, Hector was relieved. With Keith Moran as the regional deputy chief in attendance, Tyler wouldn't be able to act as he pleased.

This was Hector's trump card!

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Chapter 571

“Hahaha! Sir Moran is here! The Harmons are saved!”

“With Sir Moran present, I doubt Tyler would continue his reckless behavior!”

Keith’s appearance uplifted the Harmons’ spirits, and they felt inexplicably happy, finally feeling at ease after their previous feelings of repression. So what if Tyler was General Lionheart? He was only a major general. Sir Moran, as a lieutenant general and the one who controlled the army, held greater authority than Tyler. Even a talented genius like Tyler had to show deference in the presence of Sir Moran.

Trent flashed a wide smile. “Hector, I can’t believe you actually got Sir Moran to come. That’s

amazing!”

“Trent, you got it all wrong. Sir Moran’s appearance should have something to do with my son’s identity,” Jacob said proudly.

Kate chimed in, “That makes sense. Dylan is a part of the Dark Panther Cavalry and is backed by the Goddess of War. With such a bright future, Sir Moran must have recognized his talent.”

Trent chuckled with realization. “Oh, that’s right... Dylan is our true talented genius.”

Considering the Harmons’ standing, it wasn’t easy to have Keith confront Tyler. However, things were different if they factored in Scarlet, the Goddess of War’s connection.

“Ha! Let’s see if Tyler will continue to act as he pleases!” Dylan reveled in the praises, accepting the credit without hesitation. Hector didn’t correct them either. As long as they could resolve the situation, it didn’t matter who invited Keith.

“I believe this is just a birthday celebration. Why have you brought so many guards, General Lionheart?” Keith’s tone was frosty as he questioned Tyler, walking up to him slowly. The guards from both sides faced off against each other, creating a tense atmosphere.

“Sir Moran, this matter has nothing to do with you. I hope you won’t interfere,” Tyler was indifferent. Despite Keith’s higher rank, he remained fearless.

“Millsburg falls under my jurisdiction. Its safety is my responsibility. If you stir up trouble here, it’s only natural for me to step in,” Keith declared with conviction.

“You’re just a local general while I was bestowed my title by the royal family. Do you have authority over me?” Tyler retorted coldly.

“It doesn’t matter who commits the crime. As long as they do so, I will not stand idly by!” Keith confidently confronted him.

“Ha! I’m afraid the number of people you brought with you is not enough to stop my army,” Tyler

said, maintaining his advantage.

“If Sir Mason’s forces are insufficient, what if I join in?” At that moment, they heard an elderly yet commanding voice. It wasn’t loud, yet it reverberated through the entire place.

Following the voice, an elderly man with a white beard and matching eyebrows strolled in leisurely. He exuded a strong presence and had a piercing gaze, evoking an overwhelming air with his every move. Though unintentional, it was intimidating. As he walked through the doors, a

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palpable weight seemed to descend upon the crowd, like rocks pressing down on their chests. It was hard to even breathe.

“T—that... Isn’t that Sir Paul Hill?”

“Oh my God! It really is him! What’s he doing here?”

Everyone present erupted in a frenzy at his appearance. He was the patriarch of the Hill family, a highly skilled grandmaster, and a master of Balerno martial arts. He commanded immense respect and admiration in the marital world. In the entire seven provinces in Balerno, 100 thousand martial artists followed his command. He was a true leader, revered by countless followers.

“What’s going on? Sir Hill is actually here?” The Harmon family members looked at each other in genuine surprise. Paul was a reserved man with an air of mystery surrounding him. He rarely made appearances for anyone, and their families weren’t acquainted. Why would a martial arts master like him step up for the Harmon family?

“Hector, did you invite Sir Hill?” Trent was dumbfounded.

Hector shook his head. “No.”

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Chapter 572

“Who could it be then?” The Harmons were shocked once again. Who had the power to bring forth

Sir Hill?

Hector shook his head again. Paul’s appearance was indeed unexpected.

“Tyler Grant, do you think I can’t stop your army?” Paul stood unwavering like a tall mountain, his presence overwhelming. Even the guards behind Tyler began trembling as they held their guns. Not everyone could handle the imposing presence of a grandmaster.

“Hmm?” At that moment, Tyler, who had been indifferent the whole time, finally furrowed his brow.

Of course, Paul could stop his army. A martial artist at the level of a grandmaster had transcended the limits of human capabilities. He had the power to single-

handedly take on tens of thousands of men. Tyler's army was naturally not enough to stop him. The important thing was that Paul not only had exceptional skills, but he also had an extremely high standing in the martial world. A hundred thousand martial artists in Balerno would never dare to defy any of his orders.

"Sir Hill, this is my personal grievance with the Harmons. I hope you will stay out of it." Tyler remained unyielding.

"I love meddling in people's affairs and will help out if I witness injustice. And since I've come across one today, naturally, I won't sit idly by," Paul responded calmly.

Tyler narrowed his eyes. "Is it worth becoming an enemy of the Grants for the Harmons?" Both families were part of the Tremendous Three, and each family had their own strengths. While they weren't afraid of the other, Tyler was unwilling to sour their relationship with the Hills.

"I owe a favor, and I must repay it today. The grievances between your families can be dealt with next time. For now, you will not stir up trouble," Paul warned him.

"And if I refuse to back down?" Tyler countered. He had gone this far, and it would be like a slap to

his face if he backed down so easily now.

"You refuse to back down? Then let's see if your army can withstand my power." As Paul spoke, he forcefully stomped on the ground. The impact caused a resounding explosion, leaving a crater in its wake, and the entire banquet hall shook violently.

At the same time, a violent surge of energy rushed toward Tyler's armed guards like an avalanche. The black-clad, armed guards staggered backward like they were struck by lightning. Their faces turned pale and they broke out in cold sweat. They couldn't even hold their guns steady.

The crowd was left utterly speechless at the terrifying sight. That was a grandmaster's ability! With just one foot, he nearly defeated a hundred armed guards.

Tyler's brow furrowed. He didn't expect Paul to truly strike. Wasn't the crazy old man afraid of instigating a war between the two families?

"Hahaha... Sir Hill is truly domineering. No wonder he's a martial arts master!"

"With the support of both Sir Moran and Sir Hill, I doubt Tyler would act recklessly!"

"If you think about it, only those two could hold Tyler back."

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Paul's single stomp increased the Harmons' confidence. It didn't matter if he was Tyler Grant,

General Lionheart, or the great legend. He was no longer a threat to the Harmons.

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Chapter 573

"Are you going to back down or not?" Paul stood proudly and imposingly.

"Tyler, that's enough." Keith stepped forward as well, standing next to Paul. He alone might not be able to hold Tyler back, but with Paul's power in the martial world, it should be enough to make Tyler wary. He believed that Tyler would be smart enough to back down.

"Looks like Tyler is about to be forced to submit."

"Who can stand against two highly influential figures when they come together?"

“I didn’t know the Harmons held such influence. They were actually able to force Tyler into a tough spot.”

Taking in the sight of both parties at the height of their confrontation, the crowd couldn’t help but murmur among themselves. Tyler was an undeniably outstanding individual with a formidable background. No one dared to confront him, even when he publicly stirred up trouble at the Harmons’ birthday celebration. However, no matter how excellent or talented he was, he still had to show deference in the face of both Keith’s and Paul’s superiority.

“Seems like both of you have made up your minds to go against me. However, I’m afraid it won’t be that easy to make me back down.” Tyler’s expression gradually grew colder. To be able to climb up

to where he was now, he naturally had his connections.

“Wise individuals know how to adapt to their circumstances. Going against the tide is not a wise

move,” Keith commented casually.

“So we’re resorting to displays of power now, huh? Fine, I’m curious to see who holds the highest

authority here,” Tyler said, taking out his phone and sending a message.

After a moment, the sound of orderly marching outside could be heard outside the door. The sound grew louder as they approached nearer. The resonating sound struck fear in people’s hearts. Following the noise, the Harmon family’s butler rushed in, shouting anxiously, “Mr. Harmon, things are looking bad! An army is forcing their way in.”

“An army?” Hector frowned. “Whose army is it?”

A clear voice resounded, “That would be me!” A burly, middle-aged man in a general’s uniform

strode in confidently. Keith’s expression shifted slightly at the sight of the man. Even Paul, who stood beside him, was surprised.

“It can’t be. Even Regional Chief Roger Leinonen is here?”

“This situation has gone out of hand! It really is Sir Leinonen!”

“Oh my goodness, what’s going on today? This is such an epic clash!”

Roger Leinonen was the regional chief of one of the provinces. As a second-ranked military official, he sat in the highest position in local law enforcement. Except for the viceroy who controlled the entire military and government, no one else could compare to him in the whole of Southern Province. He held true power. Even Keith had to show him deference. After all, one was the regional chief, while the other was the regional deputy chief. The word “deputy” made all the difference in terms of power and influence.

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“This is spelling trouble. I can’t believe Tyler was able to invite Sir Leinonen.”

“What now? All our previous plans have gone to waste with his arrival!”

The Harmons were shocked and broke out in cold sweat upon Roger’s arrival. Each and every one of them looked anxious. Tyler alone was already a formidable opponent. With Sir Leinonen

backing him, they were unstoppable. Trouble was brewing for the Harmons.

“Sir Moran, General Lionheart is the pillar of our nation. Are you really going to confront him today?” Roger targeted Keith upon his arrival, his sharp tone establishing his authority.

Keith frowned without uttering a word. He never got along with Roger. Unfortunately, Roger held a higher position than he did.

“Sir Paul, you are highly respected, and I admire you greatly. I hope you will let this matter go on my behalf.” Roger turned his attention to Paul, appearing polite. After all, he didn’t wish to sever ties with a martial arts master unless absolutely necessary.

Paul narrowed his eyes. “Sir Leinonen, are you here to back Tyler?”

“I’m good friends with General Lionheart. Naturally, I’m going to offer him my full support,” Roger responded bluntly.

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Paul responded calmly, "It's two against two. We're not exactly at a disadvantage."

"Sir Paul, I'm afraid it's two against one. You should ask Sir Moran if he's still willing to open this

can of worms," Roger spoke profoundly.

"Hmm?" Paul turned to Keith and realized he seemed upset. It appeared like he had decided to back out with his silence. Keith was able to go up against Tyler alone, but with Roger backing him, it was a different story. After all, he wasn't too acquainted with the Harmons. There was no need to jeopardize his career over this.

The Harmons feel dejected by Keith's silence. Once he backed out, it would be hard for the Harmons to escape the situation unscathed.

"Mr. Harmon, I was indeed taken by surprise by your planning. Sadly, it isn't enough. So, what is your decision?" Tyler looked up slightly, his gaze directed at Hector.

With Roger's army, Paul alone wouldn't be able to save the Harmons. Hector furrowed his brow, his expression solemn. Was he to give in to the Grants?

As the situation grew increasingly dire, Trent stood up to mediate. "General Lionheart, we can discuss this. There's no need to escalate things this far." The Harmons had used up their trump cards. They could only give in if they didn't wish to receive their wrath.

"Of course, but I have a condition," Tyler said calmly.

Trent responded, "What condition?"

"I want this brat's life!" Tyler exclaimed unexpectedly, pointing a finger at Dustin. A plebeian who dared challenge the authority of the Grants should pay a price. He was going to set an example today.

Trent froze, shifting his gaze toward Hector, who was beside him. Hector was silent. No one knew what he was thinking.

“Tyler Grant! Don’t go *too far!*” Natasha finally reached her breaking point.

“You should take responsibility for your actions. You were the ones who made the decision,” Tyler said indifferently.

“You-” Natasha’s expression grew increasingly cold.

“Seems like this Dustin guy is done for.” Zoey, who was among the crowd, sighed.

Zeke sneered. “Hmph! This is the consequence for daring to challenge General Lionheart.”

“If you think about it, he brought this upon himself.” Gordon was silently happy about it.

“Tyler Grant, I’m afraid you’re still not worthy of taking my life.” Dustin remained calm.

“What? Do you think anyone else can save you today?” Tyler uttered coldly.

As soon as he spoke, a guard rushed in anxiously. He reported, “Sir Leinonen, there’s trouble! A group of guards have barged in!”

“Don’t you see that I am here with General Lionheart? Why are you so panicked?” Roger’s

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expression hardened. “Even if the emperor himself were here, it wouldn’t change a thing, let alone a small group of guards! Drive them out!”

The guard’s expression turned grave. “W—we can’t. They are the viceroy’s personal guards.”

“So what if they are the viceroy’s personal guards? I-” Roger was halfway through his tirade when he froze. His words were stuck in his throat.

The viceroy and his personal guards? It couldn't be... The viceroy was here? Before Roger could fully comprehend the situation, he saw someone walk through the door. It was a well-dressed, middle-aged man. The man had a handsome face and a dignified posture. Even when he was calm, he carried an air of authority, and every move of his was imposing.

"Lord... Lord Xenos?" Roger's expression turned for the worst immediately at the sight of the man.

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Chapter 575

"Lord Xenos! It's Lord Xenos!"

"Damn, even Lord Xenos has shown up! The world is turning upside down!"

"Who was able to bring forth Lord Xenos?"

The crowd broke out into a frenzy at the sight of the distinguished man. Lord Xenos was no ordinary man; he was the viceroy! The influential figure who held control over the entire military and government of Southern province! He was an official of the first rank and a true authority figure! A single action of his could shake up Millsburg in its entirety. Sir Leinonen and General Lionheart were mere shadows compared to him.

"Why is Lord Xenos here? Did Tyler invite him?"

"It's over. It's all over... There's no one to save us now!"

"He's the most powerful official in all of Southern province. Who else can compare to him?"

The Harmons were shaken, their faces filled with fear and despair. Given their status, it was evident that they weren't the ones to invite the viceroy. So there was only one possibility—he was on Tyler's side.

At that moment, not only were the Harmons shaken, but Tyler was also surprised and puzzled. He

wasn't exactly acquainted with the viceroy.

"It's him?" When Dustin saw him arrive, he finally revealed a flicker of emotion. It wasn't the

person's title that stirred him, but it was because he recognized him. It was none other than

Ruby's father—

George Xenos. When he first met him at the hospital a few days ago, he wasn't

aware of his identity. He didn't expect him to be the viceroy who controlled the entire Southern

province.

"Oh, Lord Xenos, what brings you here?" After a momentary daze, Roger approached and greeted

him with a smile. Lord Xenos was, after all, his direct superior.

"Roger, I heard you were planning to drive away my men. Is that true?" George asked nonchalantly.

"It's a misunderstanding ... It's all just a misunderstanding!" Roger smiled apologetically. "I would

welcome them with open arms. I would never dare to drive them away."

"Is that so?" George surveyed his surroundings. "Then why have you brought so many of your men

here?"

"Uh..." Roger froze, unsure of how to respond. He couldn't possibly admit that he was helping the

Grants tyrannize the Harmons, could he?

Tyler intervened, "Lord Xenos, what brings you to this place?"

"What, do I need to report my movements to you?" George countered.

Tyler lowered his head slightly. "Not at all. I'm just curious, that's all."

"I heard Mr. Hector is celebrating his birthday today. I'm here to wish him a happy birthday." George's voice was loud and clear.

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"Wish him a happy birthday?" All eyes turned to Hector at George's words. The Harmons were acquainted with Lord Xenos?

Trent's voice began to quiver as he asked, "Hector, did you really invite Lord Xenos?"

"I..." Hector found himself at a loss for words. If he had indeed invited Lord Xenos, he wouldn't

have feared

the Grants. However, Lord Xenos seemed unmistakably on their side from his statement. Hector couldn't figure out who could possibly have the influence to bring forth Lord

Xenos' presence.

"Roger, you must be here to send your wishes too, I reckon?" George suddenly asked.

"Huh?" Roger was momentarily stunned before nodding. "Yes, that's right... I'm here to send my wishes!" He wouldn't dare continue acting rashly with Lord Xenos backing the Harmons. He could only use the pretext to act as if nothing had happened.

"How about you?" George turned his attention to Tyler, his tone slightly imposing.

"I'm here to send my wishes and pick up my bride," Tyler answered bluntly.

"Pick up your bride? Who is she?"

Tyler answered, "Mr. Hector's daughter and I have long been engaged. Today is the day of our marriage according to the marriage contract."

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"Oh? Is that so?" George glanced at Hector.

Hector spoke truthfully, "They were indeed engaged in the past. But there were some problems recently that warranted further discussion regarding the engagement."

"Problems should be solved round the table. Why be so hostile?" George expressed his dissatisfaction.

"I'm open to discussion, but the Harmons are not respecting me," Tyler responded.

"Marriage should be based on mutual consent. It's criminal behavior for you to force my hand in marriage by publicly deploying your army!" Natasha suddenly cried out.

"She's right," George agreed. "A marriage should be between two willing parties. If one party is unwilling, you shouldn't force it."

Tyler frowned slightly at his words. It appeared as if George was adamant about standing with the Harmons.

"Lord Xenos, what did the Harmons promise you? I'm willing to pay tenfold," Tyler unexpectedly said to George.

"How dare you!" George's expression darkened, and he bellowed, "Tyler Grant! Is this how you see the viceroy? A corrupt official?"

"No, no. Not at all... Tyler misspoke. Please forgive him!" Roger attempted to defuse the situation immediately.

“You are too young to know how the world works and are too impulsive and aggressive. Take your men with you, and get out of here!” George bellowed. He had thought of saving Tyler the embarrassment but didn’t expect him to not know his place.

“Tyler, let it go. We can talk about matters at a later time.” Roger gave Tyler a meaningful look. Both of them were nothing in front of the viceroy. Tyler might be talented with a bright future ahead, but he wasn’t strong enough to challenge George at this time.

Tyler narrowed his eyes. “Lord Xenos, are you really going to support the Harmons?”

“That’s right! I’m definitely supporting them! If anyone has a problem with it, feel free to talk to me.” George’s tone was domineering.

The Harmons were ecstatic upon hearing his declaration, while Tyler’s expression turned unusually resentful. He couldn’t understand the reason George would publicly challenge the Grants in favor of the Harmons. Even though he was upset, he could only give in for now. George was a first-ranked official and controlled the army, Tyler couldn’t afford to offend him. However, he was confident he would overshadow George in under five years.

“Lord Xenos, since you have a higher rank, I’ll concede for now. However, the world is a small place, and things don’t always go as you want. We’ll meet again!” With a scoff, Tyler strutted out of the place with his entourage. He promised there would come a day when he would crush George beneath his feet.

“Lord Xenos, the younger generation can be impulsive at times. I hope you won’t take it to heart. I

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shall take my leave as well.” With a nod of acknowledgment, Roger followed Tyler out the door. He had to admit they hit a brick wall today.

“Lord Xenos is amazing. He was able to drive Tyler away with just a few words.”

“Of course! He’s the viceroy entrusted with a region. It’s not merely an empty title.”

“I envy the Harmons. They actually have Lord Xenos backing them.”

The discussion among the guests grew increasingly heated with Tyler’s departure. Nobody expected a mere birthday celebration to bring forth that many influential figures. The contest between the two families was akin to an epic clash

“Lord Xenos, Sir Paul, Sir Moran, thank you for your help. We will forever be grateful.” Hector walked up to them and shook their hands. Without their appearance, disaster would’ve befallen

the Harmons.

George smiled. “You’re welcome, Mr. Harmon. The main reason I came was to return a favor.” As he spoke, he stole a glance at Dustin.

“Return a favor?” Hector was puzzled, Lord Xenos was not only an extremely influential figure, but he also held the highest authority and answered to no one. Who could Lord Xenos owe a favor to among the Harmons?

Paul chuckled as he stroked his beard. “What a coincidence; I’m also here to return a favor, just like you, Lord Xenos.”

“Huh?” Hector widened his eyes, growing even more confused. One was the viceroy, while the other was a renowned martial arts master. Who exactly could have both influential figures owe

them a favor at the same time?

“Congratulations, Mr. Harmon. With such an outstanding son-in-law, the Harmons are destined for a prosperous future.” George gave him a meaningful smile.

“Son-in-law?” It didn’t make sense to Hector. Both of his daughters were not yet married, so which

son-in-law did he mean?

Hector was hit by a sudden realization. Could it be Dustin?

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Hector was astonished at the thought. He turned his head and looked toward Dustin, finding him calm and collected. It appeared as if he were an outsider in the situation. However, that was exactly what made him indiscernible.

Upon deep reflection, Hector realized that the Harmons' situation had taken a turn for the better when Dustin started challenging Tyler. Was this young man in front of him really the person who turned the tide? It would be frightening if that were the case!

"Mr. Hector, I'm needed elsewhere, so I'll be taking my leave first." George left after saying his goodbyes. He didn't expose Dustin's identity as he was worried about making things complicated for him. Some things were better left unto Id.

"Guess there's no more fighting. I'll be leaving too." Paul gave Dustin a knowing look before

leaving with his head held high.

"Mr. Hector, see you next time." Sir Moran shook his hand and left as well.

As the influential figures departed, the ballroom livened up even more. Not only did the guests discuss among themselves, but even the Harmons were making their own speculations.

"Dad, I can't believe you're influential enough to be able to invite Sir Paul and Lord Xenos over. You're amazing!" Natasha walked up with a huge smile on her face. With two influential figures backing them, she was sure Tyler wouldn't dare force her hand in marriage any longer. She

considered herself to have broken free from him.

"Hector, it seems you have more tricks hidden up your sleeves. I'm impressed!" Trent and a few of his people went up to Hector as well. Each of them looked proud, their faces brimming with excitement. With Lord Xenos and Sir Paul backing them, the Harmons would be unstoppable.

“Trent, it wasn’t me. I don’t have that kind of influence.” Hector remained modest and shook his head.

“Then who could it be if it wasn’t you?” Trent was puzzled and confused.

“I’m wondering the same thing...” Hector rubbed his chin and glanced at Dustin once again. He asked meaningfully, “Dustin, do you know who could have invited them?”

Before Dustin could respond, a clear and loud voice interjected, “Uncle Hector, there’s no need to speculate any longer, as that would be me!” The crowd turned their heads in the direction of the voice and saw Dylan walking over proudly.

“Dylan, are you acquainted with Lord Xenos and Sir Paul?” Trent was pleasantly surprised.

“Although I don’t know them personally, they appeared because of me.” Dylan was confident.

“Oh? Why do you say so?” Trent was taken aback.

“I’m associated with the Dark Panther Cavalry, and I have the backing of the Goddess of War. It’s likely that they recognized my potential and talent and decided to help out.” Dylan’s head was held high.

“That’s right! Dylan is the Scarlet Warrior’s trusted aide. It’s natural for Lord Xenos to take a liking

to him,” Kate chimed in.

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“So that’s why... No wonder Lord Xenos was that enthusiastic.”

“Dylan truly is exceptional to have gained the favor of the two influential figures.”

“Dylan, I didn’t know you had such powerful connections. You’re amazing!”

At that moment, the crowd showered him with praises, hailing him as their savior.

Jacob laughed heartily and was filled with pride. "My son is so talented!" He was clued in on Sir Moran's appearance. However, he didn't expect his son to be so skilled that he would garner Lord

Xenos and Sir Paul's attention.

"I think there's more to this. Dylan's status is not enough to impress the viceroy," Natasha said after thoughtful consideration. She noticed George never even glanced at Dylan throughout the entire ordeal.

"Hmph! You're just jealous!"

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Chapter 578

Chapter 578

Kate snorted. "You sure are jealous of Dylan, even when you are talentless. How petty is that? If you are unhappy about Dylan, tell me, who else is better than him?"

Kate's remark caught Natasha off guard. Dylan was indeed the best among of her family members in their generation because of his government ranks.

"What's the matter? Cat got your tongue? Is it that hard to admit that Dylan's better than you?"

Kate sneered at her.

"Natasha, you dodged a bullet today, all thanks to me! You'd better show some gratitude," Dylan chimed in, much to Natasha's dismay. He and Kate seemed to be working together to bring her

down.

“All thanks to you? How?” Dustin did not like it when they laughed at Natasha. “Lord Xenos is a viceroy, and you’re just a colonel. You’re nowhere near his level, so why did you think he showed

up for you?”

“Are you claiming that he showed up for you?” Dylan scoffed.

“You guessed right. He came here because of me.” Dustin nodded, much to everyone’s surprise.

But the surprise soon turned into dismissive laughter.

“Hahaha! Have you lost your mind? Why would you even say that?”

“Dustin Rhys, who do you think you are? What do you have to invite the viceroy?”

“Hmph! You seemed to have forgotten your place after tasting a little bit of power!”

The members of the Harmon family looked at him disdainfully as though he was a complete fool. How dare a country doctor and a kept man make such an outrageous claim?

“Dustin, do you really know Lord Xenos?” Natasha was quite dumbstruck.

“I saved Mrs. Xenos’ life a few days ago. He owed me a favor,” he confessed.

“He owed you a favor? Hah! You really flatter yourself! With Lord Xenos’ rank, he can call on any reputable doctor he wants from the military. Why does he need the help of a country doctor who’s more form than substance?” Dylan sneered at Dustin.

“Exactly! Dustin, you’re too presumptuous. The audacity to name-drop Lord Xenos so casually! You have no shame at all!” Kate smirked.

“Believe it or not, that’s the truth.” Dustin dropped another bombshell, “I cured Mrs. Xenos’ illness

and saved Sir Paul from death!”

Upon hearing this statement, the people around him burst into even louder laughter, staring at

Dustin as if he were a complete clown.

“Are you seriously telling me that Sir Paul came here because of you?” Dylan snickered.

“Absolutely.” Dustin nodded matter-of-factly.

Dylan threw his head back as he laughed. “Oh, Dustin, I never thought you could be so thick-skinned! That was eye-opening!”

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Chapter 578

“Natasha, I never thought you’d fall for an incompetent man who bluffs,” Kate made a cynical jab, jumping on the opportunity to insult her cousin.

“That was embarrassing! I felt second-hand embarrassment just watching!” Zoey shook her head

from the crowd.

Zeke, with a derisive look on his face, added, “To be honest, I kind of admire his ability *to* lie with a straight face.”

Gordon snickered. “Well, a thick-skinned man is practically invincible.”

No one believed that a loser like Dustin, who had neither authority nor influence, was somehow acquainted with a big shot like Paul Hill.

“What’s so funny?” Dustin asked nonchalantly.

“What’s not funny about the entire thing? Sir Paul is a legendary figure in the martial arts field and a grandmaster. It’s rather ridiculous to boast about saving his life, don’t you think?”

Without a word, Dustin slammed an ornate silver badge onto the table. Engraved on it was the Hill family’s last name—a Consultant Badge!

When the crowd took a good look at the badge, they collectively gasped as their smiles froze. "I thought you guys love to laugh at others. Why aren't you laughing now?"

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Chapter 579

"I thought you guys love to laugh at others. Why aren't you laughing now?" After Dustin displayed his Consultant Badge, he openly confronted those who had looked down upon him.

Dylan, Kate, and Natasha's friends gaped at the sight of the silver Consultant Badge on the table. They were smiling no more. After all, a Consultant Badge from the Hill family was a rare treasure coveted by many. With that badge in hand, one would have the backing of the Hill family, which also came with the perks of accessing and utilizing the family resources. It was not an understatement to describe the badge as priceless!

However, it raised another question—how did the badge end up in Dustin's possession? Was he telling the truth when he said that he had saved Sir Paul's life? At the thought, everyone looked at

Dustin differently.

"T—that's impossible! Why would you have the Consultant Badge from the Hill family?" Kate was still reeling from the shock, even though she was rather doubtful.

"I explained it clearly to you earlier, and I don't want to repeat myself," Dustin brushed her off coldly. He wouldn't have displayed the badge if Dylan and Kate hadn't harassed Natasha.

"Kate Harmon, what do you say? Is there anything wrong with my boyfriend now?" Natasha couldn't resist taking a jab at Kate after she regained her confidence. She finally had the chance to relieve her frustration from being ridiculed and bullied just now.

"Hmph! Don't get ahead of yourselves! The Consultant Badge means nothing!" Kate's face

scrunched up into a scowl.

“Exactly!” Dylan chimed in, “How did you get your hands on the Consultant Badge of the Hill family with your social standing? I bet the badge is a fake!”

“A fake?” Everyone exchanged cautious glances. It was public knowledge that the badge represented the Hill family. Whoever faked it would be courting death.

“Dylan, that’s ridiculous!” Natasha glared at him. “The Hill family crest is clearly engraved on the badge. Everyone sees it clearly. How can this be a fake?”

“Can’t you fake a family crest?” Dylan boastfully assumed, “It’s just a silver badge. I can get a duplicate with ten thousand dollars. What’s so special about it?”

“That’s a load of bull. No one would fake the Consultant Badge of the Hill family!” Natasha argued.

“Dustin Rhys was bold enough to face Tyler Grant. Faking a badge is child’s play for him.” Dylan

chuckled

“Nonsense! And what proof do you have?” Natasha roared at him.

“Do you want proof? Fine.” Dylan grinned and picked up the badge from the table. He gave it a

squeeze with his hand, and the silver badge cracked as it contorted into the shape of a silver bar.

Dustin frowned at Dylan’s act, while Natasha yelled, aghast, “Hey, what are you doing?”

Ignoring the two, Dylan showed off the crushed silver badge. “Everyone knows that the Hill family Consultant Badge is made of special bulletproof, waterproof, and fireproof materials. But look at this thing. It falls apart like jelly when you squeeze it. How can this be authentic?”

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Chapter 580

“That’s right! The Hill family’s Consultant Badge is as hard as steel. Only a counterfeit would be that brittle! Kate supported Dylan’s claim, and everyone else nodded in realization.

“So, it’s a fake after all. That gave me a good shock.”

“This guy knows no shame! I can’t believe he created a counterfeit badge just for show. He’s too

much!”

“Hmph! It’s fortunate that Sir Dylan was smart enough to see through him. Otherwise, we’d all have been fooled!”

Most of the crowd started berating Dustin. They trusted a wealthy son more than a lowly commoner. It was ironic how a successful person could blabber nonsense, and it would be taken as the absolute truth. While that same person, before becoming successful, could tell the absolute truth, and his words would be treated as garbage.

Dustin spoke to Dylan coldly, “Dylan Harmon, have you thought of the consequences of destroying the Consultant Badge and distorting the truth in public?”

“The consequences? Ha! You’re the one tricking people with counterfeit items. I’m just doing what is right,” Dylan countered righteously.

“That’s right! We’ve been kind enough to not hold you accountable. How dare you start a fuss with

us?” Kate snorted.

“Hey, don’t push it, you two!” Natasha was getting angry. Naturally, she had complete trust in Dylan. That was why she was certain Dylan was distorting the truth earlier and slandering Dustin

on purpose.

“Alright, that’s enough. We’re all family. It’s not a good look to be fighting here.” Trent intervened at the right time. It would be an embarrass

ment to the Harmons if their children broke out into a fight in front of their esteemed guests.

“I’m going to put this matter aside on behalf of my uncle, Dustin.” Dylan walked up to Dustin and passed him the ruined Consultant Badge. He mocked him, saying, “Here, take your fake badge back.”

“You know very well if it’s fake or not.” Dustin was indifferent.

Dylan chuckled and whispered in his ear, “Does it even matter? My words carry weight here. It’s a fake if I say so. It doesn’t matter if you feel wronged, Fucking keep it in. The world revolves around power and position, brat. A loser like you will only be worthy of being trampled by me. Remember, you’re just an ant. Act like one. There are people you can’t afford to offend, so suck it up!” Near the end, Dylan gave up the pretense as his lips gradually widened into a winner’s smile. “My, my ... You’re not about to cry, are you? Please don’t cry, or I’ll be laughing my ass off.”

Dustin narrowed his eyes. “People like you truly deserve a beating.”

“What? Are you angry? Come on, I’m right here. Why don’t you hit me? Do you dare?” Dylan said provokingly.

“I’m just going to dirty my hands if I hit you. But not to worry. I’ll make you pay,” Dustin said

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nonchalantly.

“You’re going to make me pay? Oh, I’m looking forward to it. What are you planning on doing?” Dylan chuckled teasingly.

Instead of responding directly, Dustin patted Dylan’s shoulder. He said calmly, “You’ll find out soon enough.”

Dylan sneered. "Alright! I'll be waiting. I'm curious to see what tricks you have up your sleeves."

"Dylan, there's no need to waste your breath on him. Let's go back to our seats." Kate glanced at Dustin, her expression full of disdain.

"Kate, someone is threatening me. I'm so scared... Hahahaha!" Dylan first put on a terrified, shaking act before dissolving into a loud cackle. However, his laughter suddenly ceased, and he froze; his expression betrayed his pain. He crumpled to the floor, blood spurting out of his mouth, and his body convulsed as his eyes rolled back in his head

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Chapter 581

“Dylan!” The sudden turn of events left everyone stunned. Nobody expected Dylan to collapse and spurt blood when he was still laughing a second ago.

“Get him to the hospital, quickly!” Hector made a prompt decision and ordered someone to carry

Dylan out

“Hey, brat! Did you do this?” Jacob was about to leave when he thought of something and turned back, his expression menacing.

“What does it have to do with me? It’s his old injuries that resurfaced. If you’re looking for someone to blame, you should blame Tyler since he attacked him earlier.” Dustin shrugged.

“You- Jacob was exasperated. However, he couldn’t start a scene without evidence.

“Jacob. You should go now. It’s more important to save Dylan,” Hector reminded him.

“Let’s go!” Jacob glared at Dustin and left angrily, not wanting to waste any more time. Trent and Kate followed behind them. As the Harmons’ most talented genius, Dylan’s safety would affect their future. He was already considered equal in standing to Hector, the family patriarch.

“Dear, what did you do to him?” Natasha got closer to Dustin and asked in a lowered voice. Something unusual clearly occurred for Dylan to suddenly collapse and spurt blood.

“What could I do? It was mainly because of Tyler,” Dustin said seriously.

“Do you really expect me to believe that?” Natasha rolled her eyes. “Nobody can hear us, so you’d

better tell me the truth.”

“Alright, I just aggravated his injuries and made it worse.” Dustin smiled. Dylan had sustained internal injuries from Tyler’s attack earlier. And when Dustin patted Dylan’s shoulder, he channeled another bout of violent true energy into his body. His unstable condition flared up

instantly.

“Will he die?” Natasha asked cautiously. Even though she didn’t get along with Dylan, he was still her uncle’s only son. As they were related by blood, she didn’t wish for him to lose his life.

“Don’t worry. He won’t die, but he’ll be suffering for a while. Perhaps, he might even have complications from it,” Dustin said meaningfully. In essence, Dylan would grow weak and constantly struggle with illnesses.

“As long as he doesn’t die, it doesn’t matter. Serves him right!” Natasha was indignant. She was still upset about the time he spiked the wine. Since he was terrorizing others again, naturally, he should be taught a lesson.

“What are you two whispering about?” Hector, who was standing not far away, suddenly interjected.

“Nothing.” Natasha grinned and changed the subject. “Dad, if it weren’t for Dustin, we would have

been in big trouble!”

“Not bad. Seems like we’re indebted to you again.” Hector nodded, looking impressed. He believed Dustin despite the skepticism from others. And that was because of what George said before he

left.

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“Not at all, Mr. Harmon. I didn’t do much,” Dustin responded politely.

“Dad, are you not going to do anything as a show of appreciation?” Natasha was slightly upset.

“What do you suggest? How about I give him your hand in marriage?” Hector joked.

“Huh?”

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Chapter 582

While Dustin froze, Natasha blushed. “This... this is too sudden. I’m not prepared for it!” She followed that up by asking, “Have you chosen a date? When are we getting married?”

“Hey, you thought I was for real? You should be embarrassed!” Hector glared at her.

Natasha pouted. “You said it yourself. Why are you yelling at me instead?”

“Alright, it’s time to get serious.” Hector’s smile gradually disappeared. “Even though we overcame the situation for now, this matter is far from over. With Tyler’s personality, he will not take this sitting down.”

“Will Tyler still act recklessly with Lord Xenos and Sir Paul behind us?” Natasha raised an

eyebrow.

“Tyler might not confront us directly, but he will definitely act behind the scenes.” Hector was solemn as he continued, “Lord Xenos and Sir Paul have also repaid their favor. They won’t help us a second time. We can only face him ourselves now.”

“Does that mean trouble will continue brewing for us?” Natasha looked pensive.

“There will be trouble, but the most important thing is Dustin’s safety.” Hector turned his attention toward Dustin and warned him, “Tyler is an unsympathetic and prideful man. Whether it was your involvement in Jayla’s death or your public confrontation with him, they were all unforgivable acts for him. You will be in danger going forward.”

“Thank you for the warning, Uncle Hector. I will take note.” Dustin nodded. He knew Tyler would come after him to get revenge. But as long as Natasha was safe, there was nothing he feared.

“During this period, I’ll deploy team one of our shadow guards to protect you. That should lessen some of your troubles.” Hector declared.

“Team one? They’re your personal bodyguards, aren’t they?” Natasha was astonished. The Harmons had six shadow guard teams. Team one was the most skilled, with a divine-level martial artist leading them. They were considered the Harmon family’s trump card. However, since team one’s responsibility was specifically to oversee the patriarch’s safety, they weren’t deployed

easily.

Hector responded, “I don’t need them for now. Let them protect Dustin.”

“Uncle Harmon, actually, I don’t need protecting,” Dustin tried to decline.

“There are times when we slip up. With team one protecting you, they will act as an extra precaution to ensure your safety. Consider this our sincere gift to you. Don’t refuse it.” Hector was

serious.

Natasha nodded in agreement. “My dad is right. Your safety comes first.”

“Alright...” Since Hector had put it that way, there was no reason for Dustin to refuse any longer.

Even though he wasn’t afraid of Tyler, it would affect him slightly if Tyler decided to assassinate him. At least he could avoid unnecessary trouble with the shadow guards keeping watch on him.

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In the meantime, inside the Grant family mansion, Roger was seated on the sofa, appearing pensive. "Tyler, The Harmons have Lord Xenos backing them now. It won't be easy to target them."

"Even though we can't touch them publicly, no one said anything about acting in the dark." Tyler stood with his hands behind his back. His gaze was unusually cold as he stared at a bird perched on a tree outside the window.

? What

"Oh? What are your plans?" Roger was curious.

"I have a few friends in the martial arts world. I'm going to get them to act and create chaos within the Harmon family!" Tyler spat out coldly.

"But, that's Paul's territory ... " Roger was at a loss for words. Paul was highly influential as a

martial arts master.

"Hmph! He's just an old man nearing death. While his words hold a certain weight, it won't be enough to stop me!" Tyler had a look of arrogance.

"It seems like you have everything arranged. Is there anything I can help you with?" Roger asked cautiously.

"Just keep an eye on George's movements for me. As long as he doesn't enter the picture, I will play with the Harmons as I please!" Tyler clenched his fist.

"No problem. Leave it to me," Roger vouched as he patted his chest. He wasn't brave enough to challenge Lord Xenos. However, it would be nothing if he just had to monitor his movements.

After sending Roger off, Tyler suddenly turned around and faced a corner. "That Dustin brat irritated me today. I asked you to kill him the last time, but I changed my mind. I want him to go through a living hell!"

"Right away!" A shadow disappeared from the corner.

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Chapter 583

The next morning, at Nicholson Corp. Dustin reported to work as usual. As Chief Security Officer, his work was relatively easy. He would punch in in the morning and patrol the area with a few officers, and he would have free time after that. He could do anything he wanted since no one was there to keep watch on him.

Dustin had just sat down in his office when someone knocked on his door. He looked up and found that it was the Vice Chairman, Hank Hoffman.

“Mr. Rhys, are you free? Can I have a word with you?” Hank walked in the door with a smile.

Remaining in his seat, Dustin greeted him. “Mr. Hoffman, how can I help you?”

“Mr. Rhys, I had my friend bring back this aged Narcissus Tea from Mount Wouei. I hope you like it.

Hank took out a delicate gift box and placed it on his table.

Dustin raised an eyebrow. “Aged Narcissus Tea? This must be pretty expensive.”

“It’s nothing, just over a million dollars.” Hank smiled.

Dustin declined his gift. “Mr. Hoffman, this is too valuable. I can’t afford to take it, you should keep it for yourself.”

“It’s okay if you don’t like to drink tea. I have another present prepared. Still smiling, he took out a check from his pocket and said, “Here are three million dollars. Consider it a kind gesture of mine. I hope you accept it.”

“Mr. Hoffman, you’re giving me gifts and money. What exactly is the meaning of this?” Dustin questioned him straightforwardly.

Hank chuckled. “I’d like to be friends with you, Mr. Rhys.” He flashed Dustin a meaningful smile. “I know you are close to Dahlia, but you won’t have a future if you continue working for her. She’s just a lady. She won’t be able to accomplish great things.”

Dustin’s expression remained unchanged. “So?”

“So, I hope you can help me out. I’ll treat you well. The gifts I’ve given you today are just the start of many. There’ll be more benefits for you going forward.” Hank started revealing his true

intentions.

“Mr. Hoffman, I don’t think it’s appropriate for you to ask me to betray Ms. Nicholson,” Dustin

responded calmly.

“Mr. Rhys, the world revolves around gains. Dahlia pays you only a measly salary. Why would you still be loyal to her?”

Seeing his lack of reaction, Hank continued to persuade him. “As long as you agree to my terms, I’ll make sure you end up as Vice Chairman when I become the Chairman!” The only reason Hank gave him such a lucrative offer was due to his identity as the Flame Dragon gang leader. He knew that with Dustin backing Dahlia, it would be difficult to remove her from her position. That was why he needed to get Dustin on his side to achieve his goals.

“Mr. Hoffman, you sure have confidence in me. Sadly, I’m not interested in your terms.” Dustin gave him an ambiguous smile.

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“What are you interested in, then? I’ll try my best to fulfill it as long as it’s within my means.

Hank responded hastily.

“Nothing. I just want you to obediently stay as Vice Chairman and not push the boundaries.” Dustin’s smile gradually disappeared.

“What?” Hank furrowed his brows. “What do you mean, Mr. Rhys?”

Dustin responded coldly, “You don’t get it? Let me make it clearer. Going forward, Dahlia will always remain the Chairman of this company. Anyone who wishes to dispose of her will answer to me, understood?”

Hank's expression darkened. "Mr. Rhys, does that mean this is out of discussion?"

"I'm not interested in discussing anything with you. Now, get out. I'm going to take a nap." Dustin waved his hand in annoyance.

"Fine, I hope you don't come to regret it!" Hank let out an audible scoff and left the room after

packing up. He could only seek other methods since he was unsuccessful in bribing Dustin.

"He wants to bribe me with a few million dollars? Does he think I'm poor?" Dustin was annoyed. He was a billionaire. That small amount of money was insignificant to him.

Suddenly, Dustin's phone rang.

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Chapter 584

Dustin answered the call and instantly heard Julie's voice blaring through the speakers, "Dustin, Dahlia got into a traffic accident! Come and help us out, quick!"

"An accident?" Startled, Dustin probed for more information. "What happened? Is she hurt?"

"It's a long story. I'll send you our location. Come here right now!" Julie urged.

"Okay!" Without wasting any time,, Dustin ended the call and rushed out the door.

Over at Dahlia's side, a Maserati and a Bentley had run into each other on the streets. Both cars were heavily damaged, and there were shards of car glass scattered around the point of collision.

After the collision, several young men and women came out of the Bentley, and at the forefront of the group was a young lady with hair that was dyed a bright red, and clad in luxurious branded goods from head to toe.

After she got out of her car, she immediately went up to Dahlia's car and began banging on the window, yelling rudely, "Hey! Can't you f*cking drive? Get out of the goddamn car right now!"

"Get out!"

"Yeah, get the hell out, woman!"

The rest of them, who were together with the red-haired lady, also began kicking and banging on

Dahlia's car threateningly.

"Stop it!" Julie opened the car door and got out, shouting at them, "Why are you behaving like such hooligans? You were the ones who made an illegal U-turn and broke the law! You are fully responsible for the accident!"

"Full responsibility, my ass!" The red-haired lady gave Julie a hard slap across the face. "Quit running your mouth here! You ran into my car, so pay up!"

"You hit me? Have you any idea who I am?" Julie was shocked and enraged as she cupped her stinging cheek in her hand.

"Whoa! You're trying to challenge me, aren't you? Very well, tell me, who are you?" The red-haired lady sniggered.

"You'd be terrified!" Julie said haughtily, "She's Dahlia Nicholson, chairperson of Nicholson Corp!"

And I am her cousin-cum-secretary!"

"Nicholson Corp.?" The red-haired lady made a face when she heard that. "What trash is that? I've

never even heard of it before!"

"That's only because you're ignorant! I'm warning you, if you do not wish things to blow out of hand, you better pay up and apologize or you'll be sorry!" Julie threatened her meanly.

“Fucking hell! How dare you threaten me, you b*tch?” With a nasty glare, the red-haired lady struck Julie across the face once again. The resounding smack sent Julie staggering backward and falling flat on the ground, breaking a tooth in the process.

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“Y-you—you! How dare you strike me again? You’re going to regret this!” Fuming, Julie scrambled up to her feet before launching herself at the red-haired lady, ready to get down and dirty.

“You insolent fool!” She smirked as she sent a punch straight to Julie’s guts. With a horrifying shriek, Julie fell to her knees and everything she had left in her stomach came rushing out.

“Stop this!” Seeing that things were about to get ugly, Dahlia swiftly went forward to help Julie up before she turned around and shouted at the red-haired lady, “Who gave you the right to hit others?”

”

“I do as I please! What, are you not happy? Why don’t I give you a good beating too, huh?” She shot Dahlia a glare.

“You’re going too far!” Dahlia was infuriated. She didn’t expect these people to be so rude and aggressive. They were clearly the ones who were in the wrong, and yet they showed no remorse and even resorted to physically assaulting others. They were way too arrogant!

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Chapter 585

“Oh, I’m going too far now, am I? Well, so what if I am? What are you going to do about it?” The red-haired lady stood with arms akimbo as she glared daggers at Dahlia.

"I've called the cops! You better not act rashly!" Dahlia warned. She had Julie make several calls. as soon as they had the accident.

"The cops?" The red-haired girl laughed obnoxiously as her friends behind her watched on. unkindly, obviously having no regard for the authorities. "Do you think that I'd be daunted by mere cops? I'll have you know, I can kill you right this instant and chuck you into the ocean as fish food, and no one will be able to do anything about it!" She laughed nastily.

"Surely you can't be above the law!" Dahlia shook her head with a frown, her brows furrowed.

"The law? Haha! I am the f*cking law! Now, pay me ten million dollars, or I'll show you what I'm capable of!" The red-haired lady threatened.

"Ten million dollars? That's daylight robbery!" Julie was aggravated. Even if she had bought that car in cash, it'd only amount to slightly over two million at best, so if they were to pay for the repair cost, several hundred thousand would be more than enough.

For her to demand ten million dollars as compensation was pure extortion, and most importantly, she was the one who was in the wrong, so why should they be the ones paying her?

"Cut the crap!" The red-haired lady shot them a glare. "You have only two options. One, you pay me; or two, I break your legs!"

"You! That's just robbery!" Julie was exasperated.

"So what if I am?" She delivered a kick to Julie which sent her sprawling to the ground once again. "Keep running your mouth and see if I'll kill you!"

"Stop it!" Dahlia stepped between them, hiding Julie behind her. "You lay another finger on her and you'll pay dearly for it!" she roared.

The red-haired lady raised her hand and slapped Dahlia hard on the face. "Who do you think you are to speak to me like that?"

“You!” Dahlia held her red and swollen face in her hand, her expression livid. These people were downright barbaric!

“I’ll say this one last time, pay up, or you’ll be sorry!”

“We did nothing wrong! Why should we pay?” Dahlia argued.

“You’re not paying? Then I guess I’ll just slash your face up!” With a vicious smile, the red-haired lady continued, “It’d be a pity for you to lose your pretty little face! I’d like to see if you’d dare to show up in public again after I’m done with you.”

“Don’t you dare!” Dahlia’s expression froze.

“Try me!” With a wave of her hand, the red-haired lady called out to her friends, “Guys, hold her still!”

“On it!” Her friends came forward with mean smiles on their faces as they pinned Dahlia to the

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hood of the car.

“I must say, you’ve got a perfect face!” The red-haired lady took out a pocket knife and began gently grazing it on Dahlia’s face. “But I do not like seeing things perfect, so I guess I’ll just have to ruin it!” And then she raised her hand and brought it down to Dahlia’s face quickly.

But before the knife came in contact with Dahlia’s face, a loud clang was heard as a silver needle flew through the air, accurately hitting the knife’s blade. A sharp pain shot through the red-haired lady’s hand, and the pocket knife she had in her hand clattered to the ground.

“Who’s there? Who did that?” She whipped her head around quickly with a dark expression.

“What gave you the guts to assault others in broad daylight?” A handsome man walked out from behind the car.

“Dustin?” Dahlia and Julie were both elated to see him. It was as though he was their savior, as they had yet to see him lose in a fight. When Dustin noticed Dahlia’s swollen cheeks, his expression darkened and his gaze became sharp.

“Where did you come from? And why are you sticking your nose in other people’s business?” the red-haired lady asked hostilely.

“You wretched b*tch! That man is the head of security for our company! You’re in deep trouble today!” Julie shouted haughtily now that Dustin was there.

“Hah! And here I was wondering who this rascal was. So it turns out that he’s nothing but a security guard?” The red-haired lady scoffed contemptuously.

“Looks like someone is trying to be the hero here to save the day now? Take a look in the mirror! If

you know what’s good for you, you better get lost, or I’ll beat the crap out of you too!”

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 586 -

Chapter 586

The young men and women, who were with the red-haired lady, began clamoring, disregarding

Dustin’s presence.

“Get down on your knees and apologize, or I’ll break your arms and legs!” Dustin demanded coldly.

“My! cocky, aren’t you?” One of the men walked up to Dustin and poked him in the chest rudely, taunting him as he did so, “Do you know who we are, loser? How dare you act so arrogantly with

us? I'll—"

Before he could finish his sentence, he was struck with full force across the face. A loud slap

could be heard as he was sent flying through the air, crashing through a car window head—

first. The top half of his body went right through the window and into the car, whereas the other half of

his body dangled outside of the car.

"How dare you slap my friend? Do you have a death wish?" The lady with the red hair was

infuriated by Dustin's actions. In one swift motion, she launched herself toward Dustin at an

unbelievable speed. When she got near, she threw a punch at Dustin with all her might, making a

whooshing sound. She was obviously a trained martial artist.

Then, without even the slightest change in expression, Dustin grabbed her fist and gave it a firm tug. A loud cracking sound was heard, and her arm was instantly fractured. Shocked by what had

happened, she stood there, frozen in place. It wasn't until the pain hit her that she finally let out a blood—

curdling shriek. But midway through her shriek, she was cut off by a hand grabbing at her

throat.

"Since your parents didn't raise you right, I'll educate you on some manners today." Without

saying anything else, Dustin went ahead and gave her two hard slaps on the face. The lady with the red hair saw stars, and her nose bled from the impact.

"Y—

you hit me? Do you even know who I am? I'm Maggie Doyle from the prestigious Doyle family!

“The red-haired lady glared fiercely at Dustin.

“The Doyle family?” Julie, who had been gloating over Maggie’s misfortune, immediately paled.

The Doyle family was one of the Fabulous Five and had deep roots in Millsburg. They also had

strong connections, making them incredibly powerful. With the level of influence the Doyle family possessed, Julie knew that none of them could afford to offend her.

“What?” Dahlia frowned slightly as her expression turned grave. No wonder she was acting so arrogantly! It was because she had the Doyle family backing her up! That made things difficult.

“We’re sorry, Miss Doyle! This is all just a misunderstanding. Please don’t be mad; we’ll pay you for your loss!” Julie immediately apologized to Maggie respectfully once she wrapped her head around the piece of information.

After she was done apologizing, she shouted at Dustin, “Hey Dustin! What are you doing? Let go of Miss Doyle right this instant!”

“Hahaha! So you’re scared now? I told you that you were going to regret it!” Maggie smirked sinisterly. “And you bastard, weren’t you all high and mighty just a while ago? Where’s your arrogant attitude now? You crossed a line when you placed your hands on me! You better get down

1/2

Chapter of

on your knees and apologize to us. And break your arms yourself, or I’ll see to it that you die such a horrible death that you regret the day you were born!”

“Quick, Dustin! Get on your knees and apologize! I do not want to be implicated!” Julie urged.

“Down on your knees!”

“Get down!”

“Go on, down on your knees!”

Maggie's friends yelled at Dustin. They were already used to seeing such situations because, no matter who it was, as long as they found out Maggie's identity, they would bend to her will. And that was a show of true power.

"On my knees, was it? Very well." Dustin nodded. Then he grabbed a hold of Maggie, slamming her to the ground. With a dull thud, Maggie fell heavily to her knees. Instantly, her knees were a

bloody mess of flesh, blood, and bones.

Everyone fell silent.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 587 -

Chapter 587

"Ahhh!" Maggie, who had her kneecaps fractured, let out an ear-piercing scream. She fell flat on the ground and rolled around in pain.

"What?" Everyone was shocked by what they saw. None of them had expected Dustin to hurt Maggie, even after she revealed her identity. He truly showed her no mercy.

But she was the daughter of the great Doyle family! No matter where she went, people always tried their best to please her, and nobody dared cross her. It was beyond everyone's comprehension that Dustin would actually break her kneecaps! It was insane!

"Are you out of your flipping mind, Dustin? Do you know what you've done?" After the initial shock wore off, Julie leaped to her feet, her face white as a sheet.

"You! How dare you hurt Miss Doyle? You're done for! All of you!"

"That's right! The Doyles aren't ever going to let you go! This is no longer about the money!"

Maggie's friends clamored in fury. As scions of wealthy families, they were all used to bullying others; never the other way around. This rascal had bit off more than he could chew!

You arrogant, overbearing bullies. I'm just teaching you a lesson for bullying those weaker than you. If you're not happy with it, come at me anytime," Dustin said indifferently. This was not the first time he had crossed a Doyle. He had beaten Duncan Doyle up not too long ago, and it didn't make much of a difference to him anymore to offend Maggie, who was also a Doyle.

"You're a gutsy one, bastard! We're not done with you!"

And with that, Maggie's friends quickly helped her up and ran away. If even Maggie, who came from a family with a strong martial arts background, could not go against Dustin, they'd be done for if they challenged him.

"You—you—you! You're a nutjob! You've put all of us in trouble now by messing with Miss Doyle!" Julie was terrified. Now that Maggie was in such a state, the Doyles were certainly not going to back off. And not only was Dustin going to be in trouble, but Julie would also be implicated. Influential and wealthy families like the Doyles were impossible to reason with once they decided

to seek revenge.

"Dustin! You were too impulsive!" Dahlia's brows were tightly knitted, and her expression was dark. She had yet to make a name for herself in Millsburg, and things would only be more difficult for her now that they had offended such a powerful family as the Doyles.

"Don't you worry. I'm not afraid of their retaliation." Dustin was unbothered by their reactions.

"Hah! You say that now! The Doyles are such an influential and wealthy family! How can you

afford to get on their bad side?" Julie screamed at him.

"It's true, I can't. But some people can. I know some people in Millburg who can easily deal with this," Dustin said calmly.

"You mean Natasha Harmon, don't you?" Dahlia asked huffily, her words laced with sarcasm. Well, if you have her help, things might just work out fine. After all, you're such lovebirds, aren't you?"

Chacte 587

“What are you thinking, Dahlia? Do I look like such a boy toy who gets a woman to protect me?” Dustin rolled his eyes.

“Yes.”

“Yes!”

Both Dahlia and Julie exclaimed in unison.

Dustin was left speechless. Why did everyone think that he was a boy toy? When, in fact, he had

worked hard and honestly for all his accomplishments? Maybe he really shouldn't have kept such

a low profile all this time.

Just then, Julie's phone rang. She picked it up, and soon after, her face fell. “What? You've found Terrence? Where is he? Sure. We'll be there right away!”

“What is it?” Dahlia asked.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 588 -

Chapter 588

“Mom just called me to say that someone spotted Terrence having a meal at Saffron Restaurant.

She's heading over with Aunt Florence and wants us to come along to catch the swindler too!”

Julie told Dahlia.

“Terrence Stone? How dare that cheat show his face in public again?” Dahlia was furious. He had nearly made her family go bankrupt because of the issue with the abandoned building. In the end, it was Dustin who took one for the family and bought it over. Hence, she had nothing good to say about Terrence.

“Stop being idle, Dustin! Go, get a car! We need to make Terrence give back all the money he ripped us off!” Julie said resentfully.

“I’ve bought over the abandoned building, so neither of you made any losses. Why are you both so worked up?” Dustin couldn’t comprehend their anger.

“Hey! What do you mean? A con man like Terrence needs to be taught a lesson! We should act for

justice!” Julie declared righteously.

“Is that so?” Dustin smiled. He knew very well what was going on in Julie’s head. Her declaration of justice was bullshit. She was just peeved that she was scammed, so she wanted to get some

form of compensation from Terrence.

Taking a different car, the three of them hurried off to Saffron Restaurant.

Saffron Restaurant was a nice eatery with a good ambiance, excellent service, and exquisite food,

so it was only to be expected that a place like that would charge exorbitant prices.

Over in a private room at Saffron Restaurant, Terrence, who had dressed up flashily, was having a meal with the wrong kind of people.

“I’ve got good news for you, Terrence.” After having one too many drinks, a man with a rounded

face said, “I’ve heard from some official sources that the abandoned construction site will be

developed as a key project. Its value is rapidly increasing now!”

“What did you say? Key project?” Terrence was stunned by what he heard. “You’re not joking, are you, Richie? That place’s trash! Why would anyone invest money in developing it?”

“It’s true!” The man with the rounded face said, “My father works with the relevant department, and the information has been confirmed! There’s no mistaking that!”

“Didn’t you buy that plot of land where the abandoned construction is, Terrence?” Someone asked.

“That’s right! I recall that too! I could not understand why Terrence would buy that piece of land back then! In hindsight, I guess you already knew about it then, didn’t you?”

“You’re something else, Terrence! How could you predict where the developments would be? Do you have some sort of insider information?”

“Congratulations, Terrence! You’ve struck gold this time around! Don’t forget about us when you make it big!”

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Chapter 588

Terrence’s friend flattered him and tried to court his favor.

Terrence, however, sat frozen where he was for a long time. Never had he dreamed that the abandoned construction site that nobody wanted anything to do with would suddenly transform into such a valuable piece of land overnight!

“What’s wrong, Terrence? Are you feeling alright?” Terrence’s friend asked.

“Hahaha! He must be having problems coming to terms with the fact that he’s going to be filthy rich!” Someone jested.

“Ri—
Richie, how much does that abandoned building cost now?” Terrence asked tentatively.

“At least two billion!” Richie said.

“Two billion?” Terrence felt like he’d been struck by lightning, and he blanched.

Under everyone’s disbelieving gaze, Terrence gave himself two slaps on the face. “I—

"I'm the greatest idiot!" How could he have just sold off a plot of land worth two billion dollars? Was there anyone out there more dumb than him?

Just as everyone wondered what was wrong with Terrence, the door of the private room was kicked open with a loud bang. Then, Florence, Victoria, and a few others barged in through the door. And they were fuming.

"Terrence Stone! There you are!"

"Give me back my money! Give me all the money that you've swindled off me!"

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 589 -

Chapter 589

"You swindler! Give me back my money!" Florence began shouting aggressively the moment she entered. She had even gotten several stout and burly women to come along with her to back her

1. up.

"Why are you here?" A sudden feeling of guilt came over Terrence, and his expression changed. He had not expected them to barge in while he was having a meal.

"How are we going to catch the swindler if we didn't come here personally?" Victoria shot him a glare.

"That's right! How dare you enjoy dining in such a luxurious place after cheating us of our money? You're utterly shameless!" Florence demanded with her hands on her hips.

"Who are these shrews, Terrence? Should we throw them out?" Terrence's friends asked meanly. Terrence was about to be the wealthiest one among them, so they were all dying to suck up to him.

"No, that won't be necessary. I know them." An idea came to Terrence, and he quickly told his friends, "You guys head on back for now. I've got some personal matters to deal with. I'll buy you all a meal some other day." And with that, he urged his friends to leave the private room.

“I don’t give a damn about what tricks you have up your sleeves, Terrence. Give me my money now!

“Victoria was not about to back off any time soon.

“Victoria, let’s sit down and talk, shall we? Don’t get all worked up.” With a smile on his face, he poured everyone a cup of tea.

“Cut the crap, you swindler!” Not wishing to waste her time on him, Victoria knocked the cup of

tea over.

“I don’t think I follow, Victoria. When have I swindled you?” Terrence pretended not to understand

what she was going on about.

“Oh, so you’re still trying to deny what you’ve done?” Victoria shot daggers at him with her eyes.

“You’re playing the fool with us, are you? Here, I’ll help jog your memory. A week ago, you swindled us into purchasing the plot of land where the abandoned building was, for a total of a hundred million dollars. Do you remember now?” Florence’s piercing gaze bore into Terrence. That piece of land had nearly caused her to go bankrupt, and she still had recurring nightmares

about it.

“You’re both mistaken!” Terrence sighed and acted like he had been wronged.

“About that piece of land, that was all because of my friend. I’m a victim just like you! I’d been cheated out of my

money too!”

“That’s rubbish! Do you think we’d buy that?” Victoria had a skeptical expression.

“She’s right! Why did you disappear for the past few days if you’re a victim too? We couldn’t find you, nor could we contact you. I’m sure that you’ve conspired against us together with your friend!” Florence shouted.

"I didn't! I really am a victim too!" With the most miserable look he could manage, Terrence said, "I haven't shown myself for the past few days because I was too ashamed to face you! Besides, I've

1/2

Chapter 588

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"I didn't! I really am a victim too!" With the most miserable look he could manage, Terrence said, "I haven't shown myself for the past few days because I was too ashamed to face you! Besides, I've

1/2

Chapter 580

been trying to locate my friend to get him to pay back the money that he ripped off of you! I've been doing that for you!"

“You claim to be so righteous, but where’s our money?” Florence demanded. She wasn’t going to believe his big talk anymore. If he did not return their money, everything he said was as good as

trash.

“My friend has disappeared without a trace. I suspect that he has long since fled to another city.” Terrence sighed deeply.

“Hah! I knew you were going to say that!” Florence smiled sardonically.

“Although my friend has run off with your money, I’ll take full responsibility for the money you’ve lost!” He declared righteously with a resolute demeanor.

Everyone was taken aback by his words, and they all had an astonished expression on their faces. It was beyond their expectation that he would take responsibility for the matter, as they thought that he would deny everything.

“So, what you’re saying is that you’ll pay us our money?” Victoria asked tentatively.

“Of course!” Terrence nodded earnestly. “I may be a victim too, but at the end of the day, all of you were implicated only because of me, so I’ll pay you what you lost in full!”

“Well...” Florence and Victoria exchanged a sheepish glance. For a moment, neither of them knew

how to react.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 590 -

Chapter 590

Florence and Victoria came for Terrence to get their money back. In fact, they were prepared to resort to violence to get things done, ready to teach him a lesson the moment Terrence tried to

pull anything funny. However, they had not foreseen that he would readily admit his mistakes and even humbly tell them that he would pay them for their

loss. For a moment, both of them were unsure if he really was a swindler. Could it be possible that Terrence was indeed innocent?

“If you truly are a victim too, Terrence, where would you get the money to pay us back?” Florence

was doubtful.

“Indeed, I do not have the money right now, but I can borrow some from people around me.” Terrence sighed before he continued, “I’ve got some connections here in Millsburg, and I have plenty of friends. Did you see those people who were here with me earlier on? I invited them here for a meal so that I could borrow some money from them to pay you your loss.”

Florence and Victoria were moved by his words. They were impressed by his resolution to pay them their money and even went as far as to borrow money from others. From the looks of things,

they had misunderstood him. “Have you gotten any money from them yet, Terrence?” Victoria mellowed down and asked cautiously.

“I have, and it’s just enough to cover your loss.” Terrence nodded.

“Well, we’re not in a rush to get the money back. You can take your time. It’s good to see that

you’re fine.” Victoria smiled sheepishly.

“Yes, that’s right! We were too impulsive and misunderstood you. Please don’t take it to heart.”

Florence quickly added.

“Oh, it’s all my fault. I’m the one who’s brought you trouble. A man should make right what he’s done wrong. I’ll transfer you the money now.” Terrence took out his phone and was about to make

the transaction.

“Hey! We’re all family! What’s the rush?” Florence smiled radiantly at him. “My bank account

number is 622700030...”

“Wait a minute!” Terrence suddenly stopped midway through typing in his password and pretended as if he had just thought of something. I can give you your money back, but the ownership of the plot of land with the abandoned construction should be transferred back to me.”

“Why would you want that? It’s basically worthless, Victoria asked.

“It’s not about how much it’s worth. Since I’m borrowing money from my friends, it only makes

sense that I give them something as collateral, and I think that piece of land will work just fine.”

Terrence explained earnestly.

“I see...” Victoria nodded and continued, “But the ownership of that piece of land is no longer with

us.”

“It’s not with you?” Terrence’s eyes widened. “Did you sell it?”

“That’s right!” Victoria grinned gleefully. “We sold that piece of land to a gullible person.”

“Who was it? Who was the one that bought it?” Terrence leaped out of his seat anxiously. Damn it!

1/2

Chapter 589

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were implicated only because of me, so I’ll pay you what you lost in full!”

Well. Florence and Victoria exchanged a sheepish glance. For a moment, neither of them knew

how to react.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 591 -

Chapter 591

“Speak of the devil! The simpleton is here!” Florence had barely finished her sentence when a group of three came in through the doors of Saffron Restaurant. It was none other than Dustin, Dahlia, and Julie.

“Terrence Stone!” Julie’s eyes swept the place once she entered. She quickly spotted Terrence in the private room and stormed over angrily.

“Julie, hear me out!” Terrence was just about to explain himself with an awkward smile on his face when, without any prior warning, Julie slapped him across the face. Caught off guard, he cupped his cheek with his hand, unable to react.

“Why are you being so aggressive, Julie?” Victoria reprimanded her immediately.

“Why are you defending him, Mom? Did he not deserve that?” Beside herself with anger, Julie saw nothing wrong with her actions. He deserved that slap very much for cheating her money and taking advantage of her feelings for him.

“You’re mistaken! Terrence isn’t a swindler!” Victoria swiftly pulled Julie aside.

“He’s not a swindler? Well, if he isn’t a swindler, are you implying that I’m the liar? Has something gotten into you, Mom? Why are you defending him? Julie’s fury was unabated.

“Don’t jump to conclusions. Listen to me, I’ll tell you everything...” Without any room for hesitation, Victoria explained to Julie in detail everything that Terrence had told them earlier. She made the whole thing sound so reasonable and made Terrence out to be the most considerate person, convincing Julie with her genuine and sincere words. When paired with Terrence’s miserable expression, Julie could not help but be convinced.

“What? So Terrence is innocent? I was wrong in hitting him, then?” Julie was convinced by the story that Victoria told her and quickly realized that she was wrong.

“Exactly! You acted too impulsively. Quick, apologize to Terrence!” Victoria instructed her.

“I’m sorry, Terrence; I didn’t mean to do that. Does it still hurt? Here, I’ll rub the pain away.” Julie’s attitude took a 180-degree turn, and she apologized gently.

“Don’t worry about it. I was the one who did not tell you the full story, that’s why you thought I

was a swindler.” Terrence forced a smile.

“You should have told me earlier how things were. We can always face problems together. It hurts

me to see you in such turmoil,” Julie said emotionally as she clasped Terrence’s hand in her own.

Dustin was left speechless when he saw how lovey-dovey they were acting. Were these people dimwits? How could they be fooled by Terrence with just a few words? Too ashamed to meet them? Went around borrowing money from others just to pay them back? How could anyone buy such garbage?

Dustin thought, “No wonder they were swindled.”

How else would Terrence be able to trick them if it weren’t for them being such foolish people? At the thought of that, Dustin took a glance at Dahlia beside him and noticed that she had a doubtful and wary expression. It seemed like she did not believe a single word Terrence said.

1/2

“Alright, alright. Now that we have got everything straight, we’re all still family,” Victoria said. Joyfully. She was pleased with Terrence as a person. He was a promising young man who was very considerate. She deemed him a good catch for her daughter.

“Ah, right. Terrence suddenly turned to Dustin. “Dustin, I heard from Victoria that they sold the abandoned construction site to you. Is that true?”

“It is What about it?” Dustin did nothing to hide the fact that he’d bought the land.

“That’s great.” Terrence heaved a sigh of relief. Then, with a smile on his face, he said, “I don’t like taking advantage of others. Since I was the one who brought this problem upon all of you, I can’t continue to let you bear the loss. I’ll purchase the piece of land from you at the original price that you bought it for.”

“You’ll purchase it?” Julie’s face fell when she heard that. In a hushed tone, she whispered, “Terrence, have you lost your mind? It wasn’t easy selling off that trashy piece of land! Why are you even buying it back? Why would you bring such loss upon yourself?”

“You shouldn’t say that, Julie!” Terrence put on a righteous facade.

“Dustin is my friend. Since something as bad as this has happened, we cannot take advantage of him! We must be righteous and hold fast to our principles!”

“But-” Julie was about to retort, but Terrence waved her off. “Say no more. A real man must stand up for his actions. We should not lose our principles just for a little benefit!”

With Terrence’s little righteous speech, almost everyone looked at him with admiration. Especially Julie, who looked at him like he had a halo over his head.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 592 -

Chapter 592

That was the mannerism of a true gentleman! At that moment, Terrence appeared heroic.

“You’re in luck, Dustin! What are you waiting for? Why aren’t you thanking Terrence? He decided to buy that rubbish off your hands!” Julie announced proudly.

“There’s no need for that. We’re all friends. I can’t bear to see you suffer such a loss. Just give me the ownership of that piece of land, and we’ve got a deal,” Terrence said with an amiable smile.

“When did I agree to the deal?” Dustin asked.

“What?” Terrence thought that he had heard Dustin wrong. He never thought that he would be rejected. Julie and the rest of them were astonished too. Unable to comprehend what was going on in Dustin’s head, they assumed that he had lost his marbles. After all, who would turn down money and choose to hold on to a piece of trash?

“Dustin, did you not hear what I said? The abandoned construction site is worth nothing, and you have no use for it! Why don’t you just sell it to me?” Terrence tried to talk some sense into Dustin.

“Why do you want it if it’s worth nothing?” Dustin countered.

“I’m doing this for your sake, of course!” Terrence said with all earnestness. “The reason all this happened was because of me. I trusted someone who I should not have trusted, but I should not have pulled you all into it. Therefore, I shall bear full responsibility for this at all costs!”

“Oh, how nice.” Dustin smiled faintly. “I thank you for your thoughtful gesture, but no thanks. I’m

not selling it.”

“Why not?” Terrence could not believe his ears.

“Because we’re friends. Just as you do not wish to take advantage of me, I refuse to do the same!”

“That’s all right; I do not mind bearing the loss.”

“But I do. So, forget about it.”

“No! We cannot forget about it! If you think that my offer isn’t enough, I can add a bit more to the original price that you bought it for!”

“This is not about money. It’s about principles. You said it yourself, we must be righteous and stay

true to our principles.”

“You!” Terrence was a hair’s breadth away from losing his composure. Damn it! Why was the idiot so stubborn? He had said everything he could to convince him to sell the piece of land, but nothing seemed to work. Exasperated, Terrence was left speechless.

“Alright, it’s getting late. I have some things to handle back at the company, so I’ll be taking my leave with Dahlia now. You guys carry on.” Dustin could not be bothered to converse with them any longer, so he exchanged a look with Dahlia, and they got out of the restaurant as fast as they

could.

“Hey, Dustin! You...” Refusing to let Dustin go just like that, Terrence was about to give chase but was held back by Julie. “Terrence, you cannot be too kind. Since that idiot turned you down, let’s not push it. Why would you give him money when he doesn’t even appreciate it?”

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Chapter 592

“Exactly! We all saw how sincere you were. He was the one who rejected your kindness. Don’t be too hard on yourself,” Victoria echoed. In her eyes, Terrence was every bit of the perfect son-in-law. His only drawback was that he was too righteous, which made him an easy target for others.

to take advantage of.

“If you’re still feeling bad about it, Terrence, why don’t you use the money and buy me some branded handbags?” Julie asked coquettishly.

“Handbags? Fuck you and your handbags!” Terrence finally flipped and shoved her aside. “Do you know that I’ve just lost two billion dollars?”

“Two billion dollars? What do you mean?” Shocked, Julie could not make heads or tails of

Terrence’s words.

“Truth be told, the land with the abandoned construction has been officially listed as the prime location for a key development. Its value has now gone up to two billion dollars! I’d given you wealth beyond measure when I sold you that plot of land. But look what you’ve done! You gave Dustin Rhys the perfect opportunity to get filthy rich! I can’t believe how stupid you all are!” Terrence roared f

frustratedly, growling almost. He was so close to ripping his hair out of vexation.

“Key development?”

“Two billion?”

“Immeasurable wealth?”

“Quick! Go after him!”

After a momentary stun, it finally dawned on Julie and the rest of them how big of a loss they had made. Without a moment to spare, they immediately rushed out of the restaurant. But Dustin was no longer anywhere to be seen.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 593 -

Chapter 593

On the way back, Dustin could tell that Dahlia had questions for him but was battling herself against questioning him. He smiled to himself at her curiosity and decided to give her an opening. “Shoot away if you’ve got any questions. There’s no need to hold them in.”

“I do not understand why you turned down Terrence’s offer to purchase the site of the abandoned building!” Dahlia blurted out.

“Everyone knows that it’s worthless now, so there’s no point holding onto it. You would have been better off selling it and recovering your loss!” Though she had promised and was determined to

not concern herself with Dustin’s business anymore, she still could not help but feel bad that he

had missed out on a good opportunity to make up for the loss he had made.

“Well, why would Terrence want to buy that piece of land when everyone knows that it’s

worthless?” Dustin asked.

“Didn’t he just say that he doesn’t want to take advantage of you because you’re friends?” Dahlia

retorted.

“Haha! Do you really think that Terrence would be so kind?” Dustin smiled meaningfully. “If he is

as righteous and responsible as he claims to be, he would not have disappeared without a trace for

the past few days.

“Well...” Dahlia’s brows knitted together as she fell deep into thought. It was true that she had her

doubts about Terrence’s integrity. But after seeing how sincere he appeared, even offering to buy back the abandoned construction site, she wavered and started to believe his words.

“Let me tell you the truth. The reason Terrence offered to buy the plot of land was not because of

his conscience or his righteousness. It was only because he knew that its value had skyrocketed.

Dustin chuckled.

“Skyrocket? The abandoned construction site has been sitting there for almost a decade, and

nobody wanted anything to do with it. How could it possibly increase in value?” Dahlia wondered

aloud.

“Nothing is impossible, Dahlia. Haven’t I told you that that plot of land has officially been listed as

an area for a key development? Terrence must have received some news about it that caused him

to change his mind. Do you really think that he'd be so kind?" Dustin had a faint smile on his face.

"How much is that piece of land worth now?" Dahlia asked tentatively.

"Two billion dollars at least. And that's a conservative estimation." Dustin dropped a bombshell.

"Two billion?" Dahlia's eyes went as wide as saucers. It was bewildering to think that a piece of land could go from absolutely worthless to worth two billion dollars overnight. She had toiled hard for years on end, and in the end, she had not even made as much as Dustin did in a single day. His uncanny luck was infuriating, to say the least.

All of a sudden, Dustin's phone rang. He pulled it out to see that the call was from Florence. He paused and gave it some thought before answering the call and putting it on speaker mode.

"Hey Dustin, where are you? There's something I'd like to talk to you about." An unbelievably kind

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599

and gentle voice came through the speakers. Dahlia felt her skin crawl at how cloyingly sweet her mother sounded. When has she ever been so soft-spoken?

"We're on the way back to the office, Florence. Is anything the matter? You can just tell me through the phone," Dustin said.

Clearing her throat, Florence asked awkwardly, "Well, here's the thing. I'd like to buy back the abandoned construction site. Would that be possible?"

"Why would you want to spend your money on something so worthless? You'll clearly be making a

loss. A hint of humor could be heard in Dustin's tone.

"So be it. As your ex-mother-in-law, I cannot watch you suffer the loss and do nothing about it.

Better me than you to take the loss.”

“It’s not a big deal for me. I’ve still got some disposable income. I’ll survive.”

“That wouldn’t do! I’m a person who stands firm in and upholds my moral values! I’ve been losing sleep over selling it to you at a high price. I feel like I’ve cheated you out of your money. I feel so bad for that, so I have a mind to buy it back to atone for my mistake.”

“That really won’t be necessary. After all, you mortgaged your house to get the money. If you lose that, you won’t even have a roof over your head! That’d be terrible!”

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 594 -

Chapter 594

“That’s alright, I can move into a smaller house. You, youngsters, are way too stressed out these days. As an elder, it’s only right for me to help you out however I can.”

“I’m not stressed out. Life is as breezy as it can get for me.”

Dustin and Florence bantered back and forth through the phone, neither of them coming clean with the truth. Since Florence took him as an idiot, Dustin gladly went along with the act and pretended to not know any better.

It was Dahlia, however, who found the conversation unbearable. She now fully believed what Dustin had told her. Her mother would not be so nice to Dustin otherwise. What she said about atoning for her wrongdoings and relieving Dustin of his burdens was all bullshit!

Florence had been grinning from ear to ear when she managed to scam Dustin into buying that piece of land! Now that she knew she had made a loss by selling it, she chose to put on a righteous and upright facade to buy it back instead of being honest with Dustin. She was despicable and

greedy!

“Hey! Why are you so stubborn? I’m only doing this for your good, so hurry up and sell me that piece of land!” As the conversation progressed, Florence began to los

lose her patience. Had it not been for the money, she would never have wasted so much effort coaxing him gently, and would immediately start shouting and cursing at him instead.

“Florence, why are you in such a hurry to purchase the abandoned construction site?” Dustin pressed. This was Florence’s last chance to come clean. If she told him the truth, he would willingly let her have a share of the profit.

“Have I not made myself clear yet? I can’t bear to see you lose money! I’d rather bear the burden myself!” Florence stubbornly refused to spill the truth.

“That’s enough, Mom!” Dahlia finally could take it no more. “Are you still going to keep on cheating people out of their money?”

“Hey, what’s that supposed to mean? When have I cheated others of their money?” Florence raised

her voice.

“Dustin already knows the truth. That piece of land is worth at least two billion dollars! You’ll never be able to buy it back at the original price!” Dahlia exclaimed.

“What?” All was quiet for a while before Florence said sheepishly, “Oh, so you already knew? Why didn’t you tell me earlier?”

“Florence, I’ve already reminded you repeatedly since a week ago! It was you who refused to

believe me,” Dustin retorted calmly.

“Oh, look how forgetful I am. I think my age is catching up on me!” Florence exclaimed regretfully. “Dustin, I was wrong. I’ll listen to all your advice from now on. Can you please sell the piece of land to me?”

“Had you shown just the slightest bit of honesty earlier on and did not intend to trick me out of my money, I’d have readily shared a part of what I profited from it with you. But your actions have

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truly disappointed me, so I will not be selling it to you,” Dustin told her truthfully.

“You’re not selling it?” Florence’s voice raised an octave when she heard what Dustin said. “That belongs to me! What right have you got to not sell it to me?”

“The ownership of the land belongs to me. I can handle it however I please,” Dustin said matter-of-

factly.

“I don’t care! You better give me back what belongs to me, or I’ll make you regret it!” Florence threatened menacingly. Just a few minutes ago, she had spoken so gently and kindly, but now her

true colors showed

“Behaving like this won’t get you anything,” Dustin said.

“You–

you bastard! You vile, shameless scumbag! I’ll sue you! I’ll sue you for swindling me of my money! You–

” Florence spewed a torrent of curses through the phone with no care in the world.

But she was cut off when Dahlia ended the call. How aggravating! She was the

one who bore bad intentions, and she had the gall to berate Dustin? Utterly unreasonable! As Florence’s daughter,

Dahlia felt ashamed of her actions,

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 595 -

Chapter 595

James was happily engrossed in a game of Texas Poker at an illegal casino that evening. Beside him sat a young lady with short hair who was dressed in revealing attire. Judging from the casino

chips on the table, it looked like they had been winning a lot.

“I have a pair of Queens. Show your hand!” A man with a hooked nose who sat opposite James

revealed his hand

“You dare challenge me with just a pair of Queens? Keep your eyes open, buddy. I’ve got Three of a Kind James grinned, flipping his cards over to show a pair of sixes. Since there was a six in one

of the five community cards, they made a set of three sixes, also known as three of a kind.

The rules of Texas Poker are simple. There were five community cards, and each player was dealt two hole cards. These can then be combined in any way to form the best five-card hand. The

highest-ranking hand is a Royal Flush, followed by Four of a Kind, Full House, Flush, Three of a

Kind, Two Pair, One Pair, and finally, a High Card.

*James, you’ve won again! You’re amazing!” The lady with short hair cheered excitedly, admiration evident in her eyes.

Hahaha! Well, luck isn’t the only factor in a game of Texas Poker. It’s a matter of skill too. I can

see through all his tricks! There’s no way I’d lose to him!” James bragged gleefully.

“I say, based on your chips, you’ve probably won at least a million dollars, haven’t you, James?”

The young lady asked as her eyes shone brightly.

“More or less. Here, this is for you.” James pressed a chip worth 20 thousand dollars into her hand

with a chuckle.

“Thank you, James!” The young lady flashed him a radiant smile before planting a kiss on his

cheek

“Come on, let’s go enjoy ourselves!” James reached out to hook an arm around the lady’s neck. He was happy with how much he’d won and was ready to leave to enjoy the rest of the night.

“You have a winning streak tonight, James. Why don’t you play some more while you’re winning?”

“It’s a good opportunity for you to make some more money while Lady Luck is on your side!” The young lady did not seem to want to leave yet.

“Oi, rascal! Are you running off after winning just so little? What a loser! Would you dare play another game with me?” The man with the hooked nose who sat opposite James taunted.

“This is a golden opportunity, James. Think of all the money you can win off of him. You shouldn’t miss the chance!” The young lady persuaded him in a hushed whisper.

“You’ve got a point there.” James nodded and looked at the man with a smirk. “It looks like you enjoy losing money. I’ll see to it that you walk out without a single cent today! Deal the cards!” With a wave of his hand, another round commenced.

Half an hour later.

“Oops, a Straight. I think I’ve won again.” The man opposite James showed his hand, revealing a set of Straight.

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Change pot

“Damn it! I lost again!” Losing his temper, James threw the pair of Kings in his hand on the table. With beads of sweat on his forehead and red, bloodshot eyes, he looked irritated.

Just half

an hour ago, he had been basking in the joy of winning continuously, making himself more than a million dollars without breaking a sweat. But now, it seemed as though Lady Luck had frowned on him, and he had lost everything that he had won earlier in the evening. What

terrible luck!

“Again!” Unwilling to accept defeat, James gestured for the dealer to start a new round.

“You’re out of chips, James.” The young lady reminded him.

“What?” James looked down at the table to see that he had indeed run out of chips.

“Hahaha! Is that all you’ve got? What a cheapo!” The man with the hooked nose ridiculed James, “Get lost then if you haven’t got any more money. Quit making an embarrassment of yourself here!”

“The f*ck did you just say?” James slammed his hands on the table as he bolted straight up in his seat, fury written on his face.

“What? Did I say anything wrong? Don’t act like you’re a big shot if you don’t have the money, loser!” Then, with a contemptuous expression, he called out to the young lady, “Hey, hot stuff, what are you doing with a loser like that? Why don’t you join me instead? I’ll make sure you have the best of everything!”

“You-!” James was so vexed that he ground his teeth together. But there was nothing much he could do.

“James, I heard that they allow players to borrow money from them here. Do you want to give it a try?” The young lady asked.

“Let’s do it! I’ll win back everything I lost tonight!” James roared. He could never look past the other man’s taunts. Especially not in front of a woman he fancied.

“Sure. I’ll get it done immediately.” With a quick nod, the young lady got up and left. Not long later, she came back with two million dollars worth of chips and a promissory note.

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Chapter 596

Without even looking at what was typed out on the promissory note, James proceeded to sign it and immediately joined the next round of the game. But in less than 15 minutes, he lost all two billion dollars worth of chips again.

“We’re out of chips again, James’ Should we borrow more? The young lady asked once again.

“Yes! Get as much as you can! James growled. At that moment, he had completely lost control of his senses, his actions only driven by the relentless desire to win back what he lost and make the man with the hooked nose regret what he said.

Two hours later, James was drenched in sweat and panting uncontrollably, his eyes were bloodshot. His expression was somewhat horrifying

“Sorry man, Three of a Kind and One Pair. That makes a Full House. You’ve lost again. “The man opposite him showed his hand and smiled meanly.

“Go! Borrow some more! I refuse to believe that I’ll keep losing today! James shouted.

“You’ve already lost too much, James. They refuse to lend you anymore,” The young lady answered

“They’re not lending me anymore? Why not? Do they think that I can’t afford to pay them back? I’ll have you know that my sister is the chairperson of Nicholson Corp.! She has assets worth over a hundred billion dollars! James declared proudly,

“Hey, buddy, my boss would like to speak with you.” Out of nowhere, a calloused hand rested on

James’ shoulder from behind.

“Who the hell is touching me? James whipped around immediately. Just as he was about to start acting aggressively, he froze. Behind him stood several insanely buff men who were wearing suits and looked like they were henchmen, staring at him.

“What do you want?” James put on a calm facade.

“You borrowed quite a huge sum of money throughout the night. My boss would like to talk to you about your payment. Come with us.” As the leader of the group of henchmen spoke, he inconspicuously flashed the gun fastened to his belt. James’ eyes widened. As he dared not go against their wishes, he had no choice but to follow them upstairs to the VIP room.

Over in the VIP room, there was a paunchy man with a cigar perched on his lips and one ankle resting lazily over a knee.

“He’s here, Mr. Doyle.” Two henchmen pushed James into the room and locked the door from outside. James gulped dryly when he saw the room full of menacing and fierce henchmen. His anxiety was un concealable.

“Do you know who I am?” The paunchy man asked before taking a long swig of his cigar and slowly exhaling, releasing a puff of smoke.

“You look very familiar, Sir. Have we met?” James asked cautiously.

“I’m Doyle. Duncan Doyle,” The man said.

“Duncan Doyle? From the prestigious Doyle family?” James was astonished.

“It’s good that you know me. Now, let’s talk about my money. So, you borrowed a total of 38 million dollars tonight. How are you going to pay it back?” As Duncan spoke, he slapped a thick stack of promissory notes on the table. Every piece of it had James’ signature on it.

“38 million? That much?” James could not believe his ears and quickly flipped through the notes to check. By then, he was already thoroughly drenched in sweat. “Mr. Doyle, these notes prove that I’ve only borrowed 30 million. Where did the extra 8 million come from?” James asked

miserably.

“Why would I be lending out money if not for the interest?” Duncan asked frostily.

“B—but isn’t the interest too high?” James asked warily.

“Cut the crap! You either pay me what you owe or I’ll chop your limbs off!” Duncan glared at him.

“N—no, don’t! I’ll pay!” James was flustered by the situation he was in. “Can you please give me a few more days to pay up, Mr. Doyle? I promise I’ll pay you in full.”

“No! You are to pay me tonight. Where am I going to find you if you escape?” Duncan demanded.

“But how am I supposed to produce this much money in one night?” James cowered in fear.

“Didn’t you say that your sister is the chairperson of Nicholson Corp.? Several million dollars are

considered peanuts to her!” Duncan smirked sinisterly.

“What?” James froze up for a while before he continued sheepishly, “Mr. Doyle, knowing my

sister, she will most likely refuse to pay my debts.

She usually helped him out of most of the trouble he got himself into, but once they had anything to do with gambling or drugs, it was the end of the discussion.

“Don’t worry. I’ll help you.” Duncan smiled venomously.

“Help me? How will you help me?” James was taken aback by Duncan’s offer to help. But Duncan did not give him a straightforward reply. Instead, he simply gestured to his henchmen and took an axe that they handed him. As James watched on with terror in his eyes, Duncan swung the axe

down in the direction of his wrist.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 597 -

Chapter 597

In the president's office at Nicholson Corp, Dahlia took a sip of coffee and continued immersing herself in work. Although Hank didn't show it, he was facing all sorts of obstacles in private. He pushed every matter to her, regardless of whether it was big or small, which caused her to be so busy that she had to work overtime every day till midnight.

"Ms. Nicholson...." Right then, a young female assistant knocked on the door all of a sudden.

"What is it?" Dahlia looked up at her. Because Julie wasn't a very reliable secretary, she hired another assistant, Kelly Porch, to share the workload.

"Ms. Nicholson, someone sent you a parcel and asked me to pass it to you directly. The person mentioned that it's a surprise," Kelly said, holding a gift box.

"Okay, put it on the desk." Dahlia nodded, then a thought struck her. "Kelly, it's getting late. You

should head home first. You don't have to wait for me."

"Okay, Ms. Nicholson." Kelly turned around and left.

Dahlia rubbed her eyes and finally finished her work. She turned her gaze to the gift box and decided to open it. However, the moment she opened it, she was so frightened that her face went deathly pale. What lay inside the gift box was a bloody hand! It was very obvious that the hand had just been cut off not long ago because the blood had not clotted yet. It was a very shocking sight.

While she was still in shock, her phone suddenly rang. When she answered it, she immediately heard Duncan's voice. "Ms. Nicholson, you must have already received my gift."

"Who are you?" Dahlia's expression went cold.

"Who I am is not important. What's important is that your brother owes me 38 million dollars, and you have to repay his debt," Duncan said plainly.

"Why should I believe you?" Dahlia frowned.

“You don’t believe me? Then listen for yourself.” Duncan said.

“Dahlia! Save me! Hurry up and save me! They cut my hand off!” James shouted, his voice full of fear and misery.

“James! What’s going on? Why would you owe someone money?” Dahlia hurriedly demanded.

“Dahlia! This isn’t the time to ask these questions. Hurry up and come here with the money, or I’m going to die!” James sobbed over the phone.

“Ms. Nicholson, did you hear that? Bring me the money in exchange for him. Otherwise, I don’t know what other extreme things I’ll do to your brother.” Duncan threatened.

“Don’t do anything! You just want money, don’t you? I’ll give it to you!” said Dahlia in panic.

“Okay, then I’ll be awaiting your grand arrival,” Duncan said with a laugh.

After hanging up, Dahlia dared not waste another second and, without hesitation, immediately rushed to the casino. She couldn’t just sit around and do nothing when her brother was in danger. While driving, she called Dustin, but he didn’t pick up. She had no choice but to send him a text

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along with the address

20 minutes later, Dahlia arrived at the underground casino. After she told someone her name, a gangster led her to a VIP room on the second floor. A bunch of violent-looking gangsters were standing around inside the room.

James was kneeling on the floor and trembling, his face streaked with tears and snot. Someone had simply bandaged the stub of his arm where his hand should be, temporarily stopping the bleeding “Sis! You’re finally here!” When James saw Dahlia walk in, he immediately wept tears of joy as if he saw his savior

“How dare you! Who taught you to gamble?” Dahlia slapped James across the face. She knew that her brother liked to gamble. She had always warned him

against it in all sorts of ways and had even given him a beating before. She had thought that he would have changed his ways, but who would have thought that he would get himself into more serious trouble now.

“Ms. Nicholson, I won’t meddle with you disciplining your brother, but you must give me the money first,” Duncan said with a cigar between his lips.

“It’s you?” The moment Dahlia saw him, she immediately remembered something. She quickly realized that she had seen Duncan before. Previously, when she was eating at a restaurant, he had led a gang of people to look for trouble with Dustin but had gotten beaten up instead.

“That’s right. It’s me. Now, can you give me the money?” Duncan said with a mirthless smile.

“This is a bank check for 38 million dollars, not a penny less.” Dahlia placed a check on the table.

“I don’t want a check. I want the payment in cash,” Duncan said with a shake of his head.

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Chapter 598

“Cash?” Dahlia frowned and said, “Where will I get so much cash at such short notice?”

“That’s for you to figure out. We only accept cash here,” Duncan said casually.

“You’re just making things difficult for me on purpose!” Dahlia’s expression was icy. She would probably need a truck to transport 38 million dollars worth of cash.

“Ms. Nicholson, mind your words, Does your brother still want to keep his other hand?” Duncan swept his gaze toward James.

“You!” Dahlia gritted her teeth and managed to control herself. “Can you give me two days? I’ll bring you the cash as fast as I can.”

"I wouldn't say no, but you have to have a few drinks with me first." Duncan stood up slowly and took two glasses out from the drinks cabinet. He filled them with whisky and handed one to Dahlia. "Drink this, and I'll consider giving you two days."

"What?" Looking at the glass full of whisky, Dahlia couldn't help but frown slightly. Duncan obviously didn't have good intentions. She didn't know if she could still leave that place after she

drank it.

"You refuse? Then you're just disrespecting me." Duncan's smile disappeared slowly as he said, "It's only right for one to repay their debt if they owe money. If they can't, then I have no choice but to cut their limbs off. Guys, chop James' other hand off!"

"Yes, sir!" Two gangsters laughed evilly and immediately pressed James against the floor.

"No! Don't chop my hand off!" James was scared out of his wits as he begged for mercy. "Dahlia! Save me! Save me, quick! I'm your brother! I don't want to become handicapped. I'm begging you. Hurry up and drink the whisky!"

"Chop it off!" Duncan shouted.

"Wait!" Just as the ax was about to strike, Dahlia shouted hastily, "I'll drink!"

"Haha, that's more like it ... Drink up," Duncan said with a sly smile.

Dahlia took a deep breath, picked up the glass, and downed the whiskey in one go. Even though she knew that something was wrong with it, she had no choice but to drink it because her brother's life was in Duncan's hands. Now, she could only pray that she would hold up.

"Nice! You really are an impressive woman. Come on, let's have another drink!" Duncan filled her glass again. Dahlia frowned deeply, and she hesitated for a moment. But she still finished the glass of whisky. After downing two glasses, she felt lightheaded quickly and felt herself burning

1. up.

“Shit!” Dahlia thought. Knowing something was off, she tried to fight the feeling and force herself out the door. However, before she could take more than two steps, her vision went black, and she fainted on the floor.

“Hehe... I’ll see how you try to run away from me,” Duncan said while stroking his chin, his expression perverted.

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Chappe SNE

“Mr. Doyle, wasn’t our deal just about money? How could you break your promise?” As he

witnessed his sister get drugged, James immediately panicked. Even a fool would know what was going to happen next.

“What’s the matter? You want to avenge your sister?” Duncan laughed wickedly. “Sure, if you chop off your other hand, then I’ll let your sister go. How does that sound?”

“I.. James’ expression stiffened, and he immediately hung his head. His gaze flitted around as he dared not look at Dahlia, who was lying out cold on the floor.

“A coward, just as I thought. Get lost!” Duncan shouted, and he kicked James to the floor.

“Okay, okay, okay. I’ll get lost right away.” James looked as if he had just been spared a gruesome death. He dared not hesitate and scrambled out of the room instantly. His pathetic behavior made the whole gang laugh loudly.

“Okay, you guys get out too. Don’t disturb me.” Duncan waved his hand and dismissed his lackeys from the room. Then, a thought struck him, and he fished out Dahlia’s phone. He called Dustin and said, “Hey, Rhys! Do you know who I am? That’s right, it’s me, Duncan Doyle! Your woman is in my bed right now. I’ll show her a good time tonight.”

The moment he finished speaking, a loud bang sounded as someone kicked the door open. Then, a figure with a cold expression came into sight. "You'll show who a good time?"

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 599 -

Chapter 599

Dustin stepped through the door, his gaze terrifyingly cold.

From the moment he saw Dahlia's text, he knew something was wrong, so he rushed here as fast as he could.

"W—what are you doing here?!" Duncan's eyes widened, and he staggered backward in fear.

"Didn't you call me to ask me to come over? Well, now I'm here. What are you going to do?" Dustin began approaching him.

"Someone, come quick!" Duncan screamed.

However, strangely enough, no one outside responded. It was as though those men stationed outside had disappeared into thin air.

"Where the f*ck are you all? Hello?!" Duncan continued hollering.

But no matter how much he yelled, there was no response.

"I warned you before not to cross me again. Or else, you'll die a miserable death. What, did you think I was bullshitting you?" Dustin was getting closer and closer.

"Rhys, you're on my territory. I'm warning you to not come any closer, or you won't step out of this place ever again!" Duncan shouted, putting on a fierce front.

"Tell me, how do you want to die?" Dustin asked coldly.

"Take another step, and I'll blow your brains out!" At that moment, Duncan suddenly took a gun from the drawer and pointed it right at Dustin's head. Now that Duncan had a weapon with him, he believed that he had the upper hand.

“Really? You can try.” Dustin continued to approach Duncan without a hint of fear.

“You’re f*cking asking for it!” Duncan pulled the trigger without a second thought.

“Bang!” There was the sound of a shot being fired. Yet, Dustin was still standing in the same spot and did not move a single inch.

He was completely unharmed from head to toe.

“I missed?” Duncan frowned. He pulled the trigger two more times. Yet, it was the same as before. However, Dustin still looked unruffled and unhurt in the slightest.

“Fuck, I refuse to believe that I can’t kill you!” Duncan clenched his jaw and began to shoot madly until there were no more bullets left.

“Bang, bang, bang!” After a series of gunshots, Dustin was still standing in the same spot. His body was uninjured; heck, even his clothes weren’t damaged.

“Is this guy a ghost?” Duncan was so scared that cold sweat began to pour from his temples.

At this distance, there was no way Duncan would miss, even if he closed his eyes. Yet, he’d fired over a dozen bullets, but he didn’t so much as leave a scratch on Dustin. It was absolutely insane.

“Were you trying to kill me with these things?” Dustin slowly opened his fist to reveal a handful of

1/2

misshapen bullets in his palm.

“H—how did you do that?” Duncan’s expression turned into one of horror.

Could it be that his opponent had caught all the bullets that he’d shot earlier with his bare hand? Was he even f*cking human?!

“Do you want to know? I’ll tell you once you’re dead With that, Dustin kicked Duncan in the

stomach

Duncan flew backward like a bullet leaving the barrel. He slammed into the wall harshly, leaving a spider crack on the wall. Blood spurted from his nose and mouth on impact.

“1-

I am a member of the Doyle family, one of the fabulous five! If you dare lay a hand on me, my family will never forgive you!” Duncan threatened, his face twisting into a ferocious snarl.

Dustin hummed before giving him another kick in the chest. There was the sound of bones cracking, and Duncan once again coughed up a mouthful of blood. His entire rib cage collapsed on

itself.

“D-

don’t kill me! I’m begging you not to kill me! I know I was wrong! I’ll never do it again! I swear, I won’t annoy you ever again!” Duncan begged in between fits of coughing up blood.

This time, he was truly afraid.

“Any last words?” Dustin slowly raised his foot. This time, he lifted it right over Duncan’s head.

“Wait! Someone intentionally wanted to make you suffer today. It has nothing to do with me. I’m just the runner!”

“Who was it?” Dustin asked coolly.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 600 -

Chapter 600

“If you promise not to kill me, I’ll tell you the truth.” Duncan said, attempting to negotiate terms.

“No thanks. You can just go die.” As soon as Dustin finished speaking, he stomped his foot hard on Duncan’s head

“No-”
Duncan tried to wail before his head exploded into pieces. And just like that, he was dead.

“Mr Rhys, the people outside have been taken care of ”

At that moment, two masked martial artists dressed in black garments walked in. They were elite. shadow guards.

“Excellent. Clean this place up, and send the body straight to the Doyle home,
” Dustin ordered.

The two exchanged glances, but in the end, they still nodded. “Yes.”

Dustin said nothing more. He carried the unconscious Dahlia and briskly walked out of the

underground casino.

The moment he stepped out the doors, he noticed a suspicious figure lurking in a corner. It was none other than James, who had managed to escape earlier

“Come out!” Dustin threw a glance over his shoulder.

“Oh, it’s just you. You scared me.” James couldn’t help but let out a breath of relief when he saw

Dustin’s face. At the same time, he began to criticize him. “Hey, Rhys, why didn’t you come earlier? Don’t you know how much danger my sister was in just now? Also, if you weren’t so slow

to come to the rescue, my hand wouldn’t have been chopped off. How are you going to compensate

me? I’m telling you, without at least eighteen million dollars, I won’t-”

Before he could finish his sentence, Dustin had already raised his hand and slapped him hard

across the face.

James stumbled backward from the impact, almost falling over. His cheek began to swell rapidly.

“Are—
are you crazy? What did you hit me for?!” James cupped his stinging cheek, his entire body

radiating shock and fury.

“That was for your insolent remarks!”

With a cold face, Dustin raised his hand and gave him another slap. “This one is for your lack of

repentance!”

Slap! “This one is for your cowardice!”

Slap! “And this one is for throwing Dahlia under the bus!”

Each slap made a loud ringing sound as it landed on James’ face. He was smacked so hard that his head began to spin, and blood began to drip from his nose and mouth.

His face was so swollen that he now looked like a pig.

“Stop!” Suddenly, an SUV pulled over to the side of the road, and Florence immediately jumped off the car and dashed over.

Chank Sp

“Mom, you’re finally here!” When James saw his mother, he immediately ran into her arms, crying. He wailed. “That bastard Dustin is crazy! Look at what he did to my face!”

“Rhys, why did you hit my son?!” Florence flew into a rage.

“Why don’t you ask him what he did?” Dustin shouted back.

“No matter what, you can’t hit my son!” Florence screamed, glaring at Dustin.

“That’s right! Hitting people is wrong! Not to mention, why did you have to beat him so terribly?”

Julie added.

“Terribly? He should be grateful that I didn’t slaughter him!” Dustin roared with a frigid look.

If James hadn’t gotten into trouble in the first place, Dahlia wouldn’t have gotten dragged down.

with him.

Even more despicably, that bastard had abandoned his sister and ran for his life alone!

“James, what in the world happened? Tell me everything, and I’ll make sure to do right by you!”

Florence demanded, her face darkening.

“Mom, this is all because of Dustin!” James pointed his finger at Dustin, getting his side of the story out first. “He colluded with the owner of the casino to punish me and put me in a crushing gambling debt. Then, he even lied to Dahlia to get her here, drugged her, and was going to do something to her. I couldn’t bear to watch her get hurt, so I risked my safety and tried to stop him. Humiliated, that asshole blew his top and beat me into a pulp. Look at my face—look at what he

did to me!”

As soon as James finished speaking, Dustin’s face instantly turned stormy.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 601 -

Chapter 601

As Dustin watched James run his mouth, his face became darker than a storm cloud.

He never expected that James would shift the blame to the victim instead. Not only did he feel no remorse for his wrongdoing, he even dumped all the blame on Dustin. His actions made Dustin's blood boil!

"How dare you, Dustin! I never thought you could sink to such lows. You couldn't woo my

daughter, so you decided to resort to such abominable actions? You're a demon wearing a human's face!" Florence screamed hatefully.

"Hmph, I saw through your faux gentlemanly demeanor a long time ago! Not only did you try to steal our money, you've even tried to harm my cousin. You're an animal!" Julie roared, her eyes wide with rage.

"After all that happened, are you still not repentant?" Dustin frowned.

"What do I have to repent for? This is clearly your fault! You're the one who tried to hurt my sister!" James said indignantly. With his mother backing him, he had nothing to fear.

"You animal, don't touch my daughter again!" Florence gave Dustin a fierce shove before forcefully snatching the unconscious Dahlia from his arms.

"Mom, this bastard is truly wretched. Not only was he harboring repulsive intentions toward Dahlia, he even had someone chop my hand off. This time, you need to do right by me!" James wailed, playing the victim.

"You really need a good beating!" Dustin finally reached his breaking point. He raised his hand

and slapped James across the face.

James was hit so hard that he was lifted off the ground. His nose and mouth twisted to one side as

his head cracked against the wall, and he passed out.

“Asshole, how dare you continue hurting people?!” Florence yelled, her face furious.

“Rhys, you’re a huge bully!”

Both Julie and Florence were aflame with righteous indignation. However, they knew they

couldn’t beat him. Otherwise, they would have gotten violent from the very start.

“I don’t want to waste my breath talking to you. Once Dahlia wakes up, she’ll tell you the truth. Now get out of my sight and take that piece of shit with you!” Dustin roared.

This time, James had truly pissed him off. He was as cowardly as a mouse, yet he bullied those

weaker than him. When James had to confront Duncan, he didn’t even dare to make a noise; he

was quick to abandon his sister and run. And now, after being rescued, he was still trying to

manipulate the truth to frame Dustin and throw him under the bus.

Lowly scum like him deserved to be taught a lesson.

“Rhys, just wait! This isn’t over. You beat my son and hurt my daughter. I will get justice!”

After a series of animated curses, Florence finally left indignantly with her family. She knew that Dustin was very skilled in combat, so she only dared to use her mouth and not her hands. Of

Chapter 601

course, she had made up her mind to blackmail him miserably after this.

In the best-case scenario, she might be able to get that piece of land where the buildings were.

The night flew by.

The next morning, when the first ray of sunlight filtered through the windows of one of the rooms in the Ansdale South Hospital, Dahlia finally opened her eyes after a night of being unconscious.

At that moment, Florence happened to walk in with a tray of breakfast. "Dahlia, you're awake? How do you feel? Does it hurt anywhere?"

"Mom, what am I doing here?" Dahlia rubbed her head, feeling woozy.

"Dahlia, you were drugged yesterday. I was worried about you, so I brought you to the hospital,"

Florence explained.

"Drugged?"

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 602 -

Chapter 602

Dahlia thought about it long and hard before finally recalling what happened in the casino last night. She had drunk two glasses and passed out with no recollection of what happened

afterward, but it seemed like she was safe.

"This is all that bastard's fault! If Dustin didn't harbor any ill intentions toward you and your

brother, none of this would have happened to the both of you!" Florence exploded.

"Dustin? What does any of this have to do with him?" Dahlia was puzzled.

"I bet you still have no idea that he conspired with the owner of the casino to drug you. He

was going to take advantage of you. Fortunately, James fought back and managed to save you,” Florence replied.

“Mom, there must be some kind of mistake.” Dahlia smiled. “Dustin would never hurt me, much

less use such dirty tactics. You’ve got it all wrong.”

“Oh, Dahlia. You get tricked all the time because of how naive you are.” Florence retorted, her face serious. “You should never judge a book by its cover. Dustin may look like a good man, but he’s actually rotten to the core!”

“Mom, Dustin isn’t that kind of person.” Dahlia frowned in displeasure. She knew what kind of man Dustin was, and he definitely wasn’t the kind of person Florence was describing.

“You didn’t get to witness how disgusting he truly is last night. He didn’t just touch you; he also beat James up. Thanks to that, your brother is still unconscious in the hospital right now!”

Florence fumed.

“Dustin beat up James? No way.” Dahlia was skeptical.

“I saw it with my own eyes. Why would I lie to you? Your aunt and cousin were there too. You can ask them if you don’t believe me.” Florence retorted confidently.

“I know Dustin very well. If he hit James, then James must have done something wrong,” Dahlia

quickly replied.

“Hey! How could you defend an outsider? James is the victim here, yet you’re defending that bastard! What on earth are you thinking?” Florence shrieked.

“Mom, there must be a misunderstanding. I refuse to believe that Dustin would hit someone for no reason.” Dahlia shook her head adamantly.

Although she wasn’t sure about what happened yesterday night, Dustin clearly helped get her to safety because she had left him a text before going to the casino as a precaution.

“Hmph! That brute hit James because he was angry that his tricks got exposed!” Florence seethed.

“I still-” Before Dahlia could continue her sentence, Julie barged into the room anxiously, yelling, “Aunt Florence, bad news! James’ condition suddenly took a turn for the worse, and he’s been sent to the operating room!”

“What? The operating room?” Florence was shocked, “Wasn’t he fine last night? Why did his condition suddenly worsen?”

1/2

Chapter 602

“I’m not too sure either, but the doctor said that things were very serious. You should hurry over immediately!” Julie urged.

“Right! Let’s go!” Florence quickly dashed out of the room. Dahlia immediately put on her shoes

and followed after her mother.

When they reached the operating room waiting room, they could do nothing but pace and wait anxiously for the results. It wasn’t until three hours later that the doors opened again, and several

doctors and nurses emerged, looking drained.

“Doctor, how is my son doing? Is he alright?” Florence asked fearfully.

The surgeon sighed regretfully and replied, “I’m sorry. We tried our best, but we were unable to bring the patient back. He has passed away.”

“What?” Everyone was shocked, their faces frozen in disbelief.

“D—dead?” As if struck by lightning, Florence’s knees went weak, and she sank to the floor,

devastated.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 603 -

Chapter 603

James' death shocked everyone. They couldn't believe that the man who had been so full of life last night was now dead.

"N—
no! It can't be! How could my brother be dead?" Dahlia shook her head repeatedly, her face full of disbelief. "Please try and save my brother again! I'm willing to pay any price!"

"I'm sorry, but there's nothing we can do. Our deepest condolences." The doctor shook his head.

"But how could this be?" Tears streamed down Dahlia's face, and she staggered backward. She

couldn't believe that her brother had died just like that.

"Oh, James! My son!" Florence wailed in anguish as James' body was wheeled out. She burst into tears at the sight of the lifeless body.

She couldn't believe that her only son, whom she babied endlessly, had died so suddenly. What a

tragic outcome!

"Doctor, my nephew was fine yesterday, so why did he die? Did you guys make a mistake during surgery?" Victoria questioned.

The patient suffered a severe head injury that resulted in intracranial bleeding. We've done everything we could." The surgeon quickly explained.

Hearing this, Florence sprung up and swore. "It's Dustin! That f*cker did this! He killed my son!"

"You're right. James must have died because of Dustin's violent assault last night. He even hit James on the head!" Julie exclaimed, a sudden realization dawning on her.

“That goddamn bastard! How dare he kill my son! I’ll make him pay!” Florence roared.

“I—it can’t be Dustin!” Dahlia was still in denial.

“Dahlia Nicholson! Your brother is dead! Are you still going to defend that piece of shit?” Florence

was furious.

“There must be a misunderstanding. There must be!” Dahlia kept shaking her head, unable to accept this shocking reality.

“Dahlia, it’s true that Dustin did it. We saw the whole thing happen last night.” Julie stated

gravely.

“I was there too. This happened because Dustin assaulted James.” Victoria echoed.

“Open your eyes and look at your brother’s body. Look at what that bastard did to James’ face!” Florence grabbed Dahlia by the collar and dragged her toward James’ lifeless body. The bruises and swelling on his face that indicated his brutal assault were still clearly visible.

“Why? Why did this happen?” Dahlia sobbed in anguish. Her brother’s death was already a huge blow to her, but the fact that Dustin was the person who killed James hurt her far worse.

Although she wanted to deny this truth, all evidence pointed at Dustin, so she had no choice but to accept it. Now, she was at a loss for what to do.

Why had it been Dustin?

1/2

Why did he hurt her brother?

What will happen to her and Dustin?

“Oh God, why are you doing this to me? Why?” Dahlia screamed in her head. She clutched her chest and felt as her heart shattered into a million pieces as she sobbed heartbreakingly.

Dahlia was eventually so overwhelmed that she collapsed, passing out on the spot.

In the afternoon, inside one of the hospital's wards, Florence and the others had started handling things related to James' passing.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 604 -

Chapter 604

Meanwhile, Dahlia sat alone on the hospital bed with a dull gaze and a haggard face. All the crying had tired her out, and her head was so hazy she felt like a zombie. Today's blow had completely overwhelmed her.

“Dahlia

Dustin suddenly walked into the room. His tone was concerned as he asked, “I heard you were admitted to the hospital. Which part of your body is the discomfort coming from? Do you want me to take a look at it?”

Unresponsive, Dahlia sat still like a statue.

“What's wrong, Dahlia?” Dustin waved a hand in front of Dahlia's face, whose expression remained as emotionless as a lifeless doll. Usually, only devastated people who had lost all hope showed such an expression

Dustin frowned and immediately felt her pulse, only to realize that it was irregular and extremely weak, like a candle that was going to blow out at any moment.

“How did this happen?” Dustin was shocked. He quickly took out his silver needles and began treating Dahlia

A stream of true energy started flowing into her body as more needles pierced her.

“Dahlia, wake up!” Dustin yelled as he kept inserting more needles into her body.

He had no idea what caused her to turn this way, but he did know that if her condition was not

treated soon, she was either going to die or go crazy!

“Wake up!”

As he stabbed the last needle into Dahlia’s skin, an abundant stream of true energy flowed out of

his body and into Dahlia’s.

It took a moment for Dahlia to come back to her senses and for light to return to her eyes.

“Great!” Dustin let out a breath of relief. He asked worriedly, “What happened, Dahlia? You were-”

Before he could finish his words, Dahlia swiped her hand across his face fiercely, shocking him.

“What?” Dustin frowned and turned to look at her, only to see her trembling as tears filled her eyes.

“Why are you here? I don’t want to see you. Get out!” Dahlia wailed, slapping him again.

This time, however, Dustin caught her hand gently. “What on earth happened, Dahlia?”

“How dare you ask me! Don’t you know what you did?” Dahlia seethed.

“I really don’t. Was there a misunderstanding?” Dustin asked hesitantly.

“Misunderstanding? My brother is dead, yet you tell me there was a misunderstanding?” Dahlia practically roared.

“James is dead?” Dustin paled. “How could this be?”

“You murderer! You killed my brother! I hate you! I hate you! I hate you!” Fists rained down on Dustin as Dahlia vented all her anger at him.

1/2

Chop:604

“Me? No way.” Dustin was flabbergasted.

“Don’t even try denying it. My brother was hospitalized because of what you did last night. They failed to save him this morning, so he’s dead now!” Dahlia’s face was full of agony.

“Impossible!” Dustin immediately shook his head. “I did slap him a few times last night, but I

made sure to control my strength. It was nowhere near enough to kill him!”

Despite his hatred for James, Dustin would never kill the other man. Yesterday’s actions were merely to teach James a lesson, so how could they have caused his death?

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 605 -

Chapter 605

“Don’t make excuses! Your palm prints are all over my brother’s face, and the doctors said he suffered severe head trauma. If you weren’t the one who caused it, who else could it be? Why? Why did you have to hit him so hard? Even if he did something wrong, you shouldn’t have killed him!” Dahlia bawled, her fist pounding on Dustin’s chest.

Although Dustin should be the one in pain, the person who ended up with tears streaking down

their face was Dahlia.

“Dahlia, I think that there’s something fishy with James’ sudden death. Please believe me. I would never kill him!” Dustin responded gravely.

“Believe you? How am I supposed to do that when all evidence is pointing at you?” Dahlia roared. It has been proven that Dustin was the person who hit Ja

mes, causing the latter to be hospitalized. Doctors have also confirmed that the cause of James' death was head trauma.

These answers were concrete evidence that pointed to Dustin as the murderer. So even if Dahlia was willing to believe that this hadn't been Dustin's intention, it was an undeniable fact that Dustin had accidentally killed her brother.

"Calm down, Dahlia. We haven't gotten to the bottom of this incident yet. Please give me some time." Dustin's brows were furrowed deeply.

"How am I supposed to calm down when my brother's dead body is laying in the morgue? Dustin, from today onward, we are over! I don't want to ever see you again, so get out!" Losing control of her emotions, Dahlia slapped and clawed at him.

There was no way she could ever forgive him for killing her brother, which meant that from now

on, they were enemies.

"Take care of yourself, Dahlia. I'll get to the bottom of this soon." Realizing that nothing he said was getting to her, Dustin stopped trying to explain himself and got up to leave.

Instead of leaving, he headed straight to the hospital morgue. To be honest, he wasn't so confident anymore. Although his strikes hadn't been too powerful, it was true that he hit James, so there was still a chance that things had gone wrong.

Still, who knew? Maybe James had terrible luck and accidentally fell to his death instead.

Dustin was determined to check things out for himself. He pretended to be one of James' family members and entered the hospital morgue. Dustin found the container where James' body was being kept and pulled the drawer out, revealing a face that was blue and black. All the marks from

yesterday were still clearly visible.

Dustin steeled himself and began examining James' body carefully.

“Visible injuries on the face, bloodshot eyes, forceful impact on the forehead, damage to the back of the head, and blood clots in the nostrils. It seems like intracranial bleeding is the cause of his death...” Dustin mumbled to himself, his frown deepening as he realized that James’ death was indeed caused by head trauma.

Could it be that he accidentally killed the other man?

Dustin’s heart sank at the thought. He was sure that if that were the case, Dahlia would hate him

for the rest of her life.¹

Dustin became lost in thought as he tried to think of what to do next.

Suddenly, Dustin thought of something. He leaned closer and examined James’ body again, paying more attention to the top of the man’s head this time and carefully combing through each

strand of hair.

After a while, he finally found something out of the ordinary.

At the center of James’ scalp, there was a minuscule black dot hidden in the dense forest of hair. The dot, which was the size of a pinprick, was so small that others could have easily missed it.

Dustin reached out, and a force sucked a black needle the width of a strand of hair out of James’

head.

“I knew something was wrong.” A shiver ran down Dustin’s back as he studied the black needle in

his hand.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 606 -

Chapter 606

It was obvious that someone was trying to frame Dustin for James' death, but who? Was it the

Doyle family or the Grant family? Or perhaps someone he had never met before. And why would they do this? Were they trying to turn Dahlia against him?

Dustin stared at the black needle he was holding. He wanted to explain everything to Dahlia but stopped himself. He knew that in her current state, she would never believe him.

Besides, all he had was the needle, which wasn't enough to prove anything. He would only be able to prove his innocence when he found the real killer.

Just then, the sound of the phone ringing tore through the air. Dustin fished out his phone and

saw that it was Nelson.

"Hello? Great timing, Nelson. There's something I need you to-

Before Dustin could finish what he wanted to say, a panicked voice rang out. "We're in trouble, Sir!"

"What's happening?" Dustin frowned.

"A bunch of martial artists just randomly barged into our dojo and began beating our men up. They are ruthless! Our men have no chance of stopping these people, so please save us!" Nelson pleaded desperately.

"Hang on. I'm on my way!" Dustin hung up and immediately made his way to the Flame Dragon Dojo. As the gang's leader, there was no way he could just ignore this.

After half an hour, Dustin finally arrived at the Flame Dragon Dojo, where a bunch of his disciples were sprawled out on the floor.

Foreign martial artists clad in dark clothes had completely taken over the place. Even the Four Guardians, who were fairly strong, were pinned under their feet, unable to move at all, while

Nelson was shaking where he knelt on the ground.

“Sir!” Nelson was overjoyed when he saw Dustin and struggled to stand up. However, he was kicked in the back by a bearded man and fell back onto the ground.

“Are you the leader of the Flame Dragon Gang?” The bearded man rose to his feet slowly, his expression arrogant.

“I am. And who are you?” Dustin asked.

“The name’s Malcom. Bennet Malcom. I’m the Doyle family’s envoy, and I was ordered to capture you.” Bennet answered calmly.

“Bennet Malcom?” The Flame Dragon Gang immediately paled when they heard this. Bennet Malcom, otherwise known as Maniac, was a Divine-level martial artist who also happened to be Terry Doyle’s right-hand man. He was notorious for winning all duels people challenged him with, regardless of his opponents’ level. His methods were also brutal to the point that his opponents either ended up dead or critically injured, which was why the mere mention of his name was enough to throw Nelson and the others into a state of frenzy.

1/2

Besides being insanely powerful, Bennet also had the support of the Doyle family, making him

untouchable.

“The Doyle family again?” Dustin raised an eyebrow. “You guys really don’t know when to give up,

do you?”

First, it had been Duncan, now, it was their family envoy. They seem to really have their eyes set on Dustin

The Flame Dragon Gang belongs to Mr. Doyle in the first place, yet you killed Harry Hall and took over the gang without permission. Your actions have made Mr. Doyle very angry. He has ordered me to take you in for questioning. You better behave to save yourself from the pain.” Bennet threatened coolly.

“Enough with the chit-chat, Bennet. Arrest that f*cker. I want my revenge!” Right then, a young woman with a clenched jaw limped her way out of the crowd.

“It’s you?” Dustin narrowed his eyes as he immediately recognized the woman, who was none other than Maggie Doyle, whom he had met during yesterday’s car accident.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 607 -

Chapter 607

“Hey, motherf*cker. I bet you didn’t expect me to come for you so soon.” Maggie sneered. “I’ve warned you not to cross me, or you’d be dead meat. I bet you’re shaking in fear now, aren’t you?”

As soon as she went home, she ordered her men to look into Dustin and discovered that he was

the leader of the Flame Dragon Gang. Her cousin Terry had been the one who was controlling that gang, so how dare Dustin touch that gang!

She immediately went to report her findings to Terry, secretly exaggerating the story, which led

to the current situation.

“Wasn’t yesterday’s lesson memorable enough? Why would you ask for another beating?” Dustin asked nonchalantly.

“A beating? Haha! Look around you. You’re surrounded by martial artists who work under my family!” Maggie yelled.

As the only martial arts family among the Fabulous Five, the Doyle family focused more on

security and provided martial arts assistance, which was why despite being the weakest of the five families in terms of wealth, their physical strength was second to none.

*Just because you have numbers on your side doesn't mean you'll win." Dustin shook his head.

I'm not in the mood for bloodshed today, so as long as you apologize, compensate all the damages, and promise not to do this again, I might let this matter slide."

"Let this matter slide? Pfft!" Maggie burst out laughing. "Bitch, what gives you the right to say

that? Your life is in my hands now. You'd be dead if I ordered my men to tear you to shreds!"

"Really? Try it, then " Dustin spread out his hands, his expression remaining unchanged.

"I guess you're going to be stubborn till the end. Bennet, destroy him!" Maggie gestured to Bennet and took a seat at the side to enjoy the show.

"Kid, you shouldn't have offended Ms. Maggie. I was planning to capture you peacefully, but now,

I'll have no choice but to break your limbs to placate her," Bennet said frigidly as he trudged forward, his large, imposing frame putting immense pressure on others.

"Sir, Bennet Malcom is a powerful Divine-level martial artist. You're no match for him, so run!"

Nelson, who was tied up, cried.

"What will you guys do if I run now?" Dustin was surprised by Nelson's loyalty.

"Our lives are nothing compared to yours. Let them do whatever they want!" Nelson answered firmly. From the moment he heard Bennet's name, he knew that he was doomed.

"As your leader, there's no way I'd abandon all of you," Dustin responded calmly.

“Sir, as long as you’re alive, there will always be hope. You’re extremely talented; you’ll reach the top in no time. There’s no need for you to risk your life here!” Nelson shouted. Although Dustin

was also a Divine-level martial artist, he was still no match for a seasoned fighter like Bennet. Not to mention, Bennet also had the Doyle family backing him up.

“I don’t deserve to be your leader if I run away in times of trouble.” Dustin was unfazed.

1/2

“Sir! Now is not the time to be stubborn. Bennet is far too strong for you to handle. Saving your own life is far more important. Hurry, run!” Nelson panicked.

“Run, Sir! Forget about us!”

“As long as you’re safe, the Flame Dragon Gang can rise again. Our deaths won’t be in vain!”

Influenced by Nelson, the rest of the gang’s disciples began crying out in righteousness.

In the martial world, nothing was more important than loyalty and righteousness. The fact that Dustin was willing to stand up against the Doyle family for them was enough to prove that they

had chosen the right person to follow.

“Don’t worry. This big guy can’t do anything to me.” Dustin smiled softly. “Stubborn to the end, I see? Let’s see how long you’ll last!” Maggie sniggered.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 608 -

Chapter 608

“Hey, kid. You should’ve listened when they told you to run, but unfortunately, it’s too late now. Bennet stepped closer to Dustin. Soon, Bennet was less than 20 feet away from Dustin, which

was the best range for an attack. There was no way Dustin could escape from him.

“When did I ever say that I wanted to run?” Dustin retorted calmly.

“Do you still plan to resist after hearing my nickname?” Bennet sneered.

“Resist? No, you misunderstand me. I’m merely going to knock you out.” Dustin corrected.

“Knock me out? Pfft!” Bennet sniggered. “Fine. I’ll give you a chance. I won’t move from this spot. You have three chances to strike me. I’ll let you go if you can make me take even a single step backward.”

His words put a smirk on Maggie’s and the others’ faces, who were all aware that Bennet’s body was impenetrable. Even those of the same rank as him couldn’t break through his defenses. So everyone was confident that even if Bennet let Dustin attack him thirty times without protecting himself, the former would still be completely unharmed.

“This is interesting. Bennet is going to play a game of cat and mouse.” Maggie smirked.

“The brat is going to make a fool of himself, yet he thinks he’s got the upper hand.”

The martial artists from the Doyle family had their arms crossed and were grinning from ear to ear as they watched on. While Nelson and the others gritted their teeth and clenched their jaws.

Bennet was clearly humiliating Dustin, yet Nelson and the rest of the gang were too weak to fight

back.

“Are you sure you want to let me have three strikes at you first?” Dustin suddenly asked.

“Why? Is it not enough? Fine, you can have ten. If that’s still not enough, you can even have thirty.”

Bennet sneered.

“It’s okay. Just one is enough.” Dustin smiled softly and suddenly threw an ordinary-looking punch.

“Don’t fall for it, Sir! He’s provoking you!” Nelson yelled.

“Ignorant fool.” Maggie sniggered.

“Things are starting to get good.” The Doyle family martial artists started cheering. They naturally assumed that Dustin was making things harder for himself.

There was an audible thump as Dustin’s fist buried itself into Bennet’s abdomen. However, the

latter seemed unfazed; his arms were still crossed as he sneered at Dustin.

“He actually made a move? How foolish!” The Doyle family martial artists giggled jeeringly.

Bennet chuckled. “Are you trying to tickle me with that puny punch of yours? You-”

Suddenly, he paled and looked down as he realized something.

The place where Dustin had struck him had started churning, and suddenly, there was an ear-splitting bang as Bennet’s abdomen exploded, leaving a gaping, bloody hole.

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Chapter 608

The insane force sent Bennet flying in the air before he crashed heavily into the floor and passed.

out on impact.

With a single strike, Dustin had knocked Bennet out!

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 609

Chapter 609

Flabbergasted, everyone gaped at Bennet, who landed on the f
defeated with 7 with a crash. None of them
expected someone as powerful as Bennet to be one punch.

Wasn't he supposed to have an impenetrable body and be insanely strong?
How was he defeated

so easily?

"I—impossible!" Maggie's gleeful expression had vanished and was now
replaced by aghast.

This was Maniac they were talking about. A revered Divine-level martial artist
who was also Terry's best fighter.

She couldn't believe that such a powerful person had been defeated by a
single punch from

Dustin.

"Is this Sir Rhys' true strength? He's terrifying." Nelson's eyes were wide open
with disbelief.

Bennet was well known for his strength, which made him the best fighter in
the Doyle family. He had never lost a single battle and was even strong
enough to eliminate the Flame Dragon Gang by himself, yet he had been
defeated by a single attack from Dustin. That was incredible!

There was a pregnant pause before the uproar began.

"Holy shit! I didn't know that Sir Rhys was so strong. Who would have
expected him to take Maniac down by himself? He's awesome!"

"With such a strong leader, I'm sure our gang will go far in the future!"

The Flame Dragon Gang disciples were overjoyed by the outcome and were in awe of Dustin's strength.

Maniac? Yeah, right! He couldn't even withstand a single punch from their leader, much less

thirty punches.

"How could this have happened? Bennet lost?"

"Who the hell is that guy? How the fuck did he defeat Bennet so easily?"

The Doyle family's martial artists were terrified by Dustin's power. They had initially thought that it would be an easy win, never expecting things to turn out like this.

Was this the end of the Doyle family?

"Your men seem a bit weak. Why don't you test out my strength yourself?" Dustin turned his head, and his gaze landed on Maggie, who stood amidst the crowd.

"W-what?" Maggie paled and stumbled backward, nearly tripping over her feet.

"Protect Ms. Maggie!" The Doyle family's martial artists immediately surrounded Maggie to keep

her safe.

All of them had their guards up, and several men had broken out in a cold sweat. After all, how could they possibly defeat the person who won against Maniac? Still, they had to carry out their duty, so even if they knew they would lose, they had to stand up and fight.

"Seeing how you defeated Bennet, I have to admit that I underestimated you." Maggie composed

herself quickly. "However, my family has tons of people who are way stronger than Bennet. Do you think that you can defeat a bunch of people just because you defeated Bennet?"

The Doyle family was a martial arts family, and each family member practiced martial arts, so nothing would change, no matter how powerful Dustin was.

“So what?” Dustin responded, unfazed.

“I’m very generous. I’m willing to let you go if you get on your knees and grovel for forgiveness. Maggie humphed arrogantly.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 610

Chapter 610

“I don’t think you understand the situation here. You’re the rat in the trap right now, not me.”

Dustin reminded.

The Flame Dragon Gang disciples, who had been suppressed by Bennet earlier, sprung up excitedly now that they had a fighting chance against the Doyle family.

“What? Are you challenging my family?” Maggie yelled.

“So what if I am? Since I’ve already offended your family, I might as well see things to the end. “Dustin retorted fearlessly.

“You!” Maggie seethed. She didn’t expect Dustin to be crazy enough to completely disregard her family.

“Ms. Maggie, this place isn’t safe anymore. We should retreat and regroup.” One of the martial artists next to her whispered.

There was no way they could hold out against so many gang disciples, especially with Dustin around.

Maggie sucked a deep breath and eventually ordered, “Retreat!”

“Who said you could leave?”

With a fierce stomp, true energy burst out, and the Doyle family martial artists were sent flying into the air, causing wails to ring out everywhere.

“Grab them!” Nelson immediately charged forward with his men, finally having the chance to release all the pent-up anger from the humiliation.

“Stop!” Right before the battle broke out, a feminine voice cut through the commotion.

A voluptuous woman clad in black walked in, with a dozen female martial artists following closely behind.

“What?” Dustin frowned. He was taken aback because he knew the woman in black. It was Claudia Doyle, whom he had encountered briefly back in Swinton.

They had first met at Peaceful Medical Center when she and Sheila had been severely injured by Thor Garcia, one of The Four Scoundrels. Back then, Dustin was the one who saved them and killed Thor. Their interactions stopped after he cured Sheila’s odd disease in exchange for the Gozoraberry, so he was surprised to see Claudia here.

“You came at the right time, Claudia. Kill this bastard for me!” Maggie’s eyes lit up, and she cried out happily.

“It’s you?” Claudia was just as astonished to see Dustin.

“Long time no see, Ms. Doyle.” Dustin greeted indifferently.

“Claudia, this man was acting so arrogantly. And he even challenged our family. Take him down immediately!” Maggie jeered.

“Shut your lips!” Claudia shot Maggie a glare, causing the latter to swallow her words.

Maggie had always been terrified of her cousin, and it wasn’t just because of her strength, but because of Claudia’s close relationship with the Murrays. Out of all the youngsters in the Doyle family, Terry was the only one who could control Claudia.

“Dustin, I don’t know what grudge you have against Maggie, but I must bring her back safely today,” Claudia said.

“That’ll be difficult. She stirred up trouble and even hurt my men. I can’t pretend that nothing happened.” Dustin shook his head.

“I am willing to pay you double the compensation for all the damage she caused,” Claudia responded confidently.

“This isn’t about money. Would you be happy if I gave you some money for expenses after slapping you a few times?” Dustin retorted.

your

medical

“Then, what do you want?” Claudia frowned.

“First, she has to kneel and apologize. She also has to pay a tenfold compensation, as well as slap herself twice to show her sincerity.” Dustin smiled softly.

“Fuck off!” Maggie snapped. “You want me to apologize and slap myself? Who the fuck do think you are?”

you

‘Dustin, you’re taking things too far!’ Claudia growled. “I’m talking to you nicely because saved Sheila before. You’re going to have to suffer the consequences if you keep this up!”

you

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 611

Chapter 611

“Are you threatening me, Ms. Doyle?” Dustin narrowed his eyes, a small smile on his lips.

“I’m just giving you a piece of advice!” Claudia snapped. “Terry is the one who’s protecting Maggie. He won’t let you off the hook if you touch even a single strand of her hair.”

“Terry Doyle?” The Flame Dragon Gang disciple instantly began shaking in fear.

In the martial world, Terry was not only treated as the brightest individual of the Doyle family but was also a powerhouse whose name was on The Heavenly Immortals and stood atop all his peers. There were even rumors that he might be the next leader of the martial arts world.

To sum things up, Terry was a blessed individual who was born into a prestigious family and had the guidance of the most esteemed masters, while potentially becoming the next leader of the martial world

Even meeting just one of those conditions was amazing enough, yet Terry ticked all the boxes. So, who would dare challenge him?

“So what? Does that guy have three heads and six arms or something?” Dustin was unfazed,

“You should ask those around you if you’ve never heard of Terry’s nickname!” Claudia hissed.

“Sir, we can’t afford to offend someone like him. Why don’t we give up this time?” Nelson gulped.

“He’s right. It’s alright if we suffer, but you don’t have to put your life on the line.” The other disciples advised.

If it was Maggie they were up against, they’d still have a winning chance. However, if their opponent changed to Terry, this would just be asking for death.

“You heard that? Everyone in Millsburg knows how strong Terry is. If you surrender now, I can ask him to let this matter go.” Claudia spoke again.

“Hey, Rhys! You better not waste the chance Claudia gave you, or Terry might destroy this place!” Maggie jeered

“Is he that strong?” Dustin raised an eyebrow

“Are you scared now? And here I wondered how tough you were. It turns out you’re nothing but eye candy.” Maggie grumbled disdainfully.

“Dustin, you should consider the situation you’re in Surrendering to someone stronger than you is nothing to be ashamed of. I’ll help you once, but you’re on your own next time. Let’s go, Maggie.” Claudia waved her hand and prepared to leave.

“Hang on.” Dustin moved quickly and blocked the exit. “When did I say you could leave?”

“Are you going to stir up more trouble?” Claudia frowned, annoyed by Dustin. She thought that she’d been kind enough to him, yet he was still being extremely stubborn.

“Hey, don’t be so fucking shameless!” Maggie barked. “If it weren’t for Claudia, did you think I’d let you go so easily? Trust me, if Terry were here, he’d wipe out all of you!”

“That won’t be necessary since I’ll be looking for him myself,” Dustin responded calmly. “I’ll be

visiting your family in three days to challenge Terry. We’ll settle all the scores then.”

“What?” Dustin’s words stunned everyone, and they gaped at him in disbelief.

Was he crazy? How could he challenge Terry Doyle, the genius who’s on The Heavenly Immortals? Did he have a death wish?

“Dustin, are you out of your mind? That’s nothing but foolish and suicidal!” Claudia was the first to react. She had only spoken kindly to him because of Sheila. She never expected Dustin to be bold enough to challenge Terry.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 612

Chapter 612

It was like bringing a knife to a gunfight!

“You piece of shit! You’re crazy! Who gave you the balls to challenge Terry?” Maggie cackled. Although Dustin’s behavior had shocked her, she was pleased since she couldn’t wait to see him die in Terry’s hands.

“S–sir, y–you can’t!” Nelson went as white as a sheet, and his knees went weak. Dustin had taken his joke way too far. Challenging Terry was nothing short of a suicide mission.

“Since we already have a grudge against each other, we might rip off the band–aid. Go home and ask Terry if he has the guts to accept my challenge” Dustin shocked everyone once more.

Since the conflict between him and Terry wasn’t just a small issue, it’d be better to just get things over with. Terry was the Doyle family’s sturdy boulder, and Dustin planned to demolish their confidence once and for all!

“Do you have a death wish?” Claudia hissed.

“The outcome is still unclear, so you shouldn’t make assumptions so soon,” Dustin responded calmly.

“How foolish! I hope you don’t regret your actions later on.” Claudia humphed. She had never met anyone as foolish and arrogant as Dustin.

“Nelson, draft out a challenge letter. Ms. Doyle will bring it back with her.” Dustin ordered.

“Are you sure, Sir Rhys?” Nelson was terrified.

“Do I look like I’m joking?” Dustin snapped.

“R–right away, sir.” Nelson groaned and passed the completed letter to Claudia.

“You would have been forgiven for any mistakes made accidentally, but since you brought this upon yourself, you’re doomed.” Claudia shook her head, and she stared at the letter. She was sure that Dustin was a dead man.

“I’ll be waiting for you at home in three days, Rhys! I wonder how you’ll die.” Maggie exclaimed gleefully.

“That’s between me and Terry, but we’ll be settling our score right here and now.” Dustin’s gaze hardened.

“What are you up to? I’m warning you; you better not-” Maggie’s eyes widened, and she was about to threaten Dustin again.

Out of nowhere, Dustin appeared before her and forcefully smacked her across the face twice, causing her to fly backward. Her teeth popped out, and blood from her disfigured face splattered everywhere. By the time she landed on the ground, she was completely unconscious.

“Now we’re even.” Dustin clapped his hands together, a satisfied grin on his face. Since Maggie wasn’t willing to slap herself, he thought he would help her do it instead.

“How dare you!” Claudia was pissed. How could Dustin hit Maggie right in front of her?

“Calm down, Ms. Doyle. She won’t die from this.” Dustin responded calmly. “Please also pass a message to Terry that he can just surrender if he’s too afraid to accept my challenge.”

“You’ll regret this, Dustin!” Claudia sneered and left with her people.

“We’re doomed!” Nelson was devastated.

Last time, Dustin hurt one of the Grants, and this time, he challenged Terry Doyle. Who in their right mind would do something like that?

Gosh, their gang leader was insane! The disciples were going to go crazy with worry soon.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 613

At the training grounds of the Doyle family mansion, ten heavily armed elite martial artists were surrounding an unarmed young man.

The man had long, flowing hair and a handsome face with a sharp gaze. His movements were swift and graceful as he effortlessly evaded the attacks from the ten martial artists with his hands clasped behind his back.

What made him more fearsome were the weights he was carrying. Tied all over his body were a bunch of hefty, dark steel weights that could make even the best Divine-level martial artists struggle. Yet the man seemed completely unbothered by the weights as he toyed with the other fighters. The only person who could do something like this was the Doyle family's genius, Terry Doyle!

"N-no more, Mr. Terry. We give up." 30 minutes later, the ten fighters had all collapsed onto the floor, panting and sweating buckets. Each of them was a well-known fighter in the martial arts world, yet even with their combined efforts, they hadn't even been able to put a scratch on Terry.

"You guys have been getting worse. Today's training was nothing." Terry humphed, displeased.

"Sir, we haven't been getting worse, you just became stronger again." Someone grumbled.

"Exactly. We were at least on par with you two years ago. But now, we can't even touch you despite you wearing those weights that weigh over three hundred pounds."

"It's only natural since you're a genius."

The fighters began singing praises for Terry, but that didn't make him any happier.

"You bunch of useless things. Scram!" Terry snapped, sending them scampering away in fear.

"How boring. It seems like Tyler Grant is my only rival left in Millsburg." Terry's gaze turned determined.

Tyler was a military man, and couldn't fight in the martial world, which was why his name didn't appear on *The Heavenly Immortals*. Still, Terry knew that

with Tyler's strength, the latter could easily make it to the top of the list, so he couldn't help wondering when they might have the chance to spar against each other.

"Terry!"

Just then, a battered Maggie rushed in, crying. Her disheveled looks and unrecognizable face were ghastly.

"What?" Terry's stare turned chilling, and he took out his blade and pointed it at the newcomer. Who the hell are you? How dare you trespass into our forbidden training grounds!" Startled, Maggie stopped in her tracks and pulled her hair away from her face. "It's me, Maggie!" "Maggie?" Terry was astonished. "What happened to you?"

"

"I-I got beaten up!" Maggie's lower lip quivered before she burst into tears.

"Who would dare to hit you? Did you use my name?" Terry's face darkened.

"I did, but that only made that person hit me even more!" Maggie cried.

"What? Who is that arrogant bastard?" Terry was angry that someone dared to disrespect him.

"It's that Dustin guy!" Maggie growled. "I went over to the Flame Dragon Dojo with Bennet to get the gang back, but that guy managed to defeat Bennet and even

beat me up! Ugh!"

"He must be quite strong to be able to defeat Bennet." Terry was surprised. Even among their family's martial artists, Bennet was one of their best fighters, and the average martial artist would not stand a chance against that man.

"Terry, that guy is out of his mind. After defeating Bennet, he even challenged you! Take a look at this!"

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 614

Chapter 614

Maggie handed the challenge letter to Terry.

“A duel in three days?” Terry sniggered after reading the letter. “It seems like I’ve been isolating myself for too long. Even weaklings dare to challenge me now.”

“You have to get even for me, Terry.” Maggie pleaded.

“Don’t worry. I’ll stand up for you!” Terry’s eyes glinted dangerously. “Help me spread the news of this challenge. I want to take this opportunity to scare off the weaklings and show others our family’s strength!”

“Sure!” Maggie immediately got to work.

In less than a day, news about the leader of the Flame Dragon Gang challenging Terry Doyle spread far and wide. Although not many knew who the leader of the Flame Dragon Gang was, they were well aware of who Terry was. Therefore, the news excited over half of the people in Millsburg, especially those in the martial arts world.

Terry was a publicly recognized martial arts genius whose name was on The Heavenly Immortals. Usually, it would be hard to even catch a glimpse of the man, so everyone was thrilled to hear that he accepted a public challenge.

That night, in the Harmon estate.

“What? Dustin is going to challenge Terry Doyle to a duel? Are you kidding me, Dad?” Natasha sprung out of her chair after hearing this.

On the contrary, Hector seemed unfazed as he took a sip of his tea. “The Doyle family made the announcement this afternoon, so it should be real.

“How could this have happened? Why did Dustin suddenly challenge Terry?” Natasha was fearful.

“The grudge between Dustin and the Doyle family has been going on for quite a while. I have a feeling that Dustin is using this chance to send the Doyle family a warning,” Hector said

thoughtfully.

“Dustin is being too reckless! Terry Doyle is a genius who is insanely powerful. He isn’t someone

who should be messed with. I must talk Dustin out of this!”

Natasha grabbed her phone to call Dustin, but Hector stopped her. “Dustin was the one who issued the challenge. It’ll be extremely humiliating if he goes back on his word now.”

“But that’s better than dying, isn’t it?” Natasha frowned.

“Silly girl. You’re worrying too much.” Hector shook his head with a smile. “You should know him well enough by now. If he wasn’t confident he would win, do you think he would have put his life

on the line?”

“I know that, but Terry isn’t just anyone. If Dustin loses the competition, he’ll be dead meat!” Natasha exclaimed worriedly.

Ever since she fell for Dustin, she could no longer think straight when it came to him.

“Alright, stop overthinking.” Hector patted his daughter’s head gently. “If Dustin has the balls to issue the challenge, it just means that he’s confident in himself. Who knows? He might surprise all of us. We should just watch and see how things turn out.”

111

Meanwhile, at the Grants’ mansion, a woman wearing black clothes and a mask with a raindrop design was reporting the situation to Tyler

“Master, I just received news that Dustin Rhys will be challenging Terry Doyle in three days,”

“That’s odd.” Tyler was surprised. Terry is quite a strong person. Where did Dustin find the courage to challenge him?”

“Should I do something about it?” The woman asked tentatively.

“It’s alright. Just keep an eye on things. We’ll go to the Doyle family mansion together then.”

“Yes, master.” The woman lowered her head.

She couldn't help feeling suspicious. Knowing Tyler's personality, he usually never cared about minor characters, so there must be something different about Dustin.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 615

Chapter 615

For the next few days, Dustin occupied himself with investigating James' death. Someone had murdered James and framed him for the former's death.

Although he didn't know who the true killer was, he could at least guess their intentions. They wanted to send him a warning, as well as make others turn against him. A stab in the back was always the hardest to anticipate.

Dustin had also tried approaching Dahlia several times, but she still refused to see him. He knew that before the real murderer was revealed, there was no way they could peacefully talk to each other.

On the third morning, Dustin stood at the edge of the battle ring in Flame Dragon Dojo as he studied the black needle.

The needle was forged from dark steel and had been dipped in poison. If the needle managed to prick into a person's skin, it would cause an instant death, which was why James' death had been so sudden.

But the question was, “Who did the needle belong to?”

“Sir...”

Right then, Nelson barged into the dojo, carrying a copy of the test results.

“Well, how did things go?” Dustin slowly raised his head.

“As you ordered, I swapped James' body and ordered an autopsy. Here are the results.” Nelson handed the document over politely.

“I knew it.” Dustin wasn't surprised by the results, which stated that James' death hadn't been a natural event.

“Sir, since we have the murder weapon and autopsy, we can prove your innocence,” Nelson said with a smile.

“Things aren’t that simple. Just having these two won’t be enough to regain someone’s trust.” Dustin shook his head.

Even with all this evidence, it wouldn’t be enough to convince Dahlia if he couldn’t catch the real murderer.

“I’ve also looked at the hospital’s surveillance footage. I didn’t find anyone suspicious the night James was hospitalized. It’ll be difficult to find the killer.” Nelson sighed.

“Keep digging. If there weren’t any suspicious outsiders, start looking into the doctors and nurses at the hospital. Go through every person who entered the ward that night” Dustin ordered gravely

“Of course, sir,” Nelson answered, and he immediately started making some calls.

“Oh, right. Today’s the third day, isn’t it? I should visit the Doyle family now.” Dustin carefully put away the black needle and slowly got up.

“Sir, why don’t you give it some thought again? If you lose, your life will be in danger!” Nelson pleaded. Of all people, Dustin had to challenge Terry. This was nothing but suicidal!

“Why do you think I’ll lose?” Dustin had a faint smile on his face.

“I don’t just think so, I know so.” Nelson nodded, his expression serious.

“Aww, have a little faith in me, Nelson.” Dustin patted Nelson’s shoulder and grinned. “It’s just Terry. Watch as I use the Doyle family as a stepping stone for our gang’s success! Come, let’s go to the Doyle family mansion!”

As noon approached, the Doyle family mansion quickly became packed with people as news about the challenge caused a huge commotion. After letting the news brew for the past three days, everyone was hyped up for the battle, and countless elite fighters flocked to the scene, eager to witness Terry’s power.

Even before dawn, tons of people had crowded the Doyle family mansion. And as if they had

anticipated this, the Doyle family began selling entrance tickets at a hundred thousand dollars per ticket.

The Doyle family was clearly using this opportunity to make money while showing off their strength.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 616

Chapter 616

In the Doyle family's training grounds.

"Holy shit! There are so many people!" Ruth was shocked by the amount of people that crowded

the vast space. Everywhere she looked, people were talking animatedly.

Fortunately, the Doyle family martial artists were keeping everyone in line.

"Terry is a revered genius. Of course, the spotlight would be on him." Hector smiled.

"Dad, if he's that strong, does Dustin have a winning chance?" Ruth asked nervously.

"It'll be difficult, but not impossible," Hector answered.

"Hmph! Serves him right for being so stubborn!" Natasha's words were harsh, but they failed to conceal her worry.

She tried to persuade Dustin to surrender multiple times, but Dustin seemed unbothered.

"It doesn't matter if he loses. It's more important that he tries. Besides, losing to Terry Doyle isn't humiliating." Hector smiled again. He wasn't interested in the duel. However, Dustin was going to be his son-in-law, so he had to come and support Dustin.

"Why, fancy seeing you here, Mr. Harmon!" A fancily dressed middle-aged man approached, smiling.

The man was the head of the Doyle family, Phil Doyle. He was also Terry's father.

"It's been a while, Mr. Doyle," Hector responded with a small smile.

"If I remember correctly, you are not a fan of bloodshed, aren't you? So what are you doing here?" Phil was surprised.

"I had some free time, so I brought my daughters here to watch the show. You don't mind, do you?" Hector joked.

"Of course not. It's a pleasure to have you here. Come, have a seat." Phil led the three of them to the east of the room, where they had a direct view of the battle ring.

Before they settled onto their seats, there was a commotion at the entrance, causing everyone to look.

An old gentleman with white hair entered the area, with several younger people following him. The old man was none other than Paul Hill.

"Oh, my God! Is this for real? Is that Sir Paul?"

"Holy shit! It is Sir Paul!"

"Even a martial arts master is here to watch the show. Today's duel is going to be amazing!"

Paul caused a stir with his presence since everyone knew that he rarely attended any events. So by coming personally, he was obviously supporting the Doyle family

"Please forgive me for not showing you in personally, Sir Paul!" Phil was overjoyed to see Paul and quickly greeted the older man

"Greetings, Sir Paul." Hector and his daughters quickly bowed out of respect, as well as gratitude. Hector still remembered how Paul had helped him during the birthday party.

"I'm just here to enjoy the show, so no need to fuss about me. Sit." Paul smiled.

"Please have a seat, Sir." Phil hurriedly led Paul to the seat in the center. That seat was supposed

to be his, but he could only let Paul have it now.

After Paul, other important guests gradually arrived as well, including the guildmaster of Boulderthorn, an elder from Greendust, the guildmaster of Autumn Wind, and other famous fighters.

The battle hadn't even started, but tons of martial arts elites had already gathered in the arena.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 617

Chapter 617

As it neared the agreed time for their battle, Dustin, Nelson, and several other men walked into the training ground. No matter which direction they looked, people were flocking around every corner. In the middle of the training grounds was a large battle ring. There were only a few seats surrounding the platform, so most people had no choice but to stand. This naturally meant that those who were sitting were not ordinary people, especially those sitting on the east side, where they had the best view of the arena.

Upon closer inspection, Dustin saw a few familiar faces, including Hector and his daughters, Paul and Patrick Hill, Claudia, as well as Maggie. Others seemed familiar to him, but he couldn't recall their names.

Dustin turned his attention to those on the west side of the arena, where well-known fighters in the martial arts world sat. Many of them were strong individuals who ranked only second to Paul. "Was it necessary to put on such a huge show for a normal competition?" Dustin was puzzled. "Sir, the Doyle family is using you to show off their strength!" Nelson looked around nervously. Most of the individuals present today were strong enough to get rid of him effortlessly.

"Show off?" Dustin smirked. "You never know who might end up showing off. I hope the Doyle family doesn't shoot themselves in the foot."

Nelson smiled tiredly in response, thinking to himself, “Just don’t embarrass yourself too much. As long as you’re alive, our gang can always rise again.”

“You again, Dustin?” Just then, a familiar voice rang out.

Dustin turned his head and saw four familiar faces—Zoey, Adriana, Zeke, and Gordon.

“Gosh, why do we have to run into you everywhere?” Gordon hissed disdainfully.

“Ugh, I should have checked the horoscope today!” Zeke spat on the ground.

“You can always leave if you don’t want to see me.” Dustin sneered.

“Why should we do as you say? Who do you think you are?” Zoey sneered.

“A pretty boy who’s nothing without a woman.” Zeke sniggered.

“You should keep a low profile, Dustin. During the banquet last time, if it weren’t for Mr. Dylan and Lord Xenos, you’d be dead by now.” Gordon humphed

“He’s right. It’s a miracle that you’re still alive after challenging Tyler Grant. You should appreciate your life.” Zeke sneered.

In their eyes, Dustin was incredibly lucky to be alive after challenging Tyler. It was all thanks to Paul and George’s help. Still, luck wouldn’t always be on his side.

“First of all, Dylan had nothing to do with this.” Dustin began calmly. “And just because you’re afraid of Tyler, doesn’t mean I have to be. Please don’t judge me with your dim-witted opinions. It’s

ridiculous.”

“Pfft. You’re acting so high and mighty now, aren’t you?” Zeke sneered. “Who do you think you are?”

“You’re nothing without the Harmon family’s protection”

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 618

Chapter 618

“Dustin, you should know where you stand. Don’t think you’re so important just because you’ve met some high-ranking people before. You’re just like salesmen who are always eyeing wealthy people.” Zoey jeered.

For some reason, there were always people who thought highly of themselves despite being nobodies.

“What the f*ck are you guys talking about?” Nelson exploded before Dustin had a chance to get angry. If they had been anywhere else, the Flame Dragon Disciples would have killed these people for belittling their leader.

“Pfft! You even have bodyguards now? Are you pretending to be a big shot?” Zeke was unfazed, and he was sure that anyone following Dustin wasn’t anyone important either.

“Dustin, you should take good care of your dogs. This isn’t a place they can bark.” Gordon smirked.

“You-”

“Alright, enough.” Adriana tried to calm everyone. “We’re here to watch the duel, not to fight.”

“Fine. Since Adriana is the one asking, we’ll forgive those idiotic bastards.” Gordon put on a generous font.

Still, Dustin couldn’t care less about them. He would have sent them away with a few slaps if they weren’t Natasha’s acquaintances. He wondered where they learned such vulgar behavior.

“Guys, I’m curious. Who is the leader of the Flame Dragon Gang anyway? How did he find the courage to challenge Terry Doyle?” Zoey suddenly asked.

“Well, I’ve heard about him before.” Zeke immediately chimed in. “I heard that despite his young age, he’s incredibly skilled and is Millsburg’s newest talent. He even defeated Maniac!”

“What? Even Bennet Malcom lost to him? He’s incredible!” Zoey was astonished.

Maniac was well-known in the martial arts world for his impenetrable body, and he could even fight off a hundred opponents by himself. "Of course he is! No one would simply challenge Terry Doyle like that," Zeke stated proudly.

"I wonder if he's a handsome fellow. I really want to get to know him," Zoey said excitedly.

"He's a mysterious figure who only started gaining fame recently, so although he's popular, not many people have seen him." Zeke shook his head.

"Actually, I know who he is," Gordon suddenly said, adjusting his collar snobbishly.

"You know him, Gordo?" Zeke was surprised.

"I don't just know him; we're close acquaintances too. To tell you the truth, he only became the gang leader thanks to my help." Gordon smiled haughtily.

"That's surprising! I didn't know you'd be close to someone like that. You're awesome!" Zeke gave him a thumbs-up.

"Wow, how do you know so many people?" Zoey's face was full of admiration.

"Oh, this is nothing." Gordon pretended to be modest, having mastered the skill of bluffing.

"Have you gotten addicted to bragging? What does our gang leader earning his position have to do with you?" Nelson couldn't help but retort.

"Who do you think you are to question me?" Gordon's face darkened.

"Listen up! I'm the assistant leader of the Flame Dragon Gang, Nelson Horst!" Nelson patted himself on the chest before gesturing to Dustin. "And this is the new talent in Millsburg you're talking about, the Flame Dragon Gang's new leader!"

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 619

Chapter 619

“Flame Dragon Gang’s new leader?” Gordon and his friends glanced at Nelson and Dustin before exchanging looks and then burst out in laughter.

“Pfft! Excuse me, but did you hit your head or something?” Zoey cackled. “Did you just say that Dustin is the gang leader of Flame Dragon Gang, the new talented individual who challenged Terry Doyle? Well, you might as well say that he’s God, then!”

“Who’s this idiot? As if that bastard could possibly be someone as talented as the Flame Dragon Gang’s leader.” Zeke jeered.

“How dare you humiliate our leader! You’re dead meat!” Nelson was pissed. He started to roll up his sleeves when Dustin raised a hand to stop him!

“Forget it. There’s no point arguing with these ignorant fools.” Dustin’s target was Terry, not small fries like them.

“Yeah, right. Do you think you’re so strong?” Zeke smirked.

“Didn’t you just say that you’re the assistant gang leader and he’s the leader? Well, if that’s the case, why don’t I know the two of you?” Gordon quipped.

“He’s right. Gorgon is good friends with the Flame Dragon Gang’s leader. Did you think you’d be able to fool him? How foolish!” Zoey sneered. She was disgusted by Dustin, whom she thought was a fool, and his bragging only worsened the sentiment. A man like that deserved to be a nobody.

“What’s up with the silence? Cat got your tongue? Aren’t you going to answer Gordon?” Zeke taunted.

“You should keep a low profile if you’re useless, Dustin. Having your lie exposed must be embarrassing.” Gordon smirked.

“Ugh! Can’t you guys shut up? You’re so noisy!” Dustin stuck his pinky into his ear, annoyed. Their words didn’t have much effect.

“You-” Zeke was about to snap back when Gordon said, “Forget about it. We should help him keep his dignity, or he might do something crazy out of desperation.”

On the outside, it seemed like Gordon was trying to smooth things over, but in reality, his words were nothing short of an insult.

“Hmph! Arrogant but powerless bastards like you will be taught a lesson sooner or later!” Zeke snapped at Dustin hostilely. If it weren’t for Natasha, he would have ordered someone to teach Dustin a lesson already.

“Hey, look! It’s Terry Doyle!” Someone suddenly shouted.

Everyone turned to see a handsome man dressed in a well-fitted attire emerging from the backyard. The man’s long locks were draped over his shoulder as he marched forward confidently.

The person was none other than Terry Doyle, the person everyone had been waiting for.

“I didn’t know he was so good-looking! Oh, my God!” Zoey’s eyes twinkled.

“Compared to his looks, he’s more famous for his strength. He’s not even 30 years old yet, but he

has already made a name for himself through his battles, which earned him a spot in The Heavenly Immortals! This makes him a rare gem in the entire province!” Gordon’s eyes were filled

with envy.

“We can only look up to people like him.” Zeke sighed regretfully.

Terry’s appearance hyped the room up once more as people cast gazes of admiration toward him. Even underaged girls boldly screamed their praises for him like he was a superstar.

“Terry Doyle!” An ear-splitting voice suddenly bellowed, and that instantly silenced the crowd.

Immediately after that, a man in a green shirt and hat leaped onto the stage, a long spear in his

hand.

“I dare you to fight me!” The man in green pointed his spear at Terry tauntingly.

“How dare you!”

“Arrogant bastard!”

“Stupid man!”

Those from the Doyle family immediately sprung up and shouted.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 620

Chapter 620

The Doyle family members angrily snapped. “Who the hell are you? How dare you make a scene here!”

Three of the family’s skilled fighters leaped onto the stage, glaring at the challenger.

“Hmph, trash like you don’t deserve to know my name. Tell Terry Doyle to accept my challenge!” The man in green pointed his spear at them provokingly.

“Who is this man? He’s such a dick.”

“He must have a death wish to challenge Terry Doyle.

“Tsk, I guess his pride matters more than his life.”

The people in the arena stared at the man and whispered to each other.

“Well, if you want to challenge Mr. Terry, you’ll have to get through us!” The three fighters from the Doyle family drew their swords and charged toward the man.

“Since all of you are so eager to die, so be it!” The man in green tightened his grip on his spear and began countering their attacks.

His astonishing speed made it hard for the three fighters to defend themselves, and one of them quickly found himself at the mercy of the spear. The Doyle family fighter paled and raised his blade to block the incoming blow, but there was a loud clang as his dark steel blade shattered from the force, and the momentum caused the spear to embed itself in his abdomen.

Before anyone could react, the man in green threw the fighter off the platform with a flick of his spear and moved on to the other two fighters. They were no match for him as well, and they ended up sprawled on the floor moments later.

“Holy shit!”

Everyone was shocked. No one expected the man in green to be so powerful.

The three fighters from the Doyle family were much stronger than the average martial artist, yet this man had defeated all three of them effortlessly, easily showing what he was capable of.

“Who’s next?” The man looked around mockingly.

“Get him!” Several Doyle family fighters weren’t happy with the results of the previous match and went forward, taking the chance to deliver the first blow.

The man in green remained unfazed as he countered their strikes mercilessly and threw those men back where they came from in seconds, astounding the crowd with his skills with the spear.

“Anyone else?” The man in green drove the butt of his spear into the ground with a resolute thud, the challenge clear in his tone. “Is this all the Balerno martial artists have to offer?”

His words infuriated the crowd.

“He’s far too arrogant! Someone should teach him a lesson!”

“F*ck, that’s it! Give me my sword!”

“How dare he look down on Balerno martial arts! We’re going to set him straight today!”

Those standing outside the arena, who were initially nothing but onlookers, began crying out in indignation. They didn’t mind him challenging the Doyle family, but to insult the Balerno martial arts? What a pompous asshole!

Thanks to his actions, the crowd was fired up. People began shouting their wishes to join the fight, determined to stand up for Balerno martial arts.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 621

Chapter 621

“Let’s see what you’re made of, kid.” A burly man wielding a broadsword was the first to jump into the ring. His sword, which weighed well over 200 pounds, looked as light as a feather because of his muscular physique.

“Who are you? Do you have a death wish?” The man in green pointed his spear toward the burly man. A look of disdain on his face.

“I’m Toby Hunt, leader of Hollowblades!” In a smooth motion, the man slammed the tip of his blade into the ground, a murderous aura enveloping him,

“Oh, it’s Sir Hunt. No wonder he seemed familiar.”

“Hollowblades is quite a famous guild, and Sir Hunt is known for his sword skills. I’ve heard that he’s so strong he can even cut boulders apart!”

“With Sir Hunt around, that guy’s dead meat!”

“Sir Hunt, please teach that arrogant bastard a lesson and protect Balerno martial artists’ reputation!”

Everyone showed their support for Toby.

“Hollowblades? What’s that? I’ve never even heard of that name.” The man in green sneered, unfazed by his opponent.

“Cocky brat! I’ll make you realize that there’s always someone stronger than you!” Toby bellowed, and grabbed his sword.

The tip of his blade gouged a path along the platform’s surface as he charged toward the man in green, sparks flying from the point of contact.

“Here I come!” Toby lifted his sword and brought it down heavily, causing a whistling noise as the blade cut through the air. The force he exerted was enough to take down an elephant, much less a human.

“Fool!” Instead of sidestepping, the man in green grabbed his spear and thrust it forward. There was a loud clang as the two weapons collided with each

other. Then Toby's sword flew out of his hands, and he staggered backward from the impact.

Before Toby could process what was going on, the man in green delivered his second blow by jabbing his spear into Toby's shoulder, and then he flicked Toby off the platform. This meant that with merely two strikes, the man in green managed to subdue Toby Hunt, the leader of Hollowblades.

"Holy shit! Even Sir Hunt is no match for him. He's a beast!"

Everyone was aghast by what they just witnessed. Toby was a famous martial artist in the martial world; he was especially skilled with his sword, so no one expected him to lose to a young man. "Pathetic!" The man in green humphed. "Are all Balerno martial artists so weak?"

"Arrogant bastard! I'll teach you a lesson!" Just then, a man in his twilight years jumped into the ring. His movements were swift as he lunged toward the man in green with a pair of twin swords.

Chapter 621

"Bang!" Three seconds later, the old man was also sent flying off the platform, blood splattering everywhere.

The crowd fell into stunned silence once more. Weren't his opponents losing way too quickly?

"Get out of my way! I'll fight him!"

"And me!"

"Fuck this shit. I'm in too!"

More people clambered to challenge the man in green, either out of anger or to defend their reputations as martial artists.

Still, no matter how many people tried attacking, none of them were a match for the man in green. In fact, most of them were easily swiped off the platform as soon as they got on. It was completely a one-sided battle.

After a while, everyone fell silent as shock and somberness replaced the arrogant shouts earlier.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 622

Chapter 622

If the man had only defeated one opponent, others might have considered it was due to his luck. However, defeating several dozen opponents nonstop could only mean that he was an incredibly powerful individual.

Thanks to that, the man finally earned some recognition from the crowd.

“Who is this guy? He’s so strong!”

“A man dressed in green and good at using a spear? Don’t tell me he’s the person who rose to fame in the martial world recently by challenging strong fighters—Verdant Phantom?”

“What? Verdant Phantom? I heard that even Geoffrey Vaughn, who’s in the top twenty of The Heavenly Immortals, lost to him!”

“He defeated someone as strong as Geoffrey Vaughn? He’s a monster!”

Everyone was shocked to hear his nickname. After all, the name Verdant Phantom had been gathering attention, especially after the man defeated Geoffrey Vaughn. However, since he never appeared in public, few knew what he looked like.

Everyone was surprised to learn that he would show up. They were even more shocked to see him challenging Balerno’s martial arts so openly.

“It’s your turn now, Terry Doyle!” Verdant Phantom lifted his spear and pointed its tip in Terry’s direction, turning everyone’s attention to the latter.

“Verdant Phantom is so strong. I wonder if Terry will win.”

“Terry Doyle is ranked thirteenth on The Heavenly Immortals, while Verdant Phantom was able to defeat someone who’s on the top twenty of the same list. It’s hard to guess who might win.”

“It seems like Terry Doyle finally met his match!”

The crowd gossiped nervously.

“Why? Aren’t you going to accept my challenge? Or do you plan to run away and hide?” Verdant Phantom taunted.

“How interesting.” Terry chuckled and gradually approached the platform. “I don’t know where you’re from, but you should at least let me warm up, right?”

“Warm up?” Verdant Phantom snorted. “You sure talk big for someone who’s about to meet their demise.”

“Because of you? As if.” Terry calmly stood up with his hands clasped behind his back.

“Hmph! I’ve already defeated countless martial artists on The Heavenly Immortals. You’re

nothing more than a stepping stone for my journey to reach the top of the list!” Verdant Phantom declared confidently.

No one rebutted his arrogant words after they had witnessed his strength earlier.

“Don’t tell me you think you’re on par with me just because you defeated Geoffrey Vaughn?” Terry smirked condescendingly. “The gap between each rank on The Heavenly Immortals is like a river. Compared to me, those that you defeated are about seven ranks lower than me, and that makes the gap between the two of us as vast as the ocean.”

“Those standards don’t apply to me. With my spear alone, I’ll defeat every single one of you!” Verdant Phantom smirked.

“You sure are a reckless fellow. Well, I hope you don’t disappoint me later,” Terry responded calmly.

“Enough with the chit–chat. Choose your weapon!” Verdant Phantom swung around, exuding a fierce aura.

his

spear

“My weapon? Pfft. I don’t need one against you.” Terry’s hands remained behind his back, and his nonchalant attitude showed how little he cared about his opponent.

“Since you seem keen to die, why don’t I give you a hand?” With a stomp, Verdant Phantom shot toward Terry with his spear in his grasp.

There was a glint as the spear thrust forward, its movements charged with power thanks to the true energy supplied to it. The unmatched speed and power left everyone in awe.

The tip of the spear tore through the air, leaving a shadow behind. There was even a long gouge on the ground from where the blade had been dragged past.

“What terrifying skills!”

“Terry Dole is in danger now!”

Everyone silently feared for Terry. They also realized that Verdant Phantom had been holding back against them earlier.

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In the blink of an eye, the tip of the man’s spear made contact with Terry’s chest. However, to everyone’s astonishment, despite being struck, Terry stood his ground without flinching, enduring the ferocious attack with his body!

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 623 -

Chapter 623

“What?” The scene before the crowd caused their eyes to widen and their jaws to drop in shock.

All of them had witnessed Verdant Phantom’s strength firsthand and saw how ferocious his last attack was, yet Terry had used nothing but his chest to block the blow. Was that even humanly possible?

“How can this be?” Verdant Phantom was shocked. He staggered backward, his face full of

disbelief.

He had spent years perfecting that last attack, and no one had ever managed to stop it. Even Geoffrey Vaughn had lost to that attack, so he thought that he’d be able to defeat Terry with the same attack. However, Terry had stopped his attack, which should be strong enough to pierce through armor and cripple someone, with nothing but his body. And Terry was terrifyingly calm

about it.

“Is this all you’ve got? How disappointing.” Terry shook his head.

“Don’t be so full of yourself. I don’t believe you’re immune to all physical attacks!” Verdant Phantom gritted his teeth before stabbing Terry with full force.

A mighty stream of true energy flowed out of his body and into his spear, turning its tip bright red.

“Rot in hell!” Verdant Phantom yelled before driving his spear into Terry’s chest.

A loud clang rang out instantly.

Terry seemed unfazed by the attack. On the contrary, the other man’s spear had bent under the

force.

“That’s it?” Terry smirked. He grabbed hold of the spearhead and clenched his fist. Metal creaked under his grip as he broke the other man’s spear.

“What?” Verdant Phantom was appalled. He never imagined that Terry would be unscathed after receiving his strongest attack. Their power difference was too great!

“You’re too weak. Go back and practice for a few more years.” Terry threw the bent spear aside and planted a foot into the abdomen of Verdant Phantom, who groaned as his body flew backward before slamming into a wall and passing out on impact.

In the end, Verdant Phantom lost!

“Well done!”

“Woo-hoo!”

After a pause, applause and roars of approval rang out. Terry’s strength had earned him the audience’s respect.

Verdant Phantom? So what? And what if that man defeated Geoffrey Vaughn? He had still lost to Terry.

“As expected of Terry Doyle. He got rid of Verdant Phantom so easily.”

“No wonder he’s ranked thirteenth on The Heavenly Immortals.”

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 624 -

Chapter 624

How were they going to win against a monster like Terry?

“What do you think of Terry’s performance, Sir Paul?” Phil was beaming from ear to ear after witnessing his son’s outstanding show.

“Not bad. He’s a talented one indeed.” Paul gave a small smile. “I have a feeling that he will become a Grandmaster martial artist in the next decade.”

Paul’s words shocked everyone. Grandmaster martial artists were extremely rare. Even in Balerno, where several hundred million people resided, there had only ever been five Grandmaster martial artists. And each of them had made a name for themselves with their strength.

Terry’s talent must be truly incredible if Paul was willing to give such high praise.

“You flatter him, Sir Paul. My son might be talented, but he still needs work.” Phil’s words may

seem modest, but he failed to hide the grin on his face.

As long as his son became a Grandmaster martial artist within the next decade, the Doyle family would be invincible! In fact, they might very well become a part of the Tremendous Three-no, the

Tremendous Four.

“As they say, the apple doesn’t fall far from the tree. Congratulations, Mr. Doyle.” Hector, who was

sitting beside them, congratulated them.

Other influential figures clambered to sing their praises, well aware of how strong a Grandmaster martial artist was. After all, the Hill family was only so influential because of Paul, and that was what it meant to be a Grandmaster martial artist.

“Sis, if Terry is so strong, doesn’t that guarantee that Dustin will lose?” Ruth asked worriedly. Terry’s performance earlier had wiped away whatever hope she held.

“If I remember correctly, someone was going to challenge me to a duel today.” Just then, Terry spoke. He surveyed the room, looking for his target.

“Challenge him? After seeing what happened to Verdant Phantom, there’s no way that gang leader would show up.”

“Pfft! Seeing how that guy hasn’t appeared yet, I’m sure he’s retreated with his tail between his legs.”

“If he’s already here, he might as well show his face, right? Rather than hiding like a coward.”

The crowd smirked and began bad-mouthing Dustin, assuming that he hadn’t appeared due to

fear.

“Dustin, didn’t you say that you were the leader of the Flame Dragon Gang? Why haven’t you gone up yet?” Gordon’s eyes shot to Dustin, a smirk hanging off his lips.

“Hey, you were talking big earlier. Why are you keeping silent now?” Zoey crossed her arms, sneering.

“Hey, Rhys. Someone’s calling you. You should get up there.” Zeke taunted.

“That’s none of your business!” Nelson shouted with a glare.

“What a bunch of losers! You guys are all bark and no bite. How disappointing.” Zeke ridiculed.

“Where did you find the balls to pretend to be the leader of the Flame Dragon Gang?” Zoey sniggered,

“Don’t tell me you’re scared, Dustin. Where did your courage go? Don’t you have dignity as a man?” Gordon taunted.

“Since you guys seem hell-bent on provoking me, I might as well do as you wish.” Dustin nodded. and turned toward the ring.

“Is that guy really going to go up there?” Zoey was astonished.

Gordon scoffed. “He’s just putting on a show. I bet he’s going to walk into the crowd and then run away.”

“Exactly. If he goes up there, I’ll eat my own shit while doing a handstand!” Zeke smirked. Soon, their smiles dropped when they realized that Dustin had gotten into the ring.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 625 -

Chapter 625

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“No way. He went up?” Zoey and the others stopped smiling as they watched Dustin get onto the arena, their faces frozen in shock.

They never expected Dustin to actually go into the ring, thinking that he was merely bluffing. Still, did he have a death wish?

“Hey, you! Weren’t you going to eat your shit while doing a handstand? Go ahead.” Nelson suddenly

spoke.

Zeke stiffened awkwardly. It had merely been an offhanded comment. He never imagined that

Dustin would be so bold, so his words were coming back to bite him in the ass.

Zoey suddenly thought of something. “Hang on. Dustin isn’t the Flame Dragon Gang’s leader, is he?”

Besides the leader of the Flame Dragon Gang, who else would dare to challenge Terry?

“Impossible! There’s no way a loser like him can be Flame Dragon Gang’s leader.” Gordon immediately protested.

“I guess you’re going to keep being stubborn, eh? Well, let me show you.” Nelson sneered before fishing out a badge and slapping it against Gordon’s face.

“You” Just as Gordon was about to start cursing, he took a closer look at the badge and was startled into silence..

The badge belonged to none other than the Flame Dragon Gang!

“Have you finally opened your eyes, you piece of shit? What more do you have to say?” Nelson raised his chin defiantly, rendering Gordon and his friends speechless.

The Flame Dragon Emblem was more than enough evidence, and Dustin’s bold actions only further solidified the fact. However, it was hard for them to accept that the man they had been praising for defeating Maniac was the boy they despised.

“Hey, kid. Didn’t you say you were friends with our leader? So, do you know him well?” Nelson sniggered.

Gordon’s face instantly reddened from embarrassment. When his friends turned their gazes toward him, he was so humiliated that he wanted to run and hide. After all, there was nothing more embarrassing than having your lie exposed in public.

“Cat got your tongue? Weren’t you so full of yourself earlier? Say, how does it feel to be exposed?” Nelson taunted.

“You “Gordon gritted his teeth and swallowed his words since he knew that he would only further embarrass himself if he spoke more.

“So what if Dustin is the leader of the Flame Dragon Gang? He’s still going to lose to Terry Doyle!” Zeke humphed disdainfully.

“He’s right. Only an idiot would challenge Terry Dole!” Zoey echoed, finding any reason to retort Nelson.

Gordon smirked. “His biggest mistake was trying to show off. Let’s see how he meets his end later!”

Although he still felt humiliated, the thought of Dustin beaten into a pulp pleased him greatly.

Meanwhile, in the ring, Dustin’s appearance had drawn much attention, and people were eager to see how the show would unfold.

“Are you Dustin Rhys, leader of the Flame Dragon Gang?” Terry’s hands were clasped behind his back as he gave Dustin a scornful look over.

“I am.” Dustin nodded.

“I can't tell if you're brave or stupid for challenging me.”

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 626 -

Chapter 626

Terry shook his head with a smile. "Don't tell me you're trying to use me to make a name for yourself."

It wouldn't be the first time someone did something like that. Terry had encountered many who challenged him in hopes of using their victory to boost their reputation, just like Verdant Phantom. Still, all those people eventually lost to him.

"Let me make this clear. I'm not interested in making a name for myself. I decided to challenge you to save myself the trouble by settling things with your family once and for all," Dustin answered calmly.

"Settle things with us? And how do you intend to do that?" Terry had a small smile.

"Simple. If I defeat you today, you and your family have to stop meddling in my life," Dustin answered straightforwardly.

"Defeat me? Pfft!" Terry was surprised by Dustin's words and burst out laughing. The audience also laughed mockingly along with Terry.

It would be a miracle if Dustin could come out of this battle alive, but to think he could defeat

Terry? What an idiot!

"He's an interesting fellow, but he's too arrogant." Phil was unbothered by Dustin's words.

"Insolent fool. Even Verdant Phantom was easily defeated, so what makes him think that he stood a chance against Terry?" Maggie humphed scornfully.

"I've done what I could to stop you, but you wouldn't listen." Claudia shook her head. She had only advised Dustin because of Sheila, but Dustin refused to listen and even dared to see his challenge through after watching what happened to Verdant Phantom, so he must be an idiot.

“Sir Paul, do you think Dustin has a winning chance?” Hector asked out of the blue.

“We’ll find out soon.” Paul smiled but didn’t give a straight answer.

“Mr. Harmon, you must be joking. That brat is just a nobody. There’s no way he could win.” Phil

smirked.

“Just because he’s not famous doesn’t mean he’s not capable. Since he dared to challenge your son, I’m sure he’s confident in his skills.” Hector protested.

“Since you seem to have faith in him, why don’t we have a bet?” Phil wore a smile.

“What are we betting with?” Hector didn’t refuse.

“I’ve been eyeing your antique pottery for some time now. Let’s go with that.” Phil got straight to the point.

“I must say, you’re quite greedy, my friend. The treasure you picked is worth over three billion dollars. But what will you put on the line?”

“I’m not a narrow-minded person. Even since our family’s founding, we’ve kept an ancient manuscript called the Tempest of the Eighteen Swords’. I’ll bet that. What do you think?”

“But that’s your family heirloom. Are you sure?” Hector was astonished.

“Tempest of the Eighteen Swords” was a book that contained information about a top-grade martial arts sword technique and has existed ever since the Doyle family was established. Usually, only the leader and his heir had the right to read it, while others in the family couldn’t even catch a glimpse of it. In fact, an internal conflict had happened before just because of this book, so it was easy to guess how valuable it was.

“Of course. So, do you agree to the bet?” Phil smiled. He had dared to bet his family heirloom since he was confident that his son would win. And since the winner was certain, he didn’t mind betting on something so valuable when there was no way it would fall into Hector’s hands.

“Since you put such a precious item into the bet, I’ll agree to it. Let’s see who wins.” Hector agreed. readily.

If Dustin lost the battle, Hector would merely lose an antique. However, if Dustin did win, Hector would finally get his hands on a rare sword technique manuscript that could vastly strengthen the shadow guards, thus fueling his entire family’s overall martial arts force.

There was no way Hector was going to let this opportunity slip through his fingers.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 627 -

Chapter 627

Both Terry and the audience sniggered at what Dustin had said. Everyone assumed that Dustin wouldn’t even be able to withstand three blows, much less defeat Terry.

“What are you laughing at? Is it that funny?” Dustin asked calmly, unbothered by the audience’s attitude.

“What do you think?” Terry’s smile didn’t falter. “Do you really think you’ll win?”

“Why not? Do you think you’re better than everyone else? Why are you naturally assuming that you won’t lose?” Dustin retorted.

“Pfft! I don’t know where you found the balls to ask me that, but it’s fine. I’ll show you how different we are!” Terry beckoned Dustin with a finger and smirked. “Come on. I’ll let you have three shots at me. Let’s see what you’ve got.”

“You better not do that. Last time, Bennet Malcom said the same thing, and he’s still stuck in bed. right now.” Dustin reminded.

“Bennet is merely my subordinate. As if he’s a match for me.” Terry feigned a smile.

“Both of you are the same to me since the outcome won’t be any different,” Dustin answered frankly.

“What?” Terry’s smile gradually fell. He had seen many arrogant people like Verdant Phantom, but Dustin was different from them. Dustin wasn’t only reckless and arrogant; he was also looking down on Terry. Dustin’s calm expression and unbothered attitude were infuriating.

Terry couldn’t help feeling like he was being humiliated. How dare a nobody like Dustin looked

down on him!

“That idiot! There’s no way Bennet’s skills are anywhere near Terry’s.” Maggie snorted from where she sat.

“He’s too naive if he thinks he can defeat Terry just because he defeated Bennet.” Next to Maggie, Claudia shook her head. If she had to say, Terry was ten times stronger than Bennet, and the difference between Dustin and the former was as clear as day.

“Ha, that bastard is still as arrogant as usual! He still has no idea what he’s gotten himself into.” Gordon jeered.

“The more he pisses Terry off, the worse his outcome will be. He’s just digging his own grave at this point.” Zeke smirked.

“Dustin is not as astute as he needs to be, so it serves him right if he dies today!” Zoey crossed her

arms.

Although they finally discovered Dustin’s identity, none of them thought that he had a chance of winning.

“I’ve already given you a chance. Since you don’t seem to appreciate it, don’t blame me for whatever happens!” Terry’s face darkened, and his aura turned murderous.

“Go ahead. I’m curious to see how strong the person ranked thirteenth on The Heavenly Immortals

now is.” Dustin beckoned.

When Dustin fought his way to the top of The Heavenly Immortals ten years ago, all of his

opponents had been talented and skilled individuals, so he wondered if those on the current list were just as strong.

“You seem eager to die, so I’ll do you a favor!” Terry drew his right hand back and curled his fingers into a claw. Air whirled around and gathered in his palm as his true energy was condensed to form an energy bullet. When the energy bullet finally reached the size of an apple, Terry leaped forward, and there was a loud explosion as the white energy bullet was flung toward Dustin.

Usually, one could gauge a martial artist’s strength based on the size of their energy bullets, and Terry’s happened to be unbelievably sturdy and held massive destructive power.

Dustin’s feet didn’t move an inch despite the incoming attack. Instead, he tilted his head to the side. The energy bullet missed his cheek by a hair’s breadth and slammed into the tree trunk. behind him. The force of the attack sent shivers down the audience’s spine.

“Hmm?”

Terry narrowed his eyes when he saw Dustin escape his attack, and he struck out once more.

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Chapter 628

There was a loud whoosh as a larger and quicker energy bullet blasted in the direction of Dustin’s

chest.

Dustin kept his feet firmly planted on the ground and leaned backward, his back arched. The energy bullet flew over his face and slammed into the same tree. He pushed himself off the ground with one hand and stood back up, unharmed.

Terry frowned. He had thought he’d be able to end this battle easily, yet Dustin had surprised him by dodging his attacks twice.

“If this is all you’ve got, then I have to say, I’m disappointed,” Dustin said nonchalantly..

Hearing this, Terry’s expression hardened in anger. No one has ever treated him with such disrespect and condescension.

“No way. He’s looking down on Terry Doyle?”

“He managed to dodge those two attacks thanks to luck. And Mr. Terry went easy on him, or he

would be dead by now!”

“Mr. Terry, don’t go easy on him!”

The audience shouted in indignation.

“I was going to let you live, but it seems like that’s unnecessary now.” Terry put one foot in front of the other before springing toward Dustin.

The true energy that burst forth was enough to easily kill those weaker than him without having

to touch them. However, there was a flaw in this move. If a person’s opponent is on the same level as them, the attack’s effects were greatly reduced. And since it was impossible to change the trajectory of the blow, their opponents could easily predict their moves and jump out of the way.

Therefore, a battle between Divine-level martial artists meant that fighters must use their bodies to defeat their opponents. In these cases, factors like weapons, skills, and true energy were pivotal

to one’s success.

“You’re dead meat!” As soon as Terry got closer to Dustin, he gathered his true energy and threw out a punch. There was a thunderous boom as the air around them started flowing, and a vortex of true energy enveloped Terry’s fist.

The terrifying pressure caused the audience to shudder as they struggled to breathe.

“What a powerful strike!”

“Now that Terry is getting serious, that guy’s doomed for sure!”

“No way! Is that guy going to take Terry Doyle’s attack just like that?”

Just as Terry’s fist was about to land, Dustin finally made a move. Under the crowd’s disbelieving gazes, he stood his ground and threw a punch against Terry’s fist.

“Ignorant fool!” Maggie smirked, pleased.

“He might still have a chance if he ducks, but if he’s going to face the attack head-on, then he’s at

dead man.” Claudia shook her head, sure that the winner was Terry.

“Let’s see what happens to you now!” Gordon and his friends gloated and eagerly waited for Dustin

to be blown away.

“Mr. Harmon, I’m afraid your guy is doomed.” Phil sniggered.

Hector seemed unbothered by Phil’s words. However, Natasha had gone as white as a sheet. Her fists were tightly clenched as her eyes remained glued to the ring. Would Dustin be able to withstand Terry’s attack at full force?

Finally, the two fists collided with each other. There was an ear-splitting bang as the entire place began to shake. A blast of true energy burst out and spread throughout the place, whipping up

shrill winds.

After the onslaught, Dustin seemed completely unscathed, while Terry staggered backward, nearly falling off the stage, shocking everyone.

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Chapter 629

Terry staggered back from the impact, his heavy stomps leaving footprints on the solid ground. By the time he managed to stabilize himself, his face was completely pale, despite his rapid heartbeat. Sweat had formed on his

forehead, and the edges of his shirt were frayed. There was even blood dripping from his fist. What a miserable sight.

“What?” The crowd had been stunned into silence. None of them could have imagined that Terry might be at a disadvantage when it came to physical fights. This was unbelievable!

“N-no way! Terry got pushed back?” Maggie was flabbergasted.

Claudia was shocked as well. “I didn’t know Dustin was so strong.” If she hadn’t seen it for herself, she would have never believed that someone managed to withstand Terry’s attack and even came out somewhat victorious.

“I-impossible! How can someone like him be so powerful?” Gordon and the other two were

dumbfounded. The scenario they had in their minds was Dustin being destroyed with one punch, so why was he winning against Terry?

“What?” Phil sat up straight, and his expression fell. There was no way his genius son was losing to a nobody. What would become of their family if Terry were to lose? Worse, Phil had made a bet with Hector using “Tempest of the Eighteen Swords, so the consequences would be devastating.

“As expected.” Hector smiled, pleasantly surprised. He knew that there was no way Dustin would recklessly challenge Terry if he wasn’t confident in himself.

Things are getting interesting.” Paul stroked his beard, fascinated. For Dustin to be so skilled at medicine and martial arts at such a young age, Paul was sure that there was more to Dustin than

meets the eye.

“Did you see that, Sis? Dustin is winning!” Ruth jumped up excitedly.

“Of course, I saw. I’m not blind.” Natasha heaved a sigh of relief, the smile returning to her face. “I told you he’d win, but you wouldn’t believe me.”

“When did you say that? I can’t remember anymore.” Ruth stared at Natasha quizzically.

“It doesn’t matter.” Natasha glared at her sister, who pouted.

Ruth mumbled to herself, “Are all women like this? Their moods are so unpredictable.”

Back in the arena, Terry coughed as he tried to suppress the energy churning within his body. His expression was terrifying. He felt sorry for himself as the audience criticized him. Ever since he became famous, no one has ever successfully hurt him. Today, however, an accident occurred, and it was a blow to both his dignity and skills.

His reputation would be ruined if he didn’t get rid of Dustin completely.

Abruptly, Terry burst out laughing wildly. “You’re strong; I’ll give you that. I underestimated you earlier. With your capabilities, you could easily make your way into the top twenty of The Heavenly Immortals. Unfortunately, your opponent is me. To tell you the truth, I’ve been hiding my true strength since three years ago as I underwent all sorts of training. So far, none of my opponents have been strong enough for me to want to take off these shackles and use my full

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Chapter 630

“Today, I’ll show you how terrifying the power I’ve been saving up for the past three years is!” Terry began removing his clothes, revealing the dark steel weights underneath that covered his body like armor. There were even a few attached to his limbs.

Under everyone’s disbelieving gazes, Terry gradually took off those weights, which landed on the ground with solid thuds that made people shudder.

“Holy smokes, he’s a beast! Who would have thought that he was moving around with several hundred pounds of weight.”

“Usually, it’s hard to even walk with those tied around one’s body, yet he’s been walking normally and even fighting! What a monster.”

“If he’s that strong with limitations, what would happen if he took them off?”

“I can only say that he’s terrifying!”

The audience gossiped, shocked at how strict Terry was with himself. No one would like to wear clothes that weighed a few hundred pounds.

“No wonder Dustin seemed to have an edge over Terry. Terry has been holding himself back. Now that his restrictions are gone, I’m sure he’ll win!” Maggie regained her confidence.

“There’s a reason he’s ranked thirteenth on The Heavenly Immortals.” Claudia couldn’t help but respect Terry. Being a genius was nothing new, but it was always harder to accept when a genius was working harder than ordinary people.

“See? There’s no way Terry would lose. He was just holding himself back.” The smiles returned to Gordon, Zeke, and Zoey’s faces when they found an excuse they could use.

“As expected of my son, he left a card up his sleeve. He’ll win now.” Phil let out a relieved sigh now that the manuscript seemed safe.

“It seems like Dustin will be in trouble again.” Natasha and Ruth’s expressions turned grave once more. They never thought that Terry might be hiding his true strength.

“Much better...” After removing his burdens, Terry began stretching, and a confident smile returned to his face. “To be able to force me to use my full strength, you should be proud to lose to me.”

It took Terry three years to get to where he was, so it was finally time to see the fruits of his labor.

“Don’t speak too soon. This doesn’t change anything.” Dustin shook his head.

“You still don’t seem to understand the situation right now. Without those weights, my speed and power will greatly increase. I’ll even let you in on a secret. Fist fights aren’t my forte-swords are!” Terry opened his palm, and a sword that a servant had been holding onto flew into his palm, instantly strengthening his aura to the point that those standing blocks away could feel it.

“My sword is unbreakable, and today, you’ll have the honor of dying from it. You should be proud!” Terry tightened his grip on the hilt before he sprang

toward Dustin, his speed so fast that the naked eye couldn't follow up and left an after-image.

"He's so quick!" The audience was startled.

The average martial artist could no longer catch sight of his blade due to its speed, but its murderous quality was enough to frighten them.

"You're dead meat!" With the aid of his sword, Terry was unstoppable.

Right before the tip of the sword could piece through Dustin's chest, two fingers reached out to pinch the blade, bringing Terry's attack to a halt. Instantly, whatever murderous aura there was vanished.

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Chapter 631

“What?” Terry was astounded to see that his attack had been stopped. After taking off the weights, his strength and speed would have multiplied tremendously. And to win against Dustin, he even exposed his greatest weapon, his sword. All of this was to ensure his victory against Dustin. However, despite going at Dustin at full force, the latter managed to stop his attack with nothing. but two fingers!

Was Dustin even human?

“I-impossible!” Terry’s eyes widened as he lost his mind. He began swinging his sword at Dustin nonstop, and the force whipped the air in the arena, causing dust to engulf the place.

Terry’s continuous blows brought more gouges to the ground until the floor resembled a spider web.

“Die! You have to die!” Terry roared. His attacks picked up speed and became more lethal.

Dustin, who was unfazed by the onslaught, dodged and avoided Terry’s attacks by twisting his upper body. His feet were still firmly planted on the ground. He would only block attacks with his hands when there was nowhere for him to dodge.

The battle in the ring was getting more intense, yet the audience was completely befuddled.

Due to Terry and Dustin’s high speed, all they could see were shadows and after-images of the two of them. And because of how dangerous Terry’s sword aura was to regular martial artists, the crowd had no choice but to scuttle backward and watch the battle from afar.

“Claudia, I can’t see anything. Can you?” Maggie struggled to identify the two men.

“I can’t either. They are both way stronger than me” Claudia shook her head. She was still a High- level martial artist, and although she was much stronger

than the average martial artist. She still had a long way to go compared to Divine-level martial artists. In fact, she was nothing compared.

to them.

“Terry should be the one with the upper hand, right?” Maggi asked tentatively.

“Judging from the magnitude of the destruction, it seems like it.” Claudia nodded. “Terry’s sword skill is ruthless, and he also has an ace card-Tempest of the

Eighteen Swords. If he uses that, no one would be able to stop him.”

“Great!” Maggie was thrilled to hear that. Although she didn’t have the right to learn that technique, she had heard of it before. It was the Doyle family’s greatest treasure; it had been around since the family’s foundation and was to be used as a last resort when someone had been cornered with no way of escaping.

There were rumors that the sword technique in the manuscript increased in power at each level, and so far, no one has ever withstood the last level before.

Maggi believed that as long as Terry used it, he would win the battle easily.

“Fuck. I can’t even tell who’s who anymore.” Zeke stood on tiptoes and peered over the crowd’s head. “Gordon, do you think Terry will win?”

“Of course, he will!” Gordon answered confidently. “Dustin might be skilled, but he’s still a country

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bumpkin with no power. Terry is different. As the future head of the Doyle family who’s received training from the greatest masters, I’m sure he still has a card up his sleeve that he’s hiding.”

“That’s true.” Zeke nodded his head, relieved. As a martial arts family, the Doyle family had a powerful legacy and many martial arts manuscripts that could help one easily defeat their opponent.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 632 -

Chapter 632

As long as Terry wanted to, it shouldn't be hard for him to defeat Dustin.

"Sir Paul, who do you think will win?" Hector suddenly turned his attention to Paul, who sat in the

middle.

"The one with a ninety percent chance," Paul answered with a smile, his eyes crinkling.

"Ninety percent?" Phil smiled. "You've got a good eye, Sir Paul. You could tell that my son had an ace up his sleeve, so he should be able to win."

Phil had been getting worried that his son might lose, but Paul's words reassured him. As a Grandmaster martial artist, no one would dare question what Paul said, so if Paul said that there's a ninety percent winning chance, it must be true. Although there was ten percent left, it was more than enough for him.

Paul glanced at Phil, who was full of confidence, but didn't say anything, a knowing smile on his face.

"Tempest of the Eighteen Swords!" A voice bellowed from the platform as the air turned heavy. Instantly, the entire platform began to shake as cracks spread everywhere.

"Terry is finally going to use his best move! That's the end of that bastard!" Maggie shouted animatedly.

"One doesn't use 'Tempest of the Eighteen Swords' unless extremely necessary, but when they do, their opponents will definitely die." Claudia narrowed her eyes.

"Let's see what you'll do now!" Gordon and his friends' eyes were glued to the ring, not wanting to miss seeing Dustin get defeated.

"Are things finally going to end now?" Phil smirked. Although Dustin had surprised him several times, the man was still no match for his son.

“As long as you withstand this blow, you’ll still have a chance to turn things around. Good luck!” Hector’s fists clenched as he silently prayed for Dustin. Natasha and her sister were also waiting anxiously after hearing that Dustin only had a ten percent chance of living.

“You’ve got to hold on, Sir Rhys! We’re depending on you!” Nelson and his men were worried for Duntin. They knew that if their leader lost, the Doyle family was going to completely get rid of their gang.

“Tempest of the Eighteen Swords’! It’s time for you to die!” Terry shouted. He gathered all his strength into a single strike and swung his blade toward Dustin.

Bang!

The cracked arena began crumbling. Dust and debris flew into the air, making it hard for people to keep their eyes open.

After some time, the dust finally settled, and only one man was standing among the wreckage- Terry.

“We won!” The Doyle family was overjoyed to see this, and the audience began cheering.

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“You’re amazing, Mr. Terry!”

“No wonder he’s ranked thirteenth on The Heavenly Immortals!”

“Today’s battle was eye-opening. He is indeed a genius.”

The audience was grinning widely as they sang praises to him.

Terry smiled from where he stood atop the wreckage. Suddenly, he doubled over and spat out a mouthful of blood before collapsing to the ground.

100%

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Chapter 633

The audible thud when Terry fell to the ground silenced everyone, effectively cutting off all laughter and cheers.

The crowd shared dismayed looks, unable to comprehend what just happened.

What was going on? Didn't Terry win? Why did he spit out blood? Had it merely been a narrow win?

Just as everyone was stuck in disbelief, a silhouette slowly walked out of the ruined arena. Even the dust in the air seemed to disperse and create a path for him.

When the person reached the top of the platform, the audience could finally see Dustin's handsome face.

Dustin stood proudly with his hands in his pocket as he studied his unconscious opponent calmly.

Meanwhile, everyone's jaw dropped. They thought that Terry had been the one who won, but things have completely changed. Terry was lying on the ground, injured. While Dustin was completely unscathed. It was obvious who the winner was.

"N-no way! Terry Doyle lost?"

"Holy smokes! Balerno's martial art genius and the thirteenth person on The Heavenly Immortals lost to a nobody?"

"Who the hell is that guy? How was he able to injure Mr. Terry? That's insane!"

There was an uproar as everyone stared at Dustin like he was a monster. Although it was hard for them to come to terms with the fact that Terry had lost, what they saw wasn't a lie. Terry had been completely destroyed!

"I-impossible! There's no way Terry would lose to that guy. My eyes must be deceiving me!" Maggie shook her head and rubbed her eyes, trying to deny what she saw. She refused to believe that a mere nobody had taken down the genius in their family.

“When did he become so strong?” Claudia’s eyes widened in shock. She thought that Dustin was just a normal Divine-level martial artist who could only defeat someone of Bennet’s caliber. Instead, he had completely triumphed over Terry. Had she been looking down on the wrong person this entire time?

“H-he won? How is that possible?” Gordon was aghast, his eyes filled with disbelief.

“He actually survived!” Zeke was sweating buckets now.

“He wasn’t bluffing.” Zoey gulped, unable to remain calm.

“Natasha wasn’t wrong. He is different.” Adriana mumbled to herself, her eyes fixed on Dustin.

“H-he won? Our leader won?” After getting over the shock, Nelson leaped up and began hugging his men. From now on, their gang was going to become more powerful than ever!

“Sis, he won! Dustin won!” Ruth cheered excitedly.

“Of course, he did. There’s no way my man would lose.” Natasha’s shock turned to pride, and she lifted her head haughtily. All she hoped for was for Dustin to come back to her safely, but she

never imagined he would give her such a big surprise.

“I knew there was more to that guy.” Hector smiled, relieved. Although he was sure that Dustin came prepared, it was still difficult to defeat Terry.

“I-impossible! How did my son lose?” Phil was devastated. He spun around and looked at Paul, “Sir Paul, didn’t you say that my son had a ninety percent chance of winning? How did things come to

this?”

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Chapter 634

“I think you misunderstood something here,” Paul responded calmly. “I said Dustin had a ninety percent chance of winning. Your son only had ten.”

“What?” Phil stiffened. It turned out that everything had been in his head. Still, he couldn’t understand or accept how a nobody like Dustin was able to defeat his son, who was a genius.

“Mr. Doyle, thank you for Tempest of the Eighteen Swords’,” Hector suddenly said, causing Phil’s

face to darken.

Phil thought that today’s battle would work in their favor by boosting their reputation. However, not only had his son lost the battle, he also lost their family heirloom. It was a devastating loss!

Dustin’s victory also taught everyone something. There was always someone far stronger than you, even if you were the strongest person around. Also, from today onward, Balerno martial arts. would see a dark horse, someone more talented and stronger than Terry.

“Useless fools!” Tyler Grant, who stood amidst the audience wearing a mask, humphed and walked away. He hid his identity because he thought he’d get to see an amusing show, yet Terry had been. useless and couldn’t even defeat a pretty boy like Dustin. It was such a waste of time!

Back at the wreckage, Dustin looked at Terry below him and reminded, “You’ve lost. Remember what I said earlier? Your family better stay out of my way from now on.” He turned to walk off the

stage.

“No! I haven’t lost yet!” Gritting his teeth, Terry clambered to his feet wildly.

“Go to hell!” Locking his eyes on Dustin’s back, Terry grabbed his sword and thrust it toward

Dustin.

“Watch out!” Natasha cried out, but it was too late.

Terry's attack was too quick and silent, making it hard to detect. So, before anyone realized what was going on, the tip of Terry's sword was already pressing into Dustin's back.

"Haha, I'm still the winner in the end!" Terry cackled.

Quickly, his laughter stopped and his smile froze when he realized that his sturdy blade hadn't even hurt Dustin. It didn't even impale the man's flesh.

Terry wanted to turn things around? What a joke.

"What do you think you're doing?" Dustin snapped, slowly turning his head.

This was an open battle where everyone had seen the results, so how dare Terry tried to pull a fast one on him! Were all Doyle family members so shameless?

"Die! Die! Rot in hell!" True energy burst forth from Terry and into his sword as he tried to piece through Dustin's body, and the blade eventually bent under the force.

Still, no matter how hard Terry tried, he just couldn't injure Dustin.

"Fool!" Dustin humphed. He stopped going easy on Terry and planted his fist into Terry's abdomen.

There was a bang at Terry's abdomen, and his core shattered to pieces. Terry flew backward from

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the force like a ragdoll, blood spurting everywhere. It caused an uproar among the crowd when his body landed in the audience zone, and the Doyle family's blood started boiling after seeing how Terry's core was destroyed.

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Chapter 635

After failing to sneak up on Dustin, Terry was thrown into the air, where he landed right beside Phil, who was infuriated to see his son injured and bleeding uncontrollably. "You piece of shit! How dare you hurt my son!"

“Are you blind or something? He snuck up on me, so I merely defended myself,” Dustin answered.

“Nonsense!” Phil yelled. “The winner hadn’t been determined yet. You were the one who left your back open to your opponent, so it was fair and just!”

Although his son had been in the wrong, there was no way he could admit that now.

“Fine. Since the winner hadn’t been determined yet, there shouldn’t be a problem since I attack him normally.” Dustin retorted.

“Of course, there is! You deliberately injured my son!” Phil seethed

“This is how the martial world works. You’re putting your life at stake when you accept a challenge. Your son got hurt because he wasn’t strong enough. Your family is a martial arts family. Don’t tell me you’re sore losers?” Dustin sneered.

“You!” Phil’s blood boiled.

“You sneaky bastard!” Maggie stood up. “Don’t waste time arguing with him, Uncle Phil! He destroyed Terry’s core. We must make him pay!”

“That’s right! There’s no way we’d let him walk out after hurting our family’s genius!”

“That brat is a danger to society. We need to get rid of him!”

The Doyle family yelled, their eyes showing their animosity toward Dustin. Terry had been their hope, and he even had a chance at becoming a Grandmaster martial artist. To learn that his core had been destroyed and he had lost all his powers was a huge blow to the family.

“It’s fine that he snuck up on me and tried to kill me, but I’m not supposed to defend myself? You guys are shameless!” Dustin jeered.

“How dare you!” The Doyle family was flustered and humiliated.

“Take that bastard down now!” Phil bellowed.

“Anyone who approaches me will die.” Dustin glanced around the room coolly. The Doyle family fighters shuddered when they met his gaze. How were they supposed to win against someone who defeated Terry Doyle?

“Why are you guys panicking? There are so many of us, and only one of him. We’ll defeat him, no matter how long it takes. Take him down!” Phil ordered once more.

“Wait!” Hector suddenly stood up. “Mr. Doyle, accidents are normal during duels. Don’t you think that you’re overreacting?”

“Precisely. A loss is a loss. How could you demand revenge? In public too! That’s awful.” Ruth was displeased.

“Aren’t you worried about what people will think when they find out that such a well-established

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family was manipulating the truth and bullying others?” Natasha humphed.

“Mr. Harmon, this is my family’s affair. It has nothing to do with you.” Phil frowned.

“Well, to tell you the truth, Dustin is an honored guest in our family. So our family wouldn’t let such unjust treatment slide,” Hector responded calmly.

“This is going to turn into a blood feud. Are you sure you want to get caught up in this mess?” Phil demanded.

“Mr. Doyle, everyone here saw what happened. If you insist on doing things your way, I’m afraid you’ll incur their wrath.” Hector tried to knock some sense into Phil.

Everyone here was either a celebrity or a well-known martial artist. If the Doyle family were to retaliate unjustly in front of everyone, their reputation would be ruined.

“Alright, that’s enough.”

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Chapter 636

Paul, who had been silent the entire time, finally spoke up. "Mr. Doyle, there are rules that should be kept. Since your son was the one who accepted the challenge, he should accept whatever consequences there are."

"But, my son-" Phil wanted to protest but stopped when he met Paul's icy glare. "Do you plan to be condemned by everyone?"

"No, sir." Phil gritted his teeth and lowered his head. In terms of status and power, the Doyle family was no match for Paul.

"Mr. Doyle, you should send your son to Stonearay Order immediately. He might still have hope if Dr. Watkins takes a look at him," Paul reminded.

"Hurry! Get the car ready!" Coming to his senses, Phil gathered his son into his arms and dashed. Out of the arena, the rest of the Doyle family members following closely behind. Receiving treatment was the most important thing right now.

"Hi, mind if I have a word with you?" Paul turned his attention to Dustin.

"It would be my honor." Dustin nodded and followed Paul out the door.

Once the two men were gone, gossip rose once more.

"What an outstanding battle!"

"I know, right? To think that the person ranked thirteenth on The Heavenly Immortals lost to a nobody. I wouldn't have believed it if I hadn't seen it with my own eyes."

"I'm sure that the leader of the Flame Dragon Gang is going to become famous after this."

"As he should."

"Such a talented individual should join Greendust."

“Don’t be silly. Autumn Wind has called dibs on that guy. I’m willing to do anything for him to become my disciple!”

“Are you forgetting about Boulderthorn?”

“You guys are too late. Sir Paul has already made the first move.”

“What? Oh, that sneaky geezer!”

“What are you waiting for? Go after them!”

After processing everything that happened, the elders and leaders of different guilds hurriedly chased after Dustin, not wanting to be left behind.

After all, it was extremely rare to find someone as monstrously talented as Dustin. As long as they paid him some attention, he would surely become a Grandmaster martial artist, so all of them

were now clambering for his attention.

Because Dustin had total victory over the battle, Terry’s title as a genius had been swept under the rug, and the Doyle family’s reputation was in tatters after being known as sore losers.

On the other hand, Dustin’s reputation seemed to have soared thanks to this incident, and there was now a new genius in Balerno.

The Flame Dragon Gang’s reputation also skyrocketed after the battle as skilled fighters from all over the place scrambled to join the gang. Although they still weren’t as powerful as the other famous guilds, they were considerably strong in Millsburg. In time, they would surely become much stronger.

[An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 637 -](#)

Chapter 637

Outside the Doyle family gates, a Maybach revved up and drove off, successfully shaking off the group of people who were chasing after them.

“Thank God I moved fast, or I wouldn’t even have the chance to talk to you.” Paul turned around and looked at the annoyed group behind them, impressed by his foresight.

“It’s not that bad.” Dustin was puzzled.

“You don’t seem to understand your value yet.” Paul shook his head, chuckling. “Being able to defeat Terry Doyle has already proven how powerful and talented you are. There are less than five people in Balerno who could even be on par with you, so countless guilds are desperately trying to rope you in.”

“Tsk. What a bother. I should have kept a low profile.” Dustin sighed. He had only challenged Terry to warn the Doyle family not to mess with him. He didn’t expect them to invite so many people to watch the battle in an attempt to boost their reputation. Still, the Doyle family has shot itself in the foot since he was the one who ended up receiving the boost in reputation.

“You’re an interesting fellow. Others would die for that fame, yet you don’t want it at all.” Paul smiled

“Things like fame can’t even fill my belly. I’m sure that once word spreads, I’ll have people coming up to me to challenge me to a duel. Aren’t I just making things troublesome for myself?” Dustin shook his head.

“It’s hard to find someone who looks at fame and fortune so lightly nowadays.” Paul studied Dustin appreciatively.

“Don’t flatter me, Sir Paul. I’m just a normal person. I don’t have any great ambitions, so whatever you want to say, just tell it to me straight.” Dustin changed the topic.

“Alright, then. I’ll get straight to the point.” Paul nodded. “I wanted to talk to you about the Knighthood Society Tournament.”

“The Knighthood Society Tournament?” Dustin was confused.

“Every three years, there will be a Knighthood Society Tournament between Balerno and Glenstead. The purpose of this tournament is to find new talents as well as observe how strong each side is. The outcome of the battle will determine the direction in which the alliance will

grow for the next three years. The winning side has the right to call the shots and occupy more resources. Therefore, I hope that you can join the tournament as Balerno's representative," Paul explained

"But why me? There are so many skilled fighters in Balerno. There's no way a youngster like me has the right to represent Balerno." Dustin was still puzzled.

"First of all, I have high hopes for you since you're a capable individual. Secondly, there's an age limit. Participants can't be more than 38 years old. Thirdly, each side has five slots. Terry Doyle was supposed to take one of them, and since you've injured him greatly, you'll have to take his place." Paul smiled.

"What?" Dustin paled He never thought things would get so bothersome after defeating Terry.

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"This is a good chance for you, young man. Everyone who joins the tournament receives a hefty prize. And if you win, the alliance will grant you one wish. Money, power, jewels, women name it, you'll have it." Paul urged.

"Grant me a wish?" Dustin pondered for a moment. He wasn't interested in money or power, but he did happen to need two rare precious herbs. With the alliance's help, he might be able to find them more easily.

"Let me know what you need, young man. Don't be shy." Paul took advantage of this opportunity and began pressing.

"Sir Paul, have you ever heard of the thousand-year green lotus and Cherusia?" Dustin asked.

"Thousand-year green lotus, no, but I know who has Cherusia," Paul answered.

"Really? Who?" Dustin's eyes lit up.

"That's a secret for now." Paul tried to entice Dustin "Of course, if you're willing to represent Balerno in the upcoming tournament, I'll let you know regardless of the tournament's results." "I guess that means I don't have a choice."

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Chapter 638

Dustin chuckled bitterly. "Alright, I'll agree to it. It's just going to be a few fights anyway." There was no fight he couldn't win when it came to using his martial arts prowess.

Paul smiled. "Great. That'll be all."

Dustin was curious. "Sir Paul, since you've retired, why are you still worrying about matters regarding the martial arts alliance?"

Paul kept his smile. "Even though I'm not with the alliance anymore, my heart still belongs to them. Not to mention, the current leader of the alliance is my disciple. I don't see anything wrong with helping him recruit talent."

"Sir Paul, I admire that you're a man of high integrity." Dustin nodded in acknowledgment.

"Alright, there's no need for the flattery. Where are you going next? I'll see you off."

"Back to the Flame Dragon Dojo."

In the afternoon, inside Stoneray Valley at Mount Cloudcrest, Terry laid on an emerald bed. His complexion was pale, and he was sweating all over. A few physicians in white were carefully tending to his injuries. Phil stood at one side; he was anxious and hesitant to speak, fearing he might disrupt their work. After a long while, Terry's wound was finally sutured up and bandaged.

"Mr. Turner, how is my son?" Phil finally asked when he saw that they had finished treating Terry.

"It's fortunate that you sent him here on time. Your son is safe for now." Nicholas wiped his sweat

with his sleeves.

"Thank God!" Phil breathed a sigh of relief. But he quickly followed up with another question.

“He’s safe now, but would it affect his martial arts abilities?”

“That’s where the problem lies.” Nicholas sighed and explained, “His core is seriously damaged. It would be hard to get it healed. I doubt he will be able to recover his abilities.”

“What? How can that be?” Phil’s expression fell. Mr. Turner, you have excellent medical skills. Can you please think of something? I’ll pay you no matter how high the price!”

“Mr. Doyle, my skills are limited. There’s nothing I can do.” Nicholas shook his head.

“If you can’t do it, what about Dr. Linden Watkins? Can you please get him to treat my son?” Phil

was anxious

“Dr. Watkins is in seclusion and refuses to meet anyone. Even if he did treat your son and heal his core, your son won’t be able to recover his abilities immediately as they are lost. He would need to start all over.” Nicholas was feeling truly helpless.

“Start all over?” The blood drained from Phil’s face when he heard the news. It took his son more than 20 years of hard work to reach where he was today. It would be too late to start all over again. He was now akin to a crippled man.

“Dad...” Terry suddenly opened his eyes and cried out weakly. “Quick... get my mentor, Mr.

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Augustus Kline, here quickly. Only he can save me now!”

Phil’s eyes brightened. That’s right! I almost forgot about him. I’ll contact him right away!”

Augustus Kline was one of the five ultimate grandmasters of Balerno. He possessed remarkable abilities and was seemingly invincible. With the appearance of such a revered figure, he would definitely turn the situation around.

“Dustin Rhys! When my mentor gets here, I’m going to make sure you are crushed into pieces!” Terry growled menacingly. However, the intensity of his anger made him spit out blood, and he fainted on the spot.

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Chapter 639

That night, in the second-floor office of the Flame Dragon Dojo.

“Sir Rhys, you were so cool today! Not only did you show the Doyle family who’s boss, but you also made the Flame Dragon Gang famous all across Balerno! We have around a thousand members now, and they all admire you greatly!” Nelson poured Dustin a cup of coffee while he showered him with compliments; his excitement and elation were evident.

He’d been worried that the Doyles would seize the opportunity and take revenge on them if Dustin. lost. He didn’t expect their gang leader to be so incredible. Against all odds, Dustin turned the tide. and achieved a resounding victory over Terry. He had become famous through a single battle.

“That’s enough, you’ve said that a million times now. Can’t you say something new?” Dustin was speechless. Ever since Dustin’s return, Nelson had been flattering him in various ways, singing all sorts of praises that Dustin could think of. If people didn’t know any better, they would think Nelson was flirting with Dustin from the look on Nelson’s face.

“You want something new? No problem!” Nelson grinned as he said, “Sir Rhys, did you know that after your victory, many talented individuals have sought to join our gang? I’ve tested out their skills, and every one of them is no ordinary talent. With a little training, they could turn out to be the backbone of our gang! If this continues, I believe the Flame Dragon Gang would become. Millsburg’s largest gang within three years!”

Dustin nodded in response. “Not bad. This is good news. But remember: quality over quantity. Don’t recruit anyone with questionable characters. It would be advantageous to him if the Flame, Dragon Gang expanded well. However, he had to clearly plan out their expansion, lest it led to internal conflicts.

“Hehe... No need to worry, Sir Rhys. I’m skilled in that area, I’ll be able to tell their character from just one look.” Nelson grinned confidently. He’d been part of the martial world for many years. While he didn’t possess any extraordinary abilities, he was always right when it came to reading people.

“Oh, by the way, the most important task is finding the murderer. Make sure not to slack off in that regard,” Dustin reminded him.

“My men have been working hard on investigating. I believe we will have results soon.” Nelson turned serious.

Dustin nodded. “Okay. Let me know immediately if you get any news. You can go now.”

“Alright.” Nelson left after responding..

Suddenly, Dustin’s phone rang. He took it out and saw that it was a call from Dahlia.

The Nicholsons hated him terribly since he was the greatest suspect in James’ death. With the current situation, he couldn’t believe Dahlia was the one to call him first. He wondered if she had finally thought things through.

“Hello, Dahlia?” Dustin answered immediately without hesitation.

After a few seconds of silence, he heard an indifferent voice on the other line. “I’d like to talk to

Augustus Kline, here quickly. Only he can save me now!”

Phil’s eyes brightened. That’s right! I almost forgot about him. I’ll contact him right away!”

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“Dustin Rhys! When my mentor gets here, I’m going to make sure you are crushed into pieces!” Terry growled menacingly. However, the intensity of his anger made him spit out blood, and he fainted on the spot.

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Chapter 640

“Evidence? Where is it?” Dahlia was taken aback.

“It’s with me now.” It appeared that Dustin came prepared, as he took out two pieces of evidence.” These are the autopsy results. This can prove that James was poisoned to death. While this black. needle is the murder weapon.”

“What?” Dahlia examined it curiously.

Dustin added, saying, “If you don’t believe me, you can get it tested personally.” Although he had the evidence, it would be hard to convince her without finding the murderer.

“No need for that. I believe you.” Dahlia’s expression was solemn. “To be honest, I know that you’re not the murderer and that this has all been a misunderstanding.”

Dustin smiled. “I’m happy that you think that way.

“I’m sorry for misunderstanding you. But please understand, I had no other choice. My brother’s death has left me in pain. I feel so lost, and I don’t know what to do. I’m scared... I’m scared that I will lose you too. I’m scared that we will become enemies. I’m scared of being alone, I As she spoke, her eyes turned red. She lowered her head and choked back her tears. Her teary appearance looked pitiful; anyone who saw her would pity her.

“It’s alright. It’s all in the past now.” Dustin patted her shoulders in comfort. His actions seemed to shatter all her reservations, and she threw herself into his arms, her sobs intensified. She trembled uncontrollably as a steady stream of tears flowed down her cheeks. Dahlia finally released all the pent-up emotions that she had suppressed for so long.

Dustin sighed. With both arms wrapped around her in an embrace, he inched closer to her and whispered words of comfort into her ear. “It’s okay to cry. It’ll be alright once you cry it out. Oh, by the way, I have a secret to tell you. To be honest, I really did kill your brother.”

“What?” Dahlia froze, and she looked up in shock. “Wha-what did you just say?”

“You didn’t hear me? Let me repeat myself, then. I murdered your brother!”
Dustin declared as he
smiled.

After a momentary daze, Dahlia shook her head furiously. “No, it can’t be! You must be lying! How could you be the murderer? I don’t believe you!”

“I couldn’t bear to continue deceiving you, especially when I see you crying so miserably. So I thought I’d just tell you the truth,” Dustin said calmly.

“Dustin, stop joking! You’re not that kind of person” Dahlia denied it flatly.

“Do you really know me?” Dustin countered.

“Why? Weren’t you collecting evidence?” Dahlia frowned.

“I was just playing with you. But I’ve lost interest, so I decided to reveal my cards.” Dustin shrugged his shoulders.

“So, you were the one who killed my brother?” Dahlia was enraged.

“That’s right. I’m the murderer. What do you plan on doing now Dustin gave her a vague:

“I’m going to kill you!”-In her fury, she took out a dagger and aimed it toward Dustin’s throat.

A slap rang out as Dustin struck Dahlia mercilessly, causing her to fall to the floor. The dagger slipped from her grasp and clattered onto the ground as well.

“You-!” Dahlia’s face was disfigured. She was about to get up when Dustin grabbed her by the throat and pinned her against the wall.

“Ugh-” Dahlia gasped for breath, and her face flushed red. She struggled to free herself but to no avail. Dustin’s grip was like an iron vice that clamped tightly around her neck.

“How are you planning on avenging your brother with your meager strength?”
With just one hand, Dustin lifted her off the ground.

“W-why?” Dahlia was aghast. She never expected Dustin to suddenly turn hostile and forget about their past relationship. She could even see the intent to kill in his cold eyes.

“Why? You should ask yourself that.” Dustin sneered coldly. “Is it fun playing such childish tricks in front of me? Are you tired of living?”

“What nonsense are you spouting? Have you gone crazy?” Dahlia was shocked and afraid.

“So, you’re not going to admit it? Alright, two can play at this game!” Dustin snorted and reached out his hand. With a forceful tug, Dahlia’s clothes were torn into shreds and revealed her enticing, voluptuous figure. She looked extremely provocative.

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Chapter 641

“Wha-what are you doing?” Dahlia’s expression changed as she struggled to free herself. She

looked more alluring as she struggled desperately.

“Don’t you like playing games? I’ll play with you until you’re satisfied!” Dustin’s expression was

cold.

“You’re a lunatic! Stop this at once!” Dahlia cried out angrily.

Dustin commented, “You’re still pretending? The skin on your face has peeled off. Haven’t you

noticed?”

“What?” Dahlia’s eyes widened, and she touched her face instinctively. However, she quickly came back to her senses. It didn’t matter if her face was disfigured, her actions had already given her

away.

“I thought my acting skills were pretty good. I didn’t expect you to see through it that quickly.’ Once she found out she was exposed, “Dahlia” stopped the act and pulled forcefully near her ear. Soon, a human mask was peeled off.

“Dahlia” was gone, and she was replaced by an unfamiliar

woman

The woman looked decent, but her complexion was ghastly pale. Her gaze was sinister and malicious. She was the epitome of a female fatale.

“Who are you? Why are you impersonating Dahlia?” Dustin questioned her coldly.

“If you want me to answer you, you would need to answer me first. How did you find out?” The

woman was curious.

Her mentor had taught her the Face-Changing Art personally. She could not only change her appearance, she was also good at reading people immediately, allowing her to impersonate them better. She wasn't confident enough to say that it was a perfect resemblance, but it was at least 90

% similar. At her level, even close relatives wouldn't be able to notice in a short time. Hence, she

couldn't understand how Dustin had figured it out shortly after they met.

"Your technique is impressive. It's hard to find fault with your appearance. However, you overlooked a few details."

"First, Dahlia never uses perfume, but you carried a faint smell with you. Second, with Dahlia's

born personality, she would never believe someone that easily. That evidence wouldn't be

to convince her. Your seductive performance earlier was also clearly done to get my guard e last thing would be your dominant hand. Perhaps you didn't notice, but you used your i to hold the cup earlier, which is not Dahlia's dominant hand.

"I may not have seen through you if it were just one suspicious detail, but with all of them put together, it was obvious that you were an imposter!" Dustin commented coldly, exposing her flaws. In truth, there was another detail he hadn't mentioned, and that was that he had grown

more cautious after going through a similar situation.

The woman chuckled. "I can't believe you have such keen observation skills. You're truly amazing to be able to catch such small details." After today's experience, it seemed like she would need to put in more work on the details.

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"I'm going to kill you!" In her fury, she took out a dagger and aimed it toward Dustin's throat.

A slap rang out as Dustin struck Dahlia mercilessly, causing her to fall to the floor. The dagger slipped from her grasp and clattered onto the ground as well.

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Chapter 642

The group of masked women brandished a knife and held it dangerously close to Dahlia’s neck; a thin line of blood could be seen on her skin. It was a warning that Dahlia would be killed on the spot if Dustin made any sudden movements.

Dustin furrowed his brow and ultimately released his grip. He wasn’t going to risk Dahlia’s life with the numbers they had.

“That’s more like it.” Astrid stretched her neck. She looked triumphant as she said, “Dustin, you should feel honored that my mentor has taken an interest in you. As long as you agree, we will be a family going forward. And if you refuse, you and everyone else around you will die!”

“Do you have to go to such extremes?” Dustin’s expression was frosty.

This is how we do things. If we can’t get our hands on a talented genius like you, you must be destroyed,” Astrid responded.

“Do you really think you can kill me?” Dustin retorted.

Astrid chuckled as she said, “I know you’re talented, but we came prepared. I added Tranqurin to the tea you drank earlier. The poison is colorless and tasteless. Once ingested, your body will feel weak, and you won’t even be able to use your true energy. Judging by the time, you should be feeling its effects right about now.”

“Tranqurin?” Dustin’s expression shifted.

Tranqurin was one of the ten exotic medicines of the martial world. Although it wasn’t deadly, it was the bane of many martial artists. It suppressed their true energy and weakened their bodies. These two effects of Tranqurin were enough to put any martial artist in despair. He didn’t expect

Astrid to get a hold of it when it was nearly extinct.

“Give me the antidote!” Dustin reached out to grab Astrid but stumbled and nearly fell. Before he knew it, sweat started to form on his forehead.

“Tranqurin is specifically meant to restrain expert martial artists like you. The more you exert

true energy, the faster the medicine takes effect. How about it? Do you feel it already?” Astrid

grinned.

To put Dustin under their control, the Dark Lord employed his precious treasure, which highlighted Dustin’s value.

“Dustin, I’m going to ask you one more time. Are you going to submit to us or not?” Astrid yelled.

“Dream on!” Dustin forced himself to remain upright.

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“Hmph! You’re still talking back? Are you not afraid of death?” Astrid’s expression darkened. She was out of patience. If it weren’t for the Dark Lord valuing him greatly, Astrid would have killed him much earlier instead of wasting her time persuading him.

“Although Tranqurin is powerful, I still have enough strength to make sure we die together!” Dustin spat out coldly.

“You-!” Astrid was seething in anger. Just as she was about to make a move on Dahlia, a graceful figure descended from the second floor.

“Astrid, this guy is too stubborn. You won’t get anywhere by using force. Why don’t you let me talk to him?” Azalea walked up to Dustin seductively.

“Azalea, you’ll be able to persuade him?” Astrid raised an eyebrow.

“Have you forgotten what I’m best at, Astrid?” Azalea smiled.

“Alright, go ahead and try.” Astrid nodded.

Azalea was not only good at Face-Changing Art, but she was also skilled at the Art of Charming. She could make any man fall for her charms.

“Hey, doctor. We meet again.” Azalea took out a handkerchief and wiped the sweat off Dustin’s forehead. “Does it feel bad? How about we go up and have a rest?”

“Cut the crap!” Dustin pushed her hand aside and uttered coldly, “I will never collude with you. people!”

“Why are you making this so hard, doctor?” Azalea sighed lightly. “If you join us and become my junior, we’ll be together forever. Wouldn’t that be great?”

“What utter rubbish!” Dustin glared at her. “You want me to join you after I’ve witnessed you using such underhanded methods? Dream on!”

“I know my actions have been impudent, but I have no other choice. I cherish you a lot, and I’d do anything for you,” Azalea smiled as she said.

Dustin sneered. "If that is so, kill Astrid first, then!"

"No problem." With a smile still on her face, Azalea suddenly drew her sword and stabbed Astrid's chest.

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Chapter 643

"Ugh-!" Astrid froze.

Astrid looked at Azalea, who had a smile on her face, and then down at the sword in her chest. She was filled with shock and disbelief. She never imagined that Azalea would kill her without hesitation when she was smiling cheerfully just a second ago. There weren't any signs. throughout the entire situation.

"What?" Dustin was also bewildered at the sudden turn of events. He had casually mentioned it without expecting anything to happen. He would never imagine that Azalea would not only take it seriously but also act without hesitation and plunged her sword straight into her senior's chest. He wondered if this woman was ruthless or just truly insane.

"W-why?" Astrid spat out the words with difficulty, glaring at Azalea with wide eyes. Mixed emotions flashed across her face-disbelief, fury, resentment, and defiance. But above all, confusion clouded her face. She couldn't understand why Azalea would kill her.

Was it solely based on Dustin's words?

"Don't look at me like that, Astrid. You heard him. He asked me to kill you. I'm in a difficult position as well. You won't blame me, will you?" Astrid put on an innocent act.

"You..." Astrid was about to say something when she spat out a mouthful of blood.

"Look at you, you soiled my clothes." Azalea patted the blood stains on her clothes in disgust before pulling out her sword forcefully. Following the sound

of a sharp whistle, blood gushed from Astrid's chest, and her body went limp. She collapsed to the ground as life drained from her.

"Azalea, what are you doing?" The group of masked women was shocked to see Astrid fall. They never imagined that they would end up turning against each other.

"You shall fall too." Azalea opened up her palm and blew lightly at the masked women, creating a crimson mist that enveloped everyone present. Soon, the unsuspecting group of people, including Dahlia, fell unconscious to the ground.

They had set up various foolproof measures to deal with Dustin. However, they had failed to anticipate and have their guard up against the presence of a traitor.

"A-Azalea, you crazy woman. I can't believe you betrayed us. The Dark Lord will never forgive you!" With her last breath, Astrid lifted her finger with difficulty, her expression filled with

resentment.

"You don't need to worry about that, Astrid. Just go peacefully." Azalea bent down and stabbed her once more, relaxing only after she was certain Astrid was dead.

After that, Azalea turned to face Dustin and smiled as she asked, "What do you think? Are you satisfied, doctor?"

"I don't understand. What do you mean by this?" Dustin frowned slightly, her actions coming off as strange.

"You said to kill Astrid earlier, so I helped you to do so. Is there a problem?" Azalea tilted her head

in confusion.

Dustin could feel his eye twitching, and he added, "But she's your senior from the same guild."

"What about it? Isn't it normal for members of the same guild to kill each other in the martial world?" Azalea said it like it was a natural occurrence.

“You’re truly insane.” Dustin shook his head. He could tell that the woman in front of him was not mentally stable.

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Chapter 644

“Doctor, not only did I betray my guild for you, but I also killed my senior. You’re so mean for calling me that.” Azalea pouted with a bitter expression.

“What exactly are you trying to do?” Dustin questioned her.

“Don’t overthink it. I just want to be friends with you, nothing more,” Azalea said with a grin.

“I don’t think I can afford to be your friend. There might come a day where you’d thrust a knife into my back,” Dustin responded bluntly.

“Hey, I can’t bear to do that. Besides, if anyone is thrusting anything, it’d be you.” She smiled charmingly.

The corners of Dustin’s mouth twitched upon hearing her words. Did this woman just make a dirty joke?

“If there’s nothing else, I’m leaving.” Unwilling to stay any longer, Dustin prepared to leave and picked up the unconscious Dahlia.

“Hold on.” Azalea suddenly took out a small vial and passed it to Dustin. “This is the antidote for Tranqurin. You should take it. Otherwise, you’ll have serious long-term effects.”

“There’s no need. I wasn’t poisoned.” Dustin shook his head.

Azalea was taken aback. “You weren’t poisoned? But you were sweating and lost your strength.”

“You guys can’t be the only ones allowed to act, don’t you think?” Dustin replied nonchalantly.

Although Tranqurin was powerful, it was only effective against martial artists below the rank of grandmasters. When used against grandmasters, its effects

were greatly diminished. The remaining effects of the poison would be easily neutralized.

“You pretended so well that even I couldn’t tell.” Azalea was in shock for a moment, then she rolled her eyes. “If I had known you weren’t poisoned, I wouldn’t have taken such a big risk and killed my senior. I just put myself in trouble.”

“I appreciate your goodwill. Consider me indebted to you this time.” Dustin changed the subject. No matter how he could have settled the situation himself, she did help him and even gave him the antidote voluntarily. Naturally, he had to accept her kindness.

“I’m reassured by your words.” Azalea chuckled and gave a satisfied smile. “Oh, by the way, you need to stab me before you go.”

“Stab you? Why?” Dustin was perplexed.

“We should complete the show. My seniors are dead, and I won’t be able to explain it to my mentor if I return back unharmed. So, I need your help to stab me in the chest.” Azalea opened up her coat as she spoke, revealing her voluptuous bosom.

“Is that necessary?” Dustin frowned. “The Dark Lord is not a good person. The venomous curse has been dispelled from your body anyway. He won’t be able to control you any longer. Why do you still continue to be his disciple?”

“I didn’t expect you to care about me, doctor. Don’t worry, I’ll be fine. I’ll leave when the time is

right, but now is not the time.” Azalea smirked.

“I’m just giving you advice. The specifics are up to you.” Dustin left it to her to decide instead.

“Come now. Leave me a memento.” Azalea spread her arms as if she was ready to be slaughtered.

Dustin was helpless. He had no choice but to pick up a dagger and stab her in the chest. His aim was precise, avoiding any lethal areas and sensitive parts.

Azalea hissed. “That really hurt!”

“You got stabbed for no reason; of course, it hurt.” Dustin took out a pill and handed it to her, saying, “This is Haemotrol. It’ll help you heal faster. Take it when you see fit.”

“Thanks, doctor.” Azalea smiled sweetly. It appeared as if she remembered something as she suddenly said, “Oh, right. It’ll be the New Year soon. Ask the Harmons to be careful. They might have a difficult year ahead. My mentor, the Dark Lord, has arrived at Millsburg. He might even step in personally.”

“I understand. Thanks for the warning.” Dustin nodded though

Was the Dark Lord finally appearing after laying low for so long? Hel

they could take the necessary precautions soon.

ad to notify the Harmons so

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Chapter 645

The next morning, at Nicholson Corp., Dahlia woke up groggily and found herself lying on the sofa of her office. She was covered with a thick blanket, and there was even a steaming glass of milk

on the table beside her.

Last night’s events were still fuzzy to her, and she rubbed her head, which was throbbing slightly in pain. Feeling parched, she picked up the glass of milk and finished it in one go. It made her feel warm inside, giving her a slight relief from the discomfort she was feeling.

“Dahlia, you’re awake.” At that moment, Dustin walked in with the breakfast that he had just

bought.

“Why are you here?” Dahlia’s brows creased into a frown, and her expression turned cold.

“I didn’t know where you lived, so I brought you back to your office for the night.” As he was talking, he took out a takeaway container with a full English breakfast inside as well as a bowl of chicken soup.

“I’m asking why you are here?” Dahlia asked in exasperation.

“Have you forgotten about what happened last night?” Dustin was confused.

“Last night?” Dahlia recollected her thoughts, and last night’s events became clearer. She remembered being drugged and found herself tied up when she woke up. Her kidnapper had intended to threaten Dustin with her, but it seemed like their plan had failed.

“It’s alright if you don’t remember. The drug is still in your system, so you’ll feel groggy for the time being. Here, eat up first.” Dustin passed the steaming hot chicken soup to Dahlia.

“Go away! I don’t need you putting on an act here!” Dahlia was ruthless as she slapped the bowl of chicken soup to the ground. Her tone was frosty as she said, “Don’t think I’ll be grateful to you just because you saved my life last night, you murderer” She couldn’t act like nothing had happened when her brother passed away a few days ago.

Dustin shook his head. “Dahlia, your brother’s death has nothing to do with me.”

“They saw you! My mother saw you! Are you telling me they are lying?” Dahlia bellowed.

“They only saw what happened on the surface. They’re not aware of the truth.” Dustin turned. solemn before he continued, “I did beat James up, but that doesn’t mean I killed him. He was poisoned to death. Someone is trying to frame me and get in between us!”

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“Fine, you said you were framed. Where’s the evidence? How are you going to prove your innocence?” Dahlia questioned.

“I found the murder weapon. And I have your brother’s autopsy results. You’ll find that it is suspicious if you examine it in detail.” Dustin took out the evidence he carried with him.

constantly and displayed it in front of Dahlia.

“This is just a piece of paper and a needle. Do you think I’ll believe you with just these?” Dahlia remained unyielding. An autopsy report could be fabricated with money. It was not persuasive whatsoever.

“Dahlia, we’ve been married for three years. You should know my character. I’ve never done

anything to hurt you,” Dustin said seriously. 2

“I used to think I knew you well. However, I’ve come to realize that I can’t see through you at all.” Dahlia’s expression was icy. The more she interacted with him, the more she found him shrouded in a veil of mystery. No matter how hard she tried to unravel his true intentions, she was unable to read him. This was exactly why she struggled to trust him.

Dustin lifted three fingers. “Dahlia, I swear! I didn’t kill your brother!”

“What’s the point of saying all this? Everyone thinks you’re the murderer. I can’t forgive you! Please, get out!” Dahlia pointed at the door, ordering him to leave. She was afraid that her resolve would weaken if he continued speaking. Despite her lingering feelings for Dustin, she couldn’t forgive him on behalf of her late brother.

“Dahlia, I’m doing all I can to find the murderer. Just give me a little more time. I’ll definitely be able to prove my innocence!” Dustin swore.

“Are you still trying to argue at this point?” Dahlia gritted her teeth. “If you had repented. sincerely, you may have had a chance. But you’re not only escaping responsibility; you’re making up all kinds of excuses right now. I’m really disappointed in you. I don’t want to see you ever again; leave immediately!”

“What exactly do I need to do for you to believe me?” Dustin furrowed his brows.

“You want me to believe you? Fine! If you jump down from here to prove your innocence, I’ll believe you!” Dahlia spat out in a fit of anger.

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Chapter 646

Since they were on the 30th floor, anyone who jumped down from that height would not be able to survive. Dahlia was trying to get Dustin to back down and leave.

“Alright, I’ll jump.” Dustin nodded. Without hesitation, he turned and crashed through the full-length glass window, hurtling down from the 30th floor.

Dahlia stood frozen on the spot, her mind blank with disbelief. The words had only escaped her lips in a fit of anger. She never would have imagined that Dustin would follow through with her

demand.

“Dustin!” Dahlia screamed after returning to her senses. She rushed toward the shattered window and looked down. Dustin had vanished from sight. She knew that no ordinary person would survive such a bone-shattering fall. Her legs gave away, and she collapsed to the ground with a thud. While she sat on the ground, she could not hold back her tears.

“Why? Why did it turn out like this? Dustin, why did you jump? How can you be so foolish? What am I supposed to do now that you’re gone? What should I do?” Dahlia sobbed uncontrollably, her tears streaming steadily down her cheeks. She was filled with regret. She regretted her impulsive words that were spoken in the heat of the moment. She regretted not trusting Dustin, and she regretted forcing him to prove his innocence by taking his own life. Ultimately, she was the cause of his death.”

“Dustin, I believe you... I believe you now! Come back. Please, come back!” Dahlia was so distraught, she was weeping bitterly. She longed for everything to be a dream, wishing that it was all just an illusion. As long as she woke up, Dustin would be standing before her once again.

“This is my fault. I caused your death. My brother is gone, and now you’re gone too. There’s no reason for me to continue living. Wait for me, I’ll meet you soon.” Dahlia staggered to her feet, moving toward the windows with a determined expression.

“Hey, where are you going to meet me?” Suddenly, she heard a familiar voice behind her. At that moment, she froze, thunderstruck. Her eyes widened, and she stiffly turned her head around.

Dustin had just leaped down the building moments ago, but now he was standing unscathed. before her. She froze. Doubting her own eyes, she rubbed them. Wasn't he dead? How did he come

back to life?

“Don't worry. I'm not dead. However, you can't go back on your words now. You said you believed me.” Dustin smiled gently..

As soon as he said that, Dahlia flung herself heavily into his arms. “You lunatic! You're a real lunatic! Who told you to jump? Don't you cherish your life? Do you know how worried I was? What would I have done if you had died?”

Tears streamed down Dahlia's face as she pounded relentlessly on Dustin's chest with both fists, taking out her pent-up grievances on him. But it didn't satiate her anguish, and she sank her teeth. forcefully into his shoulder. In the end, she hugged him tightly, afraid that he would suddenly vanish into thin air.

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Chapter 647

“Alright, that's enough. Stop crying. Can't you see I'm alive and well?” Dustin patted Dahlia's back, consoling her.

This was the first time they were wrapped in such a tight embrace. Dustin could not only smell the natural body scent she emanated, but he could also feel her voluptuous breasts pressing against his chest. It distracted him momentarily.

“Hmph! But you almost died earlier!” Dahlia pounded on his chest again.

“I had no choice. You were the one who told me to jump.” Dustin put on an innocent expression.

“You jumped just because I told you so? Why don’t you eat shit too if I ask you?” Dahlia’s tone was upset.

“Heh... that’s too much,” Dustin replied awkwardly.

“Eating shit is too much, but jumping down a building is not? What exactly were you thinking?” Dahlia jabbed a finger against Dustin’s forehead.

“I was too impulsive earlier. I promise there won’t be another time,” Dustin admitted to his faults.

He had witnessed the entire scene earlier, where Dahlia cried inconsolably upon realizing he had, jumped off the building. She was even willing to follow him into the afterlife. He wasn’t only surprised, he was also delighted. This was the first time he understood how important he meant

to her.

“Hmph! It’s your life! I don’t care, so do whatever you want!” Dahlia wiped her tears away before her expression hardened. “One more thing. Although I believe that you have nothing to do with my brother’s death for now, that doesn’t mean this situation is over. I’m going to find the murderer

and avenge James!”

“Leave it to me. I’ll find the murderer. I’ve sent someone to investigate. I believe there will be news soon.” Dustin was serious. He wouldn’t let the person who dared frame him off that easily. Whoever it was, he was going to make sure they paid the price.

“Hey! What are you two doing?” Suddenly, they heard someone cry out by the door. It was Florence, Victoria, and Julie, walking in angrily.

“You son of a b*tch! How dare you show up here when you killed my son!” Florence erupted in anger when she saw Dustin; her expression was menacing.

“I told you. I have nothing to do with James’ death.” Dustin shook his head.

The evidence is as clear as day, and yet you’re still denying it?” Florence’s tone was dripping with resentment as she said, “No matter what you say, I’m

going to send you to prison!” She was about to make a move when Dahlia suddenly stood in front of her.

“Hold on! Mom, this is a misunderstanding. Dustin is not the murderer!”

“What?” Florence was stunned. She looked at Dahlia in disbelief. “Dahlia, have you gone crazy? How can you defend this bastard?”

“Mom, I feel sad about James’ death too, but we can’t let hatred cloud our judgment.” Dahlia

picked up the report from the table and showed it to them. “This is James’ autopsy report. It shows that he died from poisoning. Dustin didn’t kill him. It’s all a big misunderstanding!”

“Nonsense! I won’t believe any autopsy report. I will only believe what I saw with my own eyes, and I saw Dustin kill him!” Florence gritted her teeth.

“That’s right! It’s just a piece of paper. Dustin might have fabricated the results to clear his name!”

Julie chimed in.

“Dahlia, you need to stay resolute. Don’t be deceived by his sweet words!” Victoria warned her.

“It’s real, take a closer look. There’s an official stamp and a doctor’s signature. We can get it verified anytime.” Dahlia tried to persuade the three of them.

“Verified, my ass!” Florence snatched the autopsy report and ripped it to shreds. “I don’t care where he got this damned thing; I won’t believe it! I’m going to bring him to justice today!”

“Mom, if you don’t believe him, you should at least believe in me, right? I can assure you that he isn’t the murderer!” Dahlia was serious.

Dustin’s actions earlier had already proven his innocence. Moreover, if he were truly the killer, why would he go to such great lengths to obtain evidence? He could have simply escaped without

a trace.

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Chapter 648

“Dahlia! Did this bastard feed you a love potion? How can you believe him?” Florence was both furious and shocked. She couldn’t believe her daughter had turned into such a shameful woman. She was ignoring her brother’s death for the sake of a wretched man. She was even defending the killer. It was foolish behavior!

“I believe him because there are indeed questionable circumstances surrounding James’ death. I don’t wish to unjustly accuse a good man,” Dahlia explained.

“A good man, my f*cking ass! You can tell he’s a wretched person just by how obnoxious and cunning he is! I must hand him over to the authorities today!” Florence was unyielding, shouting, and ready to act.

“Mom, can you calm down?” Dahlia stood in front of her mom, trying to stop her.

Florence was enraged and tried to push her daughter aside. “Get out of my way!”

The result was the same, as Dahlia stood her ground. In the end, the two started pushing each

other.

“Mom, listen to me. This situation-” Before Dahlia could continue, an enraged Florence delivered a heavy slap across her face.

“Dahlia! What the hell are you doing? James had just passed away, and here you are defending the murderer? Don’t you have a conscience? James is your brother! What kind of a sister are you?” Florence fumed with rage as she screamed. Throughout her life, she had never laid a hand on her daughter until today.

“Florence, you can scold her and be mad all you want, but it’s a little inappropriate to hit your child.” Realizing that the situation was getting out of hand, Victoria tried to calm the situation. “Dahlia, you’re in the wrong too. How can you fight your mother for the sake of an outsider?”

“That’s right, Dahlia. Stop being stubborn and step aside.” Julie reasoned as well.

Dahlia kept her composure even as her cheek burned. Calmly, she told her mother, “Mom, can you believe me this once? Give Dustin a chance to prove his innocence; I’m begging you.”

“You-!” Florence was frustrated at Dahlia’s behavior and was about to strike her again, but ultimately, she was unable to bring herself to do it. She knew her daughter’s personality well. It was hard to change her mind once she had made a decision.

Dustin finally spoke up. “Give me five days. I’ll definitely catch the murderer within five days. Otherwise, you can do whatever you want with me.” His words were resolute.

“Fine, I’ll give you a chance! Let’s see what tricks you can come up with!” Florence suppressed her anger and turned to Dahlia before saying, “As for you, you’re going to regret going against us for that bastard someday!” And with that, Florence left, irritated.

“Rhys, you have five days! I’ll be sending someone to tail you!” After a final threat, Julie and her

mother followed Florence out the door.

“I’m sorry for putting you through that.” Noticing her slightly swollen cheek, Dustin felt a pang of guilt Florence hadn’t held back earlier.

“It’s nothing.” Dahlia shook her head slightly. “Your main priority now is to find the murderer. Otherwise, my mom will never let you off the hook,

“I understand; I’ll take care of it right away.” Dustin nodded and left soon after.

The only reason he was searching for the murderer was to clear his name. However, he was now driven by a personal grudge, and it was poised to be deadly.

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An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 649 -

Chapter 649

Dustin's phone suddenly rang on his way back to the Flame Dragon Dojo. Abigail's voice came through on the other side of the line when he answered.

Her tone was anxious as soon as she spoke. "Sir, things are not good! There's some trouble at home!

"What kind of trouble?" Dustin's forehead creased slightly with worry..

"I'm not sure of the exact situation, but there are a lot of people outside our house and two excavators. It seems like they are going to forcibly demolish our house."

"Forced demolition? That's going overboard!" Dustin's expression darkened. "Try to hold them back, I'll be there immediately."

"It's no use; they're starting-!" While Abigail was speaking, she seemed to notice something and cried out, "You bastards, how dare you lay a hand on my father! I'm not going to let you off!"

"Abigail, don't be rash!" Dustin tried to warn her, but she had already hung up. As they were clearly in danger, Dustin didn't hesitate when he turned the car around and sped toward Central Village in a rush.

20 minutes later, at the entrance of a two-story home in Central Village, Abigail held a baseball bat with both hands, keeping guard at the front. She was sweating profusely and panting; her complexion was pale. It was obvious that she was out of energy. However, at her feet were the bodies of more than ten men. They were the gangsters she had beaten to the ground for trying to demolish her home. Every one of them at least had one broken bone as they laid on the ground, groaning in pain. The rest of the gangsters were stunned and afraid to approach.

"Damn it, why is this kid so fierce? She's a female tiger!" The gangsters grumbled under their breaths. Although they looked menacing, their gaze showed a hint of fear.

They had gotten used to acting haughty and arrogant. Owing to their numbers, everything they did usually went smoothly and effortlessly. They didn't expect to run into a headstrong individual.

today.

A teenage woman between the ages of 17 to 18 had single-handedly knocked down more than ten of their men. They wouldn't have believed that there was such an extraordinary woman living in Central Village had they not seen it

With their own eyes.

At that moment, the window of a Mercedes Benz was rolled down, and a young man wearing sunglasses with hollow cheeks poked his head out. He yelled loudly, "Hey, what are you guys doing just standing there? Take her down immediately!"

"Sir, she's too good. We aren't able to advance." One of the gangsters reported.

The young man in sunglasses berated them loudly. "Do whatever it takes! You can't handle a small child? What am I keeping you, useless idiots, for? Get her!"

"Yes, sir." The gangsters wore bitter expressions, but they could only nod. After exchanging glances, they gritted their teeth and charged forward

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"You guys again?" Abigail took a deep breath and swung her baseball bat, taking them on. Although her moves were uncoordinated, they were powerful and fast, leaving the gangsters overwhelmed and unable to defend themselves.

Ever since Dustin taught her martial arts, she never slacked off. Now, she was comparable to a low-level martial artist, possessing strength and speed greater than ordinary folks. With a weapon in hand, she fought fiercely. The gangsters lying on the floor were a testament to her hard work.

Naturally, her weakness was also apparent. Although she had managed to cultivate internal energy, she lacked experience, not knowing how to control her power. Since she fought this battle purely on instinct, it not only consumed her internal energy greatly but also didn't yield optimal results. Had she gone against a skilled opponent, she would have been at a disadvantage.

Abigail swung her bat again, and with a bang, it bent the steel pipe held by one of the gangsters and struck him hard on the head. The gangster fell unconscious to the ground with a groan. After taking on the last person, Abigail was exhausted. She stumbled, barely able to keep herself upright. Beads of sweat dripped down her forehead, and she gasped heavily. In the end, she could only support herself with the baseball bat to prevent herself from collapsing.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 650 -

Chapter 650

"Good job, you gave them a good beating!"

"These bullies who only pick on the weak deserve to be punished!"

The onlookers, who were all Abigail's neighbors, cheered and applauded when they saw that Abigail had won. They were often bullied by the gangsters and finally felt avenged.

"Abigail, you're too impulsive. You shouldn't have laid a hand on these people!" At that moment, Mr. Robinson limped forward, his face etched with worry.

"Why can't I? They're bullying us. Do you want me to just take this sitting down?" Abigail frowned. She thought her courageous act would earn her father's praise. She didn't expect him to reprimand her instead.

"Abigail, you're too young. You don't understand how evil society is. These men have people backing them. The situation will only worsen since you beat them up." Mr. Robinson had a pained

expression.

“So what if they have someone backing them? Do you think I’m afraid? Not to mention, if I hadn’t acted, would our house still be standing here?” Abigail scoffed.

“Wealth is an external possession. It’s alright if they tear down our house, as long as we are safe. You should always remember that safety comes first!” Mr. Robinson said earnestly.

“Hmph! You’re such a coward that you won’t even retaliate when someone beats you up. Do you know that the weaker you are, the more you’ll be targeted? How long will it take for you to stand up for yourself!” Abigail screamed.

“I…” Mr. Robinson was rendered speechless. As a father, he only wished for his daughter’s safety. It didn’t matter if he was wronged.

“I didn’t expect you to have some skills, little brat. Suddenly, the young man in sunglasses opened the car door and got out. Behind him were two burly bodyguards dressed in suits.

“And who are you?” Abigail gripped her baseball bat once more, her expression wary.

“I’m Chad Miller from the Charging Tiger Gang. You just beat up my men earlier.” The young man, in sunglasses said nonchalantly.

“The Charging Tiger Gang?” The onlookers’ expressions fell with his revelation.

The Charging Tiger Gang was one of the four biggest gangs in Millsburg. They were even stronger than the Flame Dragon Gang. They mainly engaged in illicit activities and recruited vile people. Notorious for their brutal methods, anyone who resisted the Charging Tiger Gang would suffer unimaginable pain. Over time, they became untouchable as their reputation spread far and wide. Just the mention of their gang sent fear through the crowd.

“So what if you’re from the Charging Tiger Gang? I’m not afraid of you!” Abigail raised her bat, her gaze determined.

Chad chuckled. “I admire your bravery, so I have decided to give you a chance.” With a grin, he said, “As long as you agree to be my slave and serve me day and night, I’ll let the both of you go.

How about it?"

"What a load of crap! Get lost, before I make you!" Abigail bellowed.

"You little brat, I'm trying to be kind here. I dislike being rejected. The consequences will be severe if you make me angry." Chad's expression was grim.

"Sir Chad, let's talk this out." Suddenly, Mr. Robinson rushed up to him and smiled apologetically. "My daughter is young and naive. I hope you will be kind enough to let her go for her impudence."

"Old man, who do you think you are? Do you think I'm going to let her go just because you said so? *Chad glanced sideways at him.

"Sir Chad, aren't you here to demolish the house? We'll move immediately and won't take up your

time." Mr. Robinson said as he hunched forward.

"A tit for tat. I want both the house and your daughter. If you don't want to die, then get lost!" Chad was losing his patience.

"Sir Chad-

"I told you to get lost!" Mr. Robinson was about to plead when Chad raised his hand and delivered a resounding slap, knocking Mr. Robinson to the ground.

"Dad" Abigail's face twisted in anger.

"How dare you hit my dad! I'm going to fight you to death!" She gritted her teeth and charged forward furiously. As she got closer, she lifted her baseball bat and aimed it at Chad's head.

"No!" Mr. Robinson exclaimed in alarm.

Just when it seemed like the bat was going to reach Chad, one of the bodyguards extended a hand out and grabbed the bat. With a gentle squeeze, they heard a crisp-sounding crack. The bat, which was as thick as an arm, was crushed instantly, leaving wood chips scattered all over the ground.

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Chapter 651

Abigail was shocked by how easily he had broken the baseball bat. It was thicker than her arm, for goodness sake! And that person had just snapped it in half like it was nothing? This man must be ridiculously strong!

“Is that all you’ve got? How dare you attack my boss when you’re so weak?” One of the bodyguards sneered disdainfully and sent a kick straight to Abigail’s abdomen.

Abigail was sent flying into the air and landed heavily on her back, almost 10 feet away. Blood trickled down from the corners of her lips, and for a moment, she could not even get up. She was all out of internal energy, and her body was exerted beyond its limits. She had no strength left to fight back. But her gaze was still firm; it was obvious she wasn’t ready to admit defeat.

“Oi, b*tch! Don’t you ever, for a single second, think that you can pull this kind of shit with me just because you practice some martial arts! I am from the Charging Tiger gang, and we have countless experts among us. Defeating a small fry like you is a piece of cake for us!” Chad straightened out his suit, walked up to her, and looked down at her condescendingly. “You have only one option now, and that is to obey me. If you do not, I’ll make sure that you regret your decision.”

“Cut the nonsense! Just kill me already!” Abigail forced her words through gritted teeth, ready to embrace death.

“Kill you? Hahaha! You’re not getting out of this so easily!” Chad smirked. “Since you’re not doing as you’re told, I think it’s time I teach you a little lesson. Boys, tear her house down!”

“Yes, sir!” Upon his command, the two excavators that were stopped right in front of the house were immediately ignited. Then, accompanied by the roar of the machinery, they crashed straight through the courtyard fence, over the vegetable patch, and went straight for the house.

“Stop it! Stop this right now!” Abigail was livid. She struggled to get on her feet, but Chad kicked

her to the ground again.

Loud crashing noises could be heard as the excavators tore through the walls and broke

everything down. In no time, the house was tattered and unsteady; it was reduced to piles of

rubble, and fine dust rained down.

“Stop it!” Abigail screamed with all her might as tears streamed down her face. There was nothing

she could do but watch helplessly as her house was torn down. Her heart ached so badly, as though it was cut into pieces. At that moment, it finally dawned on her how essential a person’s

abilities were. Had she been stronger, this would never have happened.

The onlookers sighed as they watched from afar. None of them dared to step up and defend the Robinsons, as the perpetrator was from the Charging Tiger gang. One would have to be a fool to

cross them.

Suddenly, an ear-splitting boom was heard, and the house collapsed instantly. Abigail was heartbroken. She could not accept that the place she had called home for so many years and held so many beautiful memories was now in ruins.

“Well? Have you changed your mind yet?” A malicious grin spread out on Chad’s face. “Destroying

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the house was just the start. If you continue to refuse, then your father is next.” With that, he signaled his bodyguards, and they immediately understood what he meant. Without another word, they grabbed hold of Mr. Robinson and pinned him down on the ground. One of them stepped on his head while the other held a machete in his hand, giving him a contemplative look as if he was thinking about where he should start.

“Let go of him!” Gripped by fear, Abigail threw a punch at Chad, but he easily deflected it.

“Abigail, go! Don’t worry about me! Run!” Mr. Robinson shouted.

“My! What a touching scene!” Chad chuckled mirthlessly. “Unfortunately for you, I despise sappy scenes. Boys, chop that old geezer’s hand off!”

“Yes, sir!” The bodyguard, who had a machete with him, answered before swiftly raising the machete above his head.

“No!” Abigail shrieked in despair.

Just as the machete was brought down, a person appeared out of nowhere and grabbed it by the blade. Surprised by the resistance, the bodyguard looked up and found an impassive yet handsome face staring back at him. The person’s face was devoid of any emotion whatsoever. The bodyguard had a gut feeling that the person before him was not an average person but a lurking beast ready to pounce at any moment. The bodyguard felt an unknown terror rise within him.

“It’s you, sir?” Once the initial shock wore off, a wave of relief washed over Abigail, and she could no longer hold back the tears. Her savior had finally arrived.

“Tearing down houses against the owners’ will and assaulting them in public. Where did you get the audacity to do such things?” Dustin asked with an icy glint in his eyes.

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Chapter 652

“Hey, punk! Where did you come from? How dare you meddle with my business!” Chad glared at him. He had yet to come across someone who did not tremble at the name of the Charging Tiger gang, but here was this insolent bastard who stood up for others and went against him. Did he have a death wish?

“You will pay back 10 times what the house is worth for demolishing it against their will. And whoever struck them, chop your hand yourself. If you do what I say, I’ll consider letting you go,” Dustin said nonchalantly.

“Let us go?” Chad cackled and looked at Dustin like he was an idiot. “Hey buddy, do you even know what you’re saying? Go, take a look in the mirror, man! You’re not a hero, and you damn sure ain’t going to be saving the damsel in distress today!”

“Where did this impulsive lad come from? Where did he get the courage to interfere with the Charging Tiger gang? Does he have no fear?”

“I applaud him for his bravery, but he must not be too bright to be doing something like that!”

“The Charging Tiger gang is renowned for being mercilessly brutal. This young man is getting himself into some unnecessary trouble!”

The onlookers whispered among themselves when they heard what Dustin said.

“I’ll count to three. If you do not do as I say, I’ll have to take action myself. And if I do, it won’t be as simple as chopping your hands off anymore,” Dustin warned.

“Well, aren’t you a cocky one?” Chad’s fury was ignited by Dustin’s words. “Bobby! Donny! Get him!”

“Yes, sir!” The two bodyguards exchanged looks and simultaneously threw a punch at Dustin’s face, one on the left and one on the right. The moment Dustin showed up, they felt a very imposing aura from him, so neither of them held back when they threw their punches. They gave it all they had, intending to take him out with a single move.

“You underestimate me.” Dustin scoffed and reached out with both hands, accurately grabbed both the bodyguards’ wrists, and then twisted them forcefully. With two loud cracks, their arms were broken then and there. Their arms were badly deformed, and the broken bones pierced through flesh and skin, it was a gruesome sight for all..

“Ahhh!” Both men let out agonizing screams with tortured expressions on their faces. But before they could even move, Dustin continued with his assault. He threw a punch with both hands, each one aimed at the two men’s chests. With two dull thuds, their sternums collapsed, and indentations the size of a fist could be seen on their chests.

At the same time, the two burly men were sent flying several feet away and crashed heavily into piles of rubble-like bags of sand. They both coughed out blood and laid unconscious. Although they did not die on the spot, they had little time left to live.

Chad was shocked by what he saw. His bodyguards were considered elites in the Charging Tiger gang, and they could take out at least 100 regular people on their own. No matter what trouble he got himself into, they had been able to handle their opponents with a breeze. It was beyond him how they could be defeated by just a punch. And they were even so badly hurt that they were on the verge of death. Who on earth was this punk?

“It’s your turn now.” Dustin turned to glare at Chad. So, are you doing it yourself, or shall I do it for you?”

“Y-you! Stay away!” Chad had a bad premonition about the turn of events. “I’m warning you; my father is the leader of the Charging Tiger gang! If you so much as lay a single finger on me, my father will never let you go!” 1

“The son of the leader of the Charging Tiger gang!” A commotion broke out among the onlookers. They had thought that Chad was just an ordinary member of the Charging Tiger gang, but now that they learned that he was not just any other member but the son of the leader of the gang, it

made him seem even more formidable than he already was.

“I don’t care who you are. You either pay up and chop off your arm, or you’ll end up just like them,”

Dunstin said without a hint of emotion.

“Are you f*cking deaf? I said, my father is the leader of “Chad was cut off mid-sentence as Dustin appeared right in front of him and grabbed him by the throat, lifting him off his feet. With his airway blocked, Chad could not breathe and kicked around wildly as he struggled to free

himself.

Fear bubbled from within him and overwhelmed him as he looked into Dustin's cold, uncaring

eyes. At that moment, it finally registered to him that the person before him was an absolute madman who did not give a shit about who he was, If he wasn't careful, this would be the day he bid the world goodbye.

"Wait, Mr. Rhys!" Right then, Mr. Robinson clambered up from the ground and reasoned with Dustin. "Mr. Rhys, we cannot afford to anger this person. Please put him down quickly, will you? The repercussions will be severe if you do not."

"I shall bear every consequence of my actions," Dustin assured.

"Mr. Rhys, I know that you're powerful, so you're not afraid of the Charging Tiger gang, but that isn't how things are for us. We're just ordinary civilians. We cannot afford to offend people like them. If you hurt him, we will also be dragged into the mess." Mr. Robinson looked at Dustin with

despair.

"Will you let him go just like that after all these terrible things he has done to you?" Dustin frowned.

"Mr. Rhys, peasants like us have no choice. All we ask for is a life of peace. Though we've indeed lost our house, we can still build another. As long as we're unharmed, then it isn't a big deal. Please, Mr. Rhys, I beg of you, release him." As Mr. Robinson spoke, he suddenly fell to his knees and began begging Dustin to let go of Chad.

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Chapter 653

"Why are you getting on your knees, Mr. Robinson?" Dustin was surprised by the sudden turn of events and quickly reached out to help him up. Though Mr. Robinson was just a regular civilian, Dustin had always viewed him as an elder who deserved respect.

“Mr. Rhys, I know that you’re trying to defend us, but while you may be able to protect us this time, you won’t be here to protect us forever. Mr. Robinson continued, “Using violence against violence will never solve the problem. Why don’t we all take a step back? I don’t mind suffering a little unfairness in life as long as we can continue on with our lives.”

Dustin was rendered speechless when he heard what Mr. Robinson said. When he put himself in Mr. Robinson’s shoes, he had to admit that what Mr. Robinson said made a lot of sense. Dustin might be able to help them out this once, but he wouldn’t be able to be there to help them out all the time.

Peasants had their way of life. Since they could not afford to offend anyone, they had to keep a low profile and watch every step that they took in order not to bring trouble upon themselves. Even if they suffered from any injustice, they would choose to ignore it and pretend that nothing had ever happened. Of course, it must feel terrible to live like that, but it was the only way of life that they knew

“Release him, Mr. Rhys,” Mr. Robinson begged once again. Dustin took a deep breath as he contemplated his decision. In the end, he chose to let Chad go. If even Mr. Robinson, who was the victim of this, did not wish to pursue the matter any further, then what was the point of him insisting on making Chad pay for his actions?

“Thank you for your understanding. Mr. Rhys.” Mr. Robinson nodded at him as a sign of appreciation. Then, he went up to Chad and smiled apologetically. “My apologies, Mr. Miller. That

was all a misunderstanding Are you alright?”

“Hah! And here I was, thinking that you were something else. In the end, it turns out that you’re just a loser pretending to be all that!” Chad laughed arrogantly when Dustin finally let go of him. He was under the impression that Dustin only released him because he was intimidated by his power and status. After all, everyone in the entire neighborhood feared the name of the Charging Tiger gang.

“This is all my fault, Mr. Miller. I’m the one to blame Please do not be angry.” Mr. Robinson apologized humbly as he brushed the dust off Chad’s clothes.

“You know what’s good for you, old man.” Chad smiled meanly with a condescending pat on Mr. Robinson’s face as if he were some pet of his. Abigail was infuriated by this action of his. Even

Dustin could not help but frown.

“Thank you, Mr. Miller!” Mr. Robinson forced a smile.

“Why are you so quiet now, you asshole? Weren’t you acting all high and mighty just a while ago? I say you’re a gutsy one for daring to play rough with me!” Chad shot daggers at Dustin.

“I’m only letting you go for Mr. Robinson’s sake. You better know your place and don’t cross the line, or you’ll regret it.” Dustin warned coldly.

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the verge of death. Who on earth was this punk?

“It’s your turn now.” Dustin turned to glare at Chad. So, are you doing it yourself, or shall I do it for you?”

“Y-you! Stay away!” Chad had a bad premonition about the turn of events. “I’m warning you; my father is the leader of the Charging Tiger gang! If you so much as lay a single finger on me, my father will never let you go!” 1

“The son of the leader of the Charging Tiger gang!” A commotion broke out among the onlookers. They had thought that Chad was just an ordinary member of the Charging Tiger gang, but now that they learned that he was not just any other member but the son of the leader of the gang, it made him seem even more formidable than he already was.

“I don’t care who you are. You either pay up and chop off your arm, or you’ll end up just like them,” Dustin said without a hint of emotion.

“Are you f*cking deaf? I said, my father is the leader of-” Chad was cut off mid-sentence as Dustin appeared right in front of him and grabbed him by the throat, lifting him off his feet. With his airway blocked, Chad could not breathe and kicked around wildly as he struggled to free himself.

Fear bubbled from within him and overwhelmed him as he looked into Dustin’s cold, uncaring eyes. At that moment, it finally registered to him that the person

before him was an absolute madman who did not give a shit about who he was. If he wasn't careful, this would be the day he bid the world goodbye.

"Wait, Mr. Rhys!" Right then, Mr. Robinson clambered up from the ground and reasoned with Dustin. "Mr. Rhys, we cannot afford to anger this person. Please put him down quickly, will you? The repercussions will be severe if you do not."

"I shall bear every consequence of my actions," Dustin assured.

"Mr. Rhys, I know that you're powerful, so you're not afraid of the Charging Tiger gang, but that isn't how things are for us. We're just ordinary civilians. We cannot afford to offend people like them. If you hurt him, we will also be dragged into the mess." Mr. Robinson looked at Dustin with despair.

"Will you let him go just like that after all these terrible things he has done to you?" Dustin

frowned.

"Mr. Rhys, peasants like us have no choice. All we ask for is a life of peace. Though we've indeed lost our house, we can still build another. As long as we're unharmed, then it isn't a big deal. Please, Mr. Rhys, I beg of you, release him." As Mr. Robinson spoke, he suddenly fell to his knees and began begging Dustin to let go of Chad.

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Chapter 654

Caught off guard, Chad stood frozen in place before he could react. When the pain finally hit him, he reached up to touch his head, only to find his hand covered in blood. There was a huge wound on his head!

"You-How dare you hit me?" Chad stared at Abigail in shock and anger. "You are done for! All of you are! I'll-" A hard slap from Dustin shut him up and sent him sprawling to the ground. For a moment, Chad saw stars and bled from both his nose and mouth. Even two of his teeth were knocked out of his mouth.

“100 slaps, was it? Fine. We can do that.” Dustin grabbed a fistful of Chad’s hair and lifted him off his feet. Then, a torrent of slaps rained down on Chad’s face continuously. Following a series of sharp slapping sounds, Chad’s face became red and swollen, and he was on the brink of losing consciousness.

Shocked by Dustin’s violent assault, the onlookers gaped in terror. The person who was being beaten up was the son of the leader of the Charging Tiger gang! A person whose powers were unimaginable and who had connections in both the legal system and the underworld. People like them always had their way and have never been publicly shamed like this! How did this young man dare to do something so audacious?

“My word! This brat is gutsy! He even has the guts to beat up the son of the leader of the Charging Tiger gang!”

“I say he’s just impulsive! I don’t think he understands how much trouble he’s gotten himself into!”

“He might have just suffered a good beating for what he’s said, but now that he’s pulled something

like this, his life might be on the line!”

The crowd commented on Dustin’s reckless behavior.

“He deserves that!” After everything that Chad put them through, Abigail found Dustin’s actions very satisfying. Chad had led his men to tear down their house and bullied them as he wished. His actions were horrible, to say the least. And a beast like him deserved every bit of Dustin’s beating.

“Oh no... oh no! He’s done it now. He’s offended the Charging Tiger gang. What do we do now?” Mr. Robinson’s expression was both woeful and flustered. He had tried his best to mediate between them, but still, he did not manage to calm both parties down, which ended up with the situation escalating.

After several tens of slaps later, Dustin suddenly felt the weight in his grip disappear. Chad’s hair could no longer sustain his weight and finally gave way, which resulted in a patch of his hair being ripped off his scalp. With a bald spot on the top of his head, Chad slumped to the ground, his face so swollen that it was no longer recognizable.

I'm not done with you yet." Dustin reached out for Chad's collar, ready to make good on their deal of 100 slaps. But before he could continue, more than 10 white vans pulled up by the curb. The doors opened, and over 100 henchmen with machetes rushed out of the vans. They were all dressed in black, with a huge image of a tiger's head embroidered in the middle. They looked mighty and domineering.

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"It's the Charging Tiger gang! These are people from the Charging Tiger gang!" The crowd quickly dispersed, or else they would be dragged into the mess as well.

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Chapter 655

"Who would have guessed that the Charging Tiger gang would get here so fast? The young man's in deep trouble now!"

"Well, he deserves it. I mean, why did he have to go and offend the son of their leader?"

"Exactly. We, common folks, have our way of life. If he didn't have the power, then he should have laid low. See, now even his life is in danger." The crowd looked at Dustin as if he were already a dead man

The Charging Tiger gang had always been known for their arrogance and vengefulness. Anyone who offended them met a tragic fate—they'd either go bankrupt, or their family would suffer great tragedy. There has never been an instance like today, where the son of their leader had been beaten up, and so brutally, at that. Even when an ordinary gang member experienced injustice, the gang would go all out to demand a payback. So, now that it happened to their leader's son, it was inevitable that Dustin and the Robinsons' would bear the full wrath of the Charging Tiger gang. "Oh no, darn it! Now we're all done for!" Edmund felt weak in the knees when he saw the fierce appearance of the members of the Charging Tiger gang, and his face paled.

"There are so many of them?" Abigail frowned, worry written all over her face. She could not help the trepidation that crept up on her. She knew Dustin was

a skilled fighter, but the Charging Tiger gang had the numbers. She counted at least 100 henchmen, each armed with a machete. No matter how skilled Dustin was, he was severely outnumbered.

Right then, Chad, with his terribly swollen and bruised face, seemed to be aware that something was going on, so he tried his best to open his eyes. Managing only to open his eyes into the narrowest of slits, he saw the situation around him and laughed maniacally. "Hahaha! My men from the Charging Tiger gang are here! You, all of you, will die here today!"

"Run, Sir! I'll hold them back!" Abigail saw the Charging Tiger gang close in on them, and she rushed to stand in front of Dustin, raising the broken bat above her head with a determined look. She had been the one who called Dustin, so now that there was trouble, she had to be the one to bear full responsibility. 1

"Take care of yourself, kid! These shrimps can't hurt me," Dustin said calmly, showing no sign of fear.

"But, Sir, there are so many of them! How can you fend them off alone? I don't want you to get into trouble! Quick, go now!" Abigail urged Dustin anxiously.

As they spoke, the gang members had already surrounded them. Even if they wished to leave now, -they no longer had a way out.

"Hah! Weren't you boasting earlier? Scared now? It's too late!" With a grotesque expression, Chad hissed, "I'm telling you, this is just the beginning! I will make sure that you pay ten times, no, a hundred times worse for what you did to me! I'll make your life a living hell!"

"You're too noisy." Dustin scoffed before giving Chad a kick that sent him flying several feet away.

"Chad!" The Charging Tiger gang members were astonished and quickly rushed over to help him up. The moment Chad got back on his feet, he spat out a mouthful of blood and nearly fell to the

ground once again. The burning desire for revenge kept him going, despite the excruciating pain he was experiencing. His deathly glare was fixed on Dustin, as if he wanted to swallow him whole.

"Who dares hit my son?" A loud, authoritative sound boomed.

The horde of Charging Tiger members who had formed a barrier around Dustin and the Robinsons parted. Soon after, a burly and menacing figure clad in a fur coat strode in with an air of arrogance and confidence. This was none other than the leader of the Charging Tiger gang, Felix Miller!

“No way! The leader of the Charging Tiger gang himself showed up? Things are about to get real ugly!”

“Felix Miller is infamous for his ruthlessness! Anybody who crosses him would much rather face death than endure his torment.”

“If I were the young man, I’d end myself right now to avoid Felix Miller’s cruel torture!”

A commotion broke out among the crowd once more due to Felix Miller’s presence.

For the leader of the gang himself to show up with such a huge entourage, it was obvious that the Charging Tiger gang intended to assert their dominance.

“You’re finally here, Dad! If you were any later, this bastard would’ve finished me off!”

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Chapter 656

When Chad saw his father, he immediately ran over to him, stumbling as he went. He looked like a real mess; his face was swollen and bruised, and blood trickled down his mouth.

“How did you end up like this?” Felix frowned, his expression darkening. As a leader of one of the four largest gangs in Millsburg, he was considered an underground overlord. His son had always been the bully, never the other way around. Now that his son has been messed with, it went without saying that he was fuming.

“I didn’t have a choice, Dad! I ran into the greatest idiot today who had zero respect for the Charging Tiger gang! He attacked me out of the blue! Look what he did to me! Look at my face! You have to get revenge for me!” Chad wailed miserably as he ratted on Dustin.

“Who’s the insolent bastard who dared to underestimate the power of the Charging Tiger gang?” Felix snarled.

“It’s him!” Chad pointed his finger at Dustin and said, “He slapped me over and over! My head is still buzzing from the pain!”

“You scumbag! How dare you hit my son? I’ll-” When Felix followed Chad’s pointed finger, he suddenly froze and cut himself off in the middle of his threats. “It’s him?” At the sight of Dustin, all his hair stood on ends, and he felt his skin crawl. A chilly sensation ran from the top of his head to the bottom of his feet.

He had been at the Doyles’ yesterday to watch the dueling competition. The memory of Dustin defeating Terry Doyle with his unbelievable powers was still fresh in his mind. It was shocking!

Terry Doyle was a legendary figure, ranking thirteenth among the Heavenly Immortals. He was widely acknowledged as a martial arts genius and was one of the candidates for the next master of the Balerno martial arts. Any mention of his name evoked admiration from others. But this great and legendary figure ultimately met defeat at the hands of Dustin Rhys, so it was easy for Felix to imagine just how formidable the person before him was!

It took a powerful person to know one, and in his position, Felix knew all too well how fearsome a powerful martial artist was. To say that Dustin could single-handedly wipe out the entire Charging Tiger gang was no exaggeration.

“How did I manage to get into trouble with someone so terrifying?” Felix gulped, breaking out in cold sweat. He was truly intimidated by Dustin’s presence.

“You bastard! Now that my Dad’s here, you’re dead meat! No God can save you now!” Chad, still oblivious to Dustin’s status, shouted at him.

“Shut up! Not another word from you!” Gripped with fear, Felix signaled to Chad with his eyes to shut him up. He dreaded even thinking about what would happen to them if this man before him took offense at Chad’s taunts. Harry Hall, the former leader of the Flame Dragon gang, was the perfect example.

“Go ahead, Dad! Use all your most brutal tactics on him! Let this bastard know what it means to be in a living hell!” Chad laughed hysterically.

Dustin frowned at Chad’s words. This minor gesture alone scared Felix so much that he felt his

knees buckle. Truth be told, he was just short of peeing his pants.

“Dad, why are you still standing there? Get this brat and show him what you got!” Chad continued.

“To hell with your nonsense, Chad! Shut up!” Felix couldn’t take it anymore and struck his son across the face so forcefully that Chad spun twice before collapsing to the ground like a sack of

potatoes.

“D-Dad... why did you hit me?” Chad cupped his swollen cheeks in his hand, unable to wrap his head around what had happened.

But Felix didn’t even spare him a glance as he fearfully approached Dustin. Amidst everyone’s shocked and astonished gaze, he fell to his knees and prostrated in front of Dustin. “I bow before you in reverence, Mr. Rhys! Felix Miller, leader of the Charging Tiger gang at your service, sir!”

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 657 -

Chapter 657

“I bow before you in reverence, Mr. Rhys! Felix Miller, leader of the Charging Tiger gang at your service, sir!” As the crowd watched, Felix fell to his knees and prostrated before Dustin.

A hushed silence fell over the crowd. Chad was dumbfounded, as were Edmund, Abigail, and the onlookers. Even the members of the Charging Tiger gang were dumbfounded. Dustin found himself gaping at the sight before him.

No one had ever imagined that Felix Miller, the fearsome leader of the mighty Charging Tiger gang, known for being merciless, would publicly prostrate before Dustin. It was as though he had met someone whom he greatly admired and feared. It was quite unsettling and unthinkable.

“Wha-Is this for real?” Abigail stared wide-eyed.

“What on earth is going on?” The onlookers looked at each other in bewilderment and disbelief.

“Am I seeing things? The leader is prostrating before the little bastard?” Members of the Charging Tiger gang couldn’t believe their eyes. Their leader held such prestigious status that even among the prominent Fabulous Five, he walked with his head held high. Why then would he tremble and shake at the sight of the young troublemaker, so much so that he could not even stand on his feet?

“No... no way!” Chad shook his head violently, his entire worldview shaken to its core. In his eyes, his father was an upright and heroic figure, always remaining stoic and composed even in the face of adversaries. So how could such a great person assume such a lowly stance before another?

“What are you playing at?” Dustin wondered aloud as he stared at Felix. He was certain that he didn’t know this man. It was truly mind-boggling to have someone get down on their knees on the first meeting.

“I sincerely apologize for our behavior, Mr. Rhys. I hope you can find it in you to forgive us this once if we have offended you.” Felix smiled apologetically, fear evident in his eyes.

“Do I know you?” Dustin asked.

“You don’t know me, but I’ve had the honor of watching you fight. You were incredible at the Doyles’ yesterday. Truly impressive!” Felix praised him.

Dustin had indeed made a reputation for himself across Millsburg after the duel yesterday, and the Flame Dragon gang had risen in the ranks to become the most powerful gang in Millsburg overnight. 1

“Oh, so you were there too.” Dustin nodded with understanding. He finally understood what was going on. The reason Felix feared him so much that he was brought to his knees was that he was intimidated by Dustin’s powers. But that worked well for Dustin, too, because then, there wouldn’t need to be a massacre.

“Dad! What are you doing? You are the formidable leader of the mighty Charging Tiger gang! Why are you on your knees at this bastard’s feet?” When Chad finally came to his senses, he immediately ran up to Felix and demanded an explanation.

“Shut up!” Felix’s expression darkened as he jumped to his feet and gave Chad two slaps across the face. “You insolent child! Apologize to Mr. Rhys right now, or I’ll skin you alive!”

“Me? Apologize to him? Why should I?” Chad held his face in his hand, looking both unwilling and aggrieved.

“Why should you? Because he’s the leader of the Flame Dragon gang, that’s why! And because he’s defeated Terry Doyle! Is that reason enough for you?” Felix roared.

“What? He’s the leader of the Flame Dragon gang?” Chad stood frozen in place upon hearing that. His previous defiance was replaced by complete awe. Though he had never met Dustin in person, he had certainly heard of him.

Dustin had shown up at the dueling competition as the leader of the Flame Dragon gang at the Doyles’ yesterday, intimidating everyone with his presence. Even the elderly master of the martial world personally went up to him to greet him. His talent and strength had marked him out as a person who would undoubtedly emerge as the champion, earning the awe and admiration of countless people.

No wonder his father feared him. So this was the impressive figure who nearly turned the Doyle family upside down! With a thud, Chad's knees buckled, and he, too, fell to his knees under the astonished gaze of the onlookers.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 658 -

Chapter 658

For a moment, a commotion spread through the crowd. Felix Miller had just prostrated before Dustin, and now Chad Miller followed suit. What was going on? Was this what they called "like father, like son"? Though they didn't exactly know what had happened, anyone could tell that the Charging Tiger gang was in trouble. They were sure the handsome young man possessed considerable influence.

"I was wrong, Mr. Rhys. It's all my fault. I failed to recognize you, and I underestimated you. Please don't take my wrongdoings to heart. I hope you can find it in you to forgive me," Chad apologized as he slapped himself repeatedly. With each slap, a loud, clear smacking sound echoed, showing just how hard he was slapping himself. In no time, he quickly made up for the remaining 20 to 30 slaps that Dustin had left out.

"Please get things right. The person you should be apologizing to isn't me," Dustin said impassively.

Chad seemed caught off guard initially, but he quickly caught on and went over to Edmund and Abigail. Then, he kneeled and said, "I am truly sorry. This is all my fault. I beg for your forgiveness. I will compensate you ten times for all your losses!"

"Hah! Who wants your filthy money?" Abigail turned away huffily, not wanting to bother herself with the likes of him.

"What are you doing, Mr. Miller? Please don't kneel to us!" Edmund was so frightened that he quickly reached out his hand, signaling for Chad to stand up.

"If you don't forgive me, I will keep kneeling until you do." Chad seemed bent on receiving their forgiveness.

"Alright, alright, we forgive you. You're forgiven. Please, do kneel any longer!" Edmund nodded, furiously, obviously overwhelmed by Chad's behavior. Chad

then turned around to glance at Dustin. Only when he saw that Dustin gave him no reaction did he slowly straighten up.

“Mr. Rhys, your magnanimity is truly admirable. You are a role model for people like us!” Felix quickly complemented him when he saw that the critical situation had been averted.

“Pay up first,” Dustin piped up.

“Yes, yes. Right away.” Without a moment’s hesitation, Felix immediately wrote a check for twenty million dollars check and handed it to Edmund.

“It’s... it’s too much!” Edmund dared not take the money.

“What do you mean it’s too much? He owes it to us!” Abigail didn’t waste any time and snatched the check from his hands, stashing it safely away in her pocket.

“Mr. Rhys, I’ve paid them.” Felix conjured up the brightest smile he could manage.

“Now that you’ve paid them, let’s talk business,” Dustin continued. “From what I’ve heard, the Charging Tiger gang is pretty powerful and possesses great influence in the city’s northern region.

“I wouldn’t say we’ve got great influence. We’re just doing okay, I guess. Of course, we’re nothing

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compared to you, Mr. Rhys.” Felix smiled humbly.

“Don’t give me that. I know your background pretty well,” Dustin said. “Truth be told, the Flame Dragon gang is looking to expand, so we’re recruiting talented individuals to join us. Would you be interested in joining?”

“Join the Flame Dragon gang?” Felix was taken aback, and it took him quite a while to react. He was the leader of the Charging Tiger gang, so how could he possibly join the Flame Dragon gang? “If you join us, I’ll make you the vice leader. You’ll be on par with Nelson Horst.”

“And what about my Charging Tiger gang?” An uneasy feeling washed over Felix.

“Easy, it’ll be absorbed into the Flame Dragon gang. Dustin dropped a bomb.

“What?” Felix was shocked. He thought Dustin had just mentioned it as a passing comment. Who would have thought that he meant what he said and had actually intended to absorb the entire Charging Tiger gang? Wasn’t that too much?

“What’s the matter? You don’t want to?” Dustin raised an eyebrow.

“Well...” Felix stuttered.

Everyone knew that it was always better to hold an important position in a relatively smaller setting rather than getting a less influential role in a larger, more prominent setting. As the current leader of the Charging Tiger gang, he had absolute control over every one of his members. It was a no-brainer that he wouldn’t want to be demoted to vice leader of the Flame Dragon gang. “If you don’t want to, I won’t force you

When Felix heard that, he heaved a sigh of relief. But Dustin’s next words hit him like a bolt of lightning

“I’ve always been someone who wins others over with my capabilities. I won’t force myself on anyone. This’s why the previous leader of the Flame Dragon gang, Harry Hall, chose to step back. So, what do you think? Do you think he made the right move?” Dustin smiled.

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Chapter 659

Felix was frozen with fear when he saw the devilish smile on Dustin’s face. Cold sweat broke out all over him. While others might not know how Harry Hall, the previous leader of the Flame Dragon gang, had died, Felix knew very well why. It was precisely this person standing before him who had killed Harry off to take his place. His talk about winning people over with his capabilities? If anything, that was a blatant threat! If Felix didn’t comply, he might very well end up just like Harry Hall!

“Alright, you may leave now. Till we meet again!” Dustin smiled meaningfully, sending panic through Felix. He knew that he was every part a mortal, just as Harry Hall was. If he really turned Dustin down, he might not live to see the next sunrise.

“Mr. Rhys, it would be my honor to join the Flame Dragon gang. If you would have us, I, Felix Miller, will gladly lead all my members in the Charging Tiger gang to devote ourselves to the Flame Dragon gang!” Felix declared, putting on a righteous front.

“Please don’t feel pressured, Mr. Miller. I don’t like to coerce others.” Dustin shook his head.

“This is no coercion! I’ve long heard of your great reputation, Mr. Rhys, and I greatly admire you. Now that I’ve had the honor of meeting you, I’m completely won over by your character. Please bestow upon me the honor, sir!” Felix cried out passionately.

“Are you sure you wish to join the Flame Dragon gang?” Dustin asked again.

“Of course I’m sure! I believe that under your leadership, Mr. Rhys, the Flame Dragon gang will surpass all others and become the most powerful gang!” Felix praised excessively.

“Very well, from now on, you’ll be the vice leader of the Flame Dragon gang. You’ll still have control over the members who were previously part of the Charging Tiger gang, and all your turf will remain yours,” Dustin announced.

“Thank you for allowing me this honor, Mr. Rhys!” Felix exclaimed with elation. His biggest concern was losing his authority when he joined the Flame Dragon gang. But since that hadn’t changed, and only his title was different, he seemed to have suffered no loss at all.

Before this encounter, Felix had a certain aversion toward Dustin, but now, all he felt was admiration. Dustin was powerful and knew how to make things work in his favor. He was also courageous, and most importantly, Felix saw immense potential in him. It was not a bad idea to serve someone like that.

“Alright, you go ahead and go to the Flame Dragon gang and meet up with Nelson Horst.” Dustin dismissed him with a wave.

“Yes, sir!” Felix answered and quickly left with his men.

As he watched them leave, Dustin fell into deep thought. He knew Felix would have objections, but he had his ways of pursuing him to join willingly. His target wasn't just the Charging Tiger gang but also the other two major gangs. Simply put, he wanted to merge the four major gangs in order to form new rules and create an orderly system.

Currently, the four major gangs had their own interests at heart and would often get into gang fights with each other. In the eyes of truly powerful people, they seemed trivial and

inconsequential, as they had no sense of cooperation. However, once they were merged, they would become an unbelievably formidable power, even surpassing that of the Fabulous Five! Gaining control over the four major gangs would make him the King of the Underworld in Millsburg!

Just then, the sound of a car honking filled the air. Dustin turned around to see a silver Bentley slowly pulling over by the side of the road. As the door opened, an exquisite lady with a perfect figure stepped out of the car and slowly approached them. 1

It was Natasha! She was dressed in a burgundy-red overcoat, a black turtleneck top, and a pair of Hermès boots. She looked stylish and elegant, exuding an air of nobility.

"Why are you here, Natasha?" Dustin's eyes lit up. Despite being familiar with her, he couldn't help but be in awe of her beauty every time he saw her. 1

"I heard Mr. Robinson ran into some trouble, so I came to check on things. Didn't expect to find you here already!" Natasha smiled.

"Ms. Natasha."

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Chapter 660

Edmund quickly greeted Natasha.

"Ms. Natasha," Abigail greeted her too.

Back when her father used to work for the Harmons, Abigail had her fair share of interactions with Natasha. She found her to be a thoughtful, caring, and

gentle person who would occasionally give her gifts. It wasn't until Natasha went to Swinton to further her career that the two rarely met anymore.

"Abigail, I haven't seen you in two years! You've grown up into such a beautiful young lady!" Natasha praised with a light-hearted chuckle.

"You're the beautiful one, Ms. Natasha. There are countless ladies in Millsburg who envy your beauty." Abigail looked at her with admiration. Few could match Natasha's beauty and elegance in the whole of Balerno, much less Millsburg.

"How sweet." Natasha tapped Abigail's nose adoringly before looking back at the ruins behind them. "It seems like your house has been completely torn down. Why don't you go back with me to the Harmon estate and stay there for a few days? It'd be a good opportunity for us to catch up too."

"It wouldn't be right to trouble you like that, Ms. Natasha. We'll just find somewhere else to stay for a few days," Edmund declined.

"It's almost New Year's; where will you find a place to stay at a time like this? Besides, we have plenty of empty rooms at the Harmon estate, and you're familiar with the place too. What harm will it do to stay there for a couple of days?" Natasha didn't see any trouble with that at all.

"Well..." Edmund found himself in quite a dilemma!

"Ms. Natasha's right. If you're not going, I'll go myself!" Abigail huffed.

"Don't hesitate, Mr. Robinson. Come on, get in the car. There are so many of us waiting," Natasha urged.

"In that case, I'll have to trouble you then, Ms. Natasha." Edmund looked around, and in the end, he nodded. It wouldn't be right to decline such a generous offer. If he refused any longer, it would come off as impolite.

After getting into the car, the four of them quickly left the village. Half an hour later, they arrived at the Harmon estate. Edmund and Abigail couldn't help but sigh when they saw the familiar sights through the car window. Having worked for the Harmons for so many years, the estate was akin to their second home.

After taking Edmund and Abigail to their lodgings, Natasha led Dustin to Hector's study room, and they stood outside the door.

"Why have you brought me here, Natasha?" Dustin couldn't help but wonder.

"There's something my dad would like to discuss with you."

"What is it?"

"I'm not sure. Maybe it's something to do with our marriage." Natasha smiled coyly.

"Don't spout nonsense." Dustin shot her a glare. Nothing was official between them yet, so how could they be talking about marriage? It definitely wasn't going to be so soon!

"What? Do you not wish to marry me? Or is it because you still have feelings for Dahlia Nicholson?" Natasha asked, subtly probing.

Dustin cleared his throat awkwardly. "If Mr. Harmon wants to meet me, I'm sure he has something important to discuss. We'd better go in now." Seeing that the conversation was veering into dangerous waters, Dustin swiftly pushed the door open and went in.

"Hah! Just wait till I get the chance to stake my claim on you! I'd like to see how you'll deny my hand in marriage then!" Natasha thought to herself as she bit her lip. She followed him in soon after.

Inside the study, Hector was quietly reading a book, and the room was still brightly lit. It was obvious he hadn't slept the entire night. "Oh, you're here? Have a seat." Hector put down his book and poured them each a cup of tea when he saw them enter.

"Mr. Harmon, is something the matter? Why did you call me here?" Dustin asked tentatively.

"I heard from Natasha that you gave her a call yesterday, telling her to watch out for the Dark Lord. What was that about?" Hector cut straight to the point.

"It was Azalea. She gave me information that the Dark Lord is now in Millsburg. It's highly likely that he'll strike again during New Year's," Dustin said solemnly.

“It’s three days away from New Year’s Eve. So you’re saying the Dark Lord will appear again in three days?” Hector seemed deep in thought.

“That’s right.” Dustin nodded.

“Sounds like the Dark Lord isn’t planning on letting us have a peaceful New Year’s celebration!” Hector narrowed his eyes ever so slightly as a murderous gleam flashed in his eyes. After fighting and scheming against each other for so long, it was finally time to draw an end to things.

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Chapter 661

“How do you plan to deal with this, Mr. Harmon?” Dustin asked.

“Since the Dark Lord is drawing near, I’ll have to make arrangements in advance. Just to be prepared, I’ll spare no expense to hire skilled martial artists to guard the house,” Hector declared in all seriousness.

Not only was the Dark Lord exceptionally skilled in martial art, but he was also accomplished in the mystic arts. The Harmon family’s shadow guards alone were no match for him, so he would need to hire backup. Not only will this strengthen their forces, but it would also minimize potential losses for the Harmons.

“Mr. Harmon, the Dark Lord will not act alone. He has many disciples, and each one of them possesses remarkable skills. You will have to consider that too,” Dustin reminded.

“Yes, I’ll take note of that. The Harmon family will be under strict security measures for the next few days to prevent any unwanted visitors.” Hector nodded.

“Dad, I remember Grandfather saying that we have a trump card. What is it?” Natasha asked out of the blue.

“It’s a person,” Hector replied, his voice lowered.

“A person? Who is it?” Natasha’s curiosity was piqued.

“There are five ultimate grandmasters in Balerno-Paul Hill, Zachary Graves, Ronald Reeds, Clarence Lawson, and Michael Robinson. The person I’m talking about is none other than one of the five ultimate grandmasters, Michael Robinson!”

Hector’s words shocked both Natasha and Dustin.

“The grandmaster Michael Robinson?” Natasha’s eyes widened in extreme astonishment.

The five ultimate grandmasters of Balerno were formidable figures with reputations that extended across the entire nation! They were like towering mountains, magnificent and awe-inspiring, yet seemingly out of reach. When faced with grandmasters, the presence of regular people and low-level martial artists was no different from those of ants. There was even a widely circulated saying that everyone below the level of a grandmaster was like ants, and this went to show the immense power of a grandmaster.

It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that any one of the five ultimate grandmasters alone could easily wipe out the entire Harmon family. So, when Natasha heard her father say that their trump card was Michael Robinson, her first reaction was shock, followed by doubt.

"Dad, you're not joking, are you? How do we have a connection with Michael Robinson?" Natasha asked, both surprised and skeptical.

"The Harmon family has had its time of glory. What's the surprise in us having connections with some big shots?" Hector calmly sipped on his tea.

"Dad, what does he look like? Does he look imposing?" Natasha began to gossip.

"I'm not entirely sure how he looks. I haven't met him in person, either. Your grandfather's the only one who knows. Your grandfather helped him ten years ago, so he owes us a favor," Hector

1/2

explained

"The favor of a grandmaster martial artist is priceless! With Michael Robinson backing us up, dealing with the Dark Lord would be a piece of cake!" Natasha looked overjoyed. "Dad, why haven't you used this valuable trump card earlier? We wouldn't have to worry so much then."

Over the years, the Harmons had been oppressed by the Dark Lord. Every year, several bizarre deaths would happen in the family, wreaking havoc and instilling fear in their hearts. The Harmons would have long since fallen if they had not been so strong and resilient.

“I, too, would like to get rid of the Dark Lord once and for all, but your grandfather had given me strict instructions that unless the safety of the entire Harmon family is at stake, I am not to use the favor.” Hector shook his head.

The Harmons could only ask for Michael’s help once. It only made sense that they should not waste the opportunity on trivial matters. Besides, the Dark Lord had always been cautious, acting in the dark and never showing his face to anyone. Even someone as powerful as Michael would find it arduous to catch him. For a cat to catch the mouse, the mouse had to first come out of hiding...

“Dad, the Dark Lord could barge through our doors at any moment now! Are we still not going to use it?” Natasha insisted. She was impressed by her father’s resilience.

“There’s no rush. I have my plans,” Hector said calmly before adding, “When the time comes, all it takes is a signal from our end, and Michael will be here in no time.”

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Chapter 662

“Alright, you’re the leader of the family. It’s your decision ” Natasha didn’t voice much of her

opinion. It was true that they shouldn’t play their trump card, Michael Robinson, so easily. The best outcome would be to resolve the crisis and eliminate the Dark Lord of their own means so that not only will they still be in possession of their trump card, but it would also boost the entire family’s morale.

“Mr. Harmon, I’m curious. What grudge the Dark Lord holds against the Harmon family?” Dustin suddenly questioned.

“Well...” Hector seemed to hesitate for a moment.

“Mr. Harmon, I asked because I’m curious. If you don’t feel like telling me, don’t stress about it.” Dustin smiled. He knew better than to probe if it involved any of the family’s secrets.

“Dad, there’s no harm in spilling the truth. Dustin isn’t an outsider,” Natasha coaxed. She, too, didn’t know much about the grievances between her family and the Dark Lord.

“Alright then, if you must know, I’ll tell you.” After some contemplation, Hector began. “The reason behind the resentment between us Harmons and the Dark Lord is simple. It’s all because of riches. “Back in the days, the Harmon ancestors used to be royalty, and we had our period of glory. Back then, our ancestors amassed a huge amount of treasure, and to put things simply, we were immensely wealthy. But as time passed, things happened, and there was a change of monarchies. In order to safeguard the treasure, our ancestors buried them in a safe place and drew out a map pointing to the exact location where the treasure was buried. As a precaution, the treasure map was split into three parts. They were to be kept by the three sons of the Harmon family.

“The original plan had been to use the treasure to aid the Harmon family in regaining their former glory when the time came. But beyond everyone’s expectation, the three sons eventually turned on each other and disappeared with their part of the map. From then on, the Harmon family split into three branches and made their way in the world independent of one another.

“After centuries of ups and downs, the three lineages of the Harmon family eventually reached different outcomes. Some grew stronger, while others declined. And the maps were passed on from one generation to the next. It wasn’t until a decade ago, when Stonia went through some changes which brought about the great earthquake in Dragonmarsh, that something happened. The strongest branch of the Harmon family mysteriously just disappeared overnight! And the two remaining branches were implicated in varying degrees too. We were one of them.

“Fortunately for us, we pulled through it and made it out stronger than before. The other branch, however, did not fare so well and eventually perished.” At the mention of that, Hector stopped abruptly and sighed lightly.

“Dad, I’ve seen the history on the genealogical register, but what has the Dark Lord got to do with this?” Natasha asked.

“All these years, the Dark Lord has had many chances to kill me, but he has always held back. Do you know why?” Hector countered.

“Was it because of the treasure map?” Natasha quickly understood.

1/2

“That’s right.” Hector nodded. “Who wouldn’t want to get their hands on immeasurable riches? The Dark Lord is no different. The only reason he hasn’t killed me is because he hasn’t got the map. All this time, he’d been pressuring me in every way imaginable in order to make me give up the map.

“Hang on...” Dustin suddenly asked curiously, “Mr. Harmon, surely this matter about the treasure map is a secret known by only Harmons?”

“Of course.” Hector nodded yet again.

“Well, if this is a Harmon family secret, how would the Dark Lord know about it?” Dustin could not contain his concern.

“Seems like you’ve noticed.” Hector sighed before continuing, “Out of the three lineages of Harmons, one has mysteriously disappeared, one has perished, and we are the last one standing. As for the Dark Lord, he is the sole survivor of the lineage that had perished!”

2/2

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Chapter 663

“The sole survivor?” Dustin and Natasha exchanged a look of surprise. It was truly astonishing to them that the Dark Lord was also a Harmon! And not only that, but one from the same ancestry! No wonder he knew so many of their secrets.

“The three branches stemmed from the same ancestry, but due to the Dark Lord’s selfishness, he went so far as to harm his kinsmen. How inhumane!” Natasha slammed her hand on the table out of frustration. She was even more irked after learning about the truth. She could have been more understanding if their current predicament had been caused by some deep grudge between both parties, but to think it was all because of a treasure map? The Dark Lord actually assassinated members of the Harmon family for so many years, all for a mere map? He was extremely deranged! “Men’s greed is endless. The temptation of the treasure is immense, and the Dark Lord will never back off till he gets his hands on them,” Hector said.

“One of the three branches has already disappeared, which means that a part of the map is missing. Even if the Dark Lord manages to obtain our part of the map through all his vile schemes, what use has he of it? Isn’t it pointless?” Natasha asked coldly. The Dark Lord would not be able to find the treasure with an incomplete map. From how Natasha saw it, he was only caught up in his wishful thinking.

“The Dark Lord has been blinded by greed. He has long since lost all sense of rationality. When you become the next leader of the family, I’ll personally hand our part of the map to you. When the time comes, you must protect it to the best of your ability,” Hector said solemnly.

“No, you hold on to your position as the patriarch. I’m not interested in it.” Natasha waved her hands dismissively. The treasure map was no doubt troublesome. If she were to take over, she could only begin to imagine the problem she’d have to deal with.

“Alright, we’ll discuss this in the future. I don’t want to force you into anything, either. The most pressing matter at hand is to defeat the Dark Lord Hector continued after a pause, “For the next three days, just stay put in the Harmon estate. Don’t go running around lest we get singled out. I’ll hire some skilled martial artists to back us up. If the Dark Lord shows up, he’ll be walking straight into our trap.”

“No matter the price, we must get ahold of the Dark Lord this time round to put an end to things!” Natasha narrowed her eyes, a cold glint flashing in them.

The Dark Lord had placed huge pressure on the Harmon family and needed to be dealt with as soon as possible. However, the problem was that he hid himself too well and never revealed his identity. Now that the chance finally presented itself, the Harmons were definitely not going to let it pass without taking action.

“Mr. Harmon...” Just then, Jack entered after knocking on the door.

“What is it?” Hector looked up at him.

“Someone has requested to meet you, sir. They claim to be disciples of the Invincible Guardians.”

“The Invincible Guardians?” Hector was pleasantly surprised. “They’re here so soon? Quick, show

them in.”

“Yes, sir, Jack said and swiftly left.

“Dad, who are the Invincible Guardians? Why have I never heard of them?” Natasha asked, curious, “The Invincible Guardians is a huge guild in Glenstead. However, they prefer to keep a low profile, and since you’re not a part of the martial world, it’s only natural that you’ve never heard of them before,” Hector explained.

“Did you invite them here?” Natasha probed.

“Yes, I have some connections with the guild master of the Invincible Guardians. After I learned about the Dark Lord’s intentions last night, I immediately contacted him. Never expected them to be here so soon, though,” Hector chuckled.

The Invincible Guardians were well-known in the martial world. Though they were few in number, every one of their members was a genius of exceptional talent. With their help, Hector felt the Harmons would stand a greater chance of going against the Dark Lord.

“Mr. Harmon, they are here.” As they were conversing, Jack returned with three people behind him. Two young women and a young man, all wearing white attire with a long sword on each of their backs. Their gazes were sharp, and they carried themselves with extraordinary demeanor.

“Caelus Amos, senior disciple of the Invincible Guardians, at your service, Mr. Harmon!” The young -man in white greeted Hector the moment he came in through the door.

However, when his gaze fell on Natasha, his eyes lit up.

“What a beauty! She’s incredibly beautiful!” he thought.

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Chapter 664

As expected of the number one bombshell on the Beauty Ranking!

“Maria Dunham, second disciple of the Invisible Guardians, at your service, Mr. Harmon!”

“Ivy Dennis, third disciple of the Invisible Guardians, at your service, Mr. Harmon!”

The two girls in white also introduced themselves.

“Alright, alright. You’ve all come at the right time. Come have some tea.” Hector smiled gently, motioning for Jack to serve the tea and pastries.

“Mr. Harmon, we heard you’re in trouble, so we’re here on our master’s orders to lend a hand. If you need anything, just let us know. We promise to help you handle it with ease!” Caelus said confidently.

“The three of you must be exhausted from such a long journey. Please get some rest first. We can discuss this tomorrow. Oh, by the way, why haven’t I seen your master?” Hector asked, changing the subject.

Just three disciples from the Invincible Guardians were obviously not enough. It was best if a few elders or even the leader stepped in..

“Don’t worry, Mr. Harmon. My master and his colleague will be here in two days,” Caelus replied. “Great.” Hector secretly let out a breath he had been holding.

“Actually, something small like this doesn’t even require my master and his colleague to step in. No matter what it is, I can slay it with just one slash!” Caelus shrugged, and a longsword immediately appeared on his back. He grabbed it with one hand, gripped the hilt, and slashed down on a chair about ten feet away.

The sword glinted, and the wooden chair split into several pieces.

“Amazing swordsmanship, Caelus!” Maria and Ivy said in unison, gasping in shock. The external manifestation of true energy was a sign of a divine-level martial artist. To be able to cast such a quick and fierce aura in his early thirties was truly no small feat.

“Mr. Harmon, what do you think of my sword?” Caelus smiled slightly with a hint of pride. As he spoke, he even snuck a glance at Natasha as if to say, “Did you see how cool I was?”

“Not bad. You have accomplished a lot at a young age, surpassing your peers. You even outdo your master when he was your age,” Hector said, nodding with a smile.

“Heh, so long as I’m here, nothing will dare come close to the Harmon family,” Caelus boasted. As the most senior disciple of the Invincible Guardians and the future successor to the leader role, he was the cream of the crop among the youths in Glenstead in terms of both talent and skills.

“With the Invincible Guardians here, I definitely feel more at ease.” Hector smiled:

“Mr. Harmon, actually, there’s another reason I came today,” Caelus said, moving to a different topic.

“Oh? What is it?” Hector’s smile didn’t waver.

“I heard that you have two daughters as beautiful as the flowers blooming outside, Mr. Harmon, and they are yet to be married. Thus, I wanted to ask for your daughter’s hand in marriage!” Caelus didn’t beat around the bush.

The moment those words left his mouth, Hector and the two others were stunned. They had invited the Invincible Guardians to go against the Dark Lord, so how did the topic turn to marriage?

“Caelus, I think it’s too sudden to be talking about marriage, considering how we just met,” Hector said.

“You and my master are old friends. We should be strengthening our ties. If that means marriage, I would be open to it.” Caelus laughed.

“Caelus, is this your idea or your master’s?” Hector asked.

“My master will fully support my decision. So long as you give your nod of approval, Mr. Hector, this is a done deal,” Caelus said, brimming with confidence.

“Well...” Hector hesitated.

“What’s the matter? Could it be that you look down on me, Mr. Harmon? You don’t think I’m worthy of becoming your son-in-law?” Caelus narrowed his

gaze. With his status, he more than deserved to marry the daughter of a wealthy family.

Not to mention, if he simply gave the word, countless excellent girls would come looking for him. "It's not like that at all, Caelus. It's just rather sudden. I'd have to ask my daughters' opinions," Hector said, trying to avoid giving an answer.

"There's no need for such trouble. I'll ask her myself." Caelus turned around, his eyes blazing, and said, "Ms. Natasha, I've heard so much about you. The moment I saw you today, my heart fell for you. Will you marry me?"

Natasha was first caught off guard. Then, she coldly spat out, "Get lost!"

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Chapter 665

"Get lost!" Natasha's answer was simple and direct.

The smile on Caelus' face froze. He had never thought she wouldn't even try to spare his feelings. After all, he was the senior disciple of the Invincible Guardians and a universally acknowledged martial arts genius. No matter where he went, people kissed the ground he walked on, and no one dared look down on him.

But today, of all days, when he tried to ask for someone's hand in marriage, all he received in response was a simple "Get lost!" His reputation was going down the drain.

"Natasha, don't be rude!" Hector chastised. He then said regretfully, "Caelus, my daughter impulsively spoke out of turn. Please don't take it to heart."

Caelus was the senior disciple of the Invincible Guardians, after all. He had to show him some form of respect.

"Mr. Harmon, I consider myself a handsome and exceptionally talented man. I don't think it's a tall order to become your son-in-law. Now, I'm sincerely proposing to your daughter, and this is the attitude I get in return?" Caelus frowned slightly.

“This is a misunderstanding, Caelus. Actually, my daughter is already betrothed. All I can say is that you two are not destined to be,” Hector explained, shaking his head.

“Betrothed? To whom?” Caelus was taken aback.

“To this young man next to me, Dustin.” Hector gestured toward him.

In an instant, everyone’s eyes were drawn to Dustin.

Dustin’s mouth twitched. The only choice he had was to go along with it. At this point, no matter whether it was real or not, he couldn’t expose the bluff.

“Dustin?” Caelus narrowed his eyes slightly. The moment he stepped through the door, he noticed this man. At first, he simply thought Dustin was an ordinary disciple of the Harmon family. Never in a million years did he think the man was Nathasha’s fiancé.

Caelus peered at him closely. Besides being somewhat good-looking, there was nothing outstanding about him. He dressed ordinarily and gave off an aura of ordinariness. He seemed to be the farthest thing from a powerful martial artist, and he didn’t have the energy that young talent should have.

His entire being screamed average.

“Mr. Harmon, I don’t understand. In what way is this guy worthy of your daughter?” Caelus said, not hiding the disdain on his face. How could a mediocre young man like Dustin be put on par with the senior disciple of the Invincible Guardians?

“Dustin is talented in both medicine and martial arts. And he’s way better than you. Why wouldn’t he be worthy?” Natasha piped up suddenly.

There was always going to be that arrogant bastard who liked to look down on others.

“Talented in both medicine and martial arts?” Caelus snorted coldly. “Fine. Since he’s so

impressive, why don’t we have a duel?”

“How do you want to compete?” Dustin said indifferently.

“It’s simple. Let’s follow the example of our ancestors and have a martial arts battle. The winner will get Natasha’s hand in marriage!” Caelus raised his head slightly.

Dustin said nothing, instead turning to look at Natasha. Although he was certain he could win, he didn’t agree with treating women as objects to be won, so he had some concerns.

“What, are you scared? If you are, then just forfeit,” Caelus said with a cold laugh.

“Isn’t it just a fight? Fine, we agree!” Natasha replied.

At that moment, Hector suddenly slammed his hand on the table and shouted, “This is ridiculous! The enemy hasn’t appeared yet, but we’re already starting to tear each other apart. This is unacceptable!”

“Dad, that bastard”

“Enough!” Hector raised a hand, interrupting Natasha. Sternly, he said, “Do not bring up the martial arts battle again. If you youngsters are brimming with energy, you can go outside and run a few laps!”

It was one thing to bicker, but if a fight broke out, things would get complicated. One side was the young man that he had his eyes on, while the other was the Invincible Guardians. No matter who won, it would be unfavorable to the Harmons.

Before the big enemy appeared, any internal conflict would just be an opportunity for the Dark Lord to take advantage of.

“Caelus, you must be exhausted from the long journey. Go get some rest. We can talk about it later,

Hector said lightly.

“Yes.” Seeing that Hector was upset, Caelus couldn’t refuse. After all, Hector was on good terms with his master. He had to show him respect, at the very least.

“Jack, please take our three guests to the guest wing and show them the Harmons’ hospitality,” Hector instructed.

Chapter 666

“Please follow me.” Jack bowed and escorted them out.

“You got lucky today, punk. However, you won’t be this lucky next time.” Caelus shot Dustin a cold glare before leaving with the two young women.

“Dad, why do I feel like you’ve invited wolves into our house?” Natasha said meaningfully.

“These are special circumstances. Let’s put the interests of the whole above anything else. Now, we need the power of the Invincible Guardians, so let’s not turn them against us,” Hector reminded them.

“If he doesn’t get on my nerves, there won’t be a problem.” Natasha arched an eyebrow.

“You...” Hector shook his head helplessly. “Enough You two should head out. I still have things to attend to.”

The two nodded. They quickly said their goodbyes without saying much.

After leaving the study, Natasha specially arranged a luxurious guest suite for Dustin, complete with a hot bath.

To put it nicely, a private bodyguard would get special perks.

Dustin wanted to turn it down at first, but he couldn’t stand the pleading and pestering, so he decided to stay for now. His main concern was Natasha’s safety.

The Dark Lord could attack at any time. Considering his treacherous tricks, he could easily take out several people at once. If he didn’t stay by Natasha’s side protecting her and something ended up happening to her, he’d regret it for the rest of his life.

Dustin practically lived in the Harmons’ home for the next few days. In his spare time, he gave martial arts training to Abigail or went flower viewing with Natasha. Occasionally, he’d call Nelson to ask about the results of the investigation.

Something to rejoice about was that Nelson had already identified the culprit—a resident doctor at the hospital. After committing the murders, the resident fled

to escape punishment. The Flame Dragon Gang and the Charging Tiger Gang were pursuing him.

Capturing the culprit was only a matter of time. Once they caught him, it would be clear who the mastermind was.

Three days later, on New Year's Eve, large, fluffy snowflakes descended from the sky, covering the ground in a layer of white.

Houses everywhere were brightly lit to welcome the new year, except the Harmons' home. The Harmon estate was heavily guarded, with outposts everywhere. In order to catch the Dark Lord, Hector had gone all out and invited a large number of martial arts experts to protect their home. Among them were several notable figures.

The Harmons' armed forces had strengthened greatly. However, it came with a downside, the entire courtyard was a mix of good and bad people

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Before the big enemy appeared, any internal conflict would just be an opportunity for the Dark Lord to take advantage of.

“Caelus, you must be exhausted from the long journey. Go get some rest. We can talk about it later,” Hector said lightly.

“Yes.” Seeing that Hector was upset, Caelus couldn’t refuse. After all, Hector was on good terms with his master. He had to show him respect, at the very least.

“Jack, please take our three guests to the guest wing and show them the Harmons’ hospitality,” Hector instructed.

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Chapter 666

“Please follow me.” Jack bowed and escorted them out.

“You got lucky today, punk. However, you won’t be this lucky next time.” Caelus shot Dustin a cold glare before leaving with the two young women.

“Dad, why do I feel like you’ve invited wolves into our house?” Natasha said meaningfully.

“These are special circumstances. Let’s put the interests of the whole above anything else. Now, we need the power of the Invincible Guardians, so let’s not turn them against us,” Hector reminded them.

“If he doesn’t get on my nerves, there won’t be a problem.” Natasha arched an eyebrow.

“You...” Hector shook his head helplessly. “Enough. You two should head out. I still have things to attend to.”

The two nodded. They quickly said their goodbyes without saying much.

After leaving the study, Natasha specially arranged a luxurious guest suite for Dustin, complete with a hot bath.

To put it nicely, a private bodyguard would get special perks.

Dustin wanted to turn it down at first, but he couldn’t stand the pleading and pestering, so he decided to stay for now. His main concern was Natasha’s safety.

The Dark Lord could attack at any time. Considering his treacherous tricks, he could easily take out several people at once. If he didn’t stay by Natasha’s side protecting her and something ended up happening to her, he’d regret it for the rest of his life.

Dustin practically lived in the Harmons’ home for the next few days. In his spare time, he gave martial arts training to Abigail or went flower viewing with Natasha. Occasionally, he’d call Nelson to ask about the results of the investigation

Something to rejoice about was that Nelson had already identified the culprit—a resident doctor at the hospital. After committing the murders, the resident fled to escape punishment. The Flame Dragon Gang and the Charging Tiger Gang were pursuing him.

Capturing the culprit was only a matter of time. Once they caught him, it would be clear who the mastermind was.

Three days later, on New Year's Eve, large, fluffy snowflakes descended from the sky, covering the ground in a layer of white.

Houses everywhere were brightly lit to welcome the new year, except the Harmons' home. The Harmon estate was heavily guarded, with outposts everywhere. In order to catch the Dark Lord, Hector had gone all out and invited a large number of martial arts experts to protect their home. Among them were several notable figures.

The Harmons' armed forces had strengthened greatly. However, it came with a downside; the entire courtyard was a mix of good and bad people.

At that moment, a family meeting was being held in one of the conference rooms. All of the core members of the family had gathered there. As the patriarch, Hector sat at the head of the table, while Trent and Jacob sat on his left and right, respectively.

"Hector, when tonight draws to a close, the year will end. Didn't you say before that the Dark Lord would come? Why hasn't he appeared yet? Could your information be wrong?" Trent was the first to speak.

"The source of the information shouldn't be fake. All in all, everyone needs to be careful," Hector said seriously.

"Could the Dark Lord have found out that there's an ambush and decided not to come?" Jacob rubbed his chin.

The Harmon family had invited so many martial artists to help. Right now, their home could be compared to a lion's den. If the Dark Lord was smart, he wouldn't barge in recklessly.

"It's nothing out of the ordinary if he doesn't show up." Dylan suddenly spoke up. "With me here, would the Dark Lord dare to act out of line?"

When the others heard him, they all nodded in agreement. The current Dylan was nothing like the old Dylan; not only was he extremely talented, but he also had the Scarlet Warrior backing him. No matter how strong the Dark Lord was, he'd have to think it over.

"Considering the Dark Lord's personality, he wouldn't give up easily. We can't let our guards down,

Hector warned.

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"Hmph, it's better if the Dark Lord doesn't show up. If he does, I'll lop his head off and release all the pent-up hatred!" Dylan spat fiercely.

As soon as he said that, one of the Harmon family guards suddenly ran inside in a panic. "Sir, it's bad! A fight broke out outside!"

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Chapter 667

"A fight?" Upon hearing that, Hector got to his feet. Is the Dark Lord here?"

"Perfect timing! Everyone, come with me to kill the enemy!" Dylan shouted with vigor. "Kill!"

The Harmon family members all slammed the table in front of them and hopped to their feet, aggression rolling off of them.

"You've got it wrong!" The Harmon family guard quickly explained, "It's not the Dark Lord; it's the martial artists we invited. They got into a conflict and are now fighting in the ballroom."

"Huh?" When everyone heard that, they frowned. They had all thought that the great enemy had descended on them, but it turned out to be an internal fight amongst their own. All their

excitement and vigor had been for nothing.

What a waste of emotion.

“Come, let’s go take a look!” Without another word, Hector led everyone out of the conference room. If internal conflicts were not handled properly, it could very likely end in greater disaster.

At present, the Harmon family home’s ballroom was filled with martial artists eating and drinking together. It looked like people of all sorts of backgrounds and teachings were there-gazing across the room, there were burly, fierce-looking men, stout dwarves; poison experts with snakes crawling all over their bodies; swordsmen with swift auras; and monks holding golden wands. There were also inhumane-looking humans, unghostly ghosts, and peculiarly dressed fellows. At that moment, Dustin, Natasha, Ruth, Edmund, and Abigail walked in. Their appearance attracted a lot of attention; the three gorgeous women were especially eye-catching.

“Natasha, are these the external help that Dad invited? Why do they look so weird?” Ruth looked around with a strange expression on her face. Besides a handful of regular people, the rest were rather odd.

“The Dark Lord is an expert in the mystic arts. It would be difficult to fight him with normal martial arts. These strange people are our best options,” Natasha explained.

“I see.” Ruth nodded.

“I don’t quite like the way they’re looking at us,” Abigail suddenly piped up.

“Ms. Natasha, let’s take a seat first,” Edmund said with a smile.

It was New Year’s Eve; the Harmon family had specially thrown a banquet in the ballroom to host all the guests. However, these guests didn’t look like nice people.

As soon as they sat down, a group of martial artists with impressive waistlines walked over. “Oh, I didn’t think I’d be able to see such beauty here.”

The leader was a bearded man naked from the waist up. He was buff, muscular, and had a thick bush of chest hair. When he got close, they could smell the pungent odor coming from his armpits. “Hey, beautiful. Seems like we’re fated to meet. Are you interested in drinking a few glasses with

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me?” The bearded man regarded the women up and down, not even disguising the desire in his eyes.

“Not interested,” Natasha declined.

“Gorgeous, in the martial world, having more friends always trumps having more enemies. Don’t you think so?” The bearded man flashed the knife tucked in his belt. His words and actions carried a hint of threat.

“You stink, so please keep a distance from me. Don’t ruin our meal,” Natasha remarked coldly.

“Do I smell? Why do I not smell it?” The bearded man raised both his arms and sniffed his armpits. Instantly, his body odor filled the air. Everyone frowned at the stench. “Beautiful, I don’t think you know. That’s the smell of a true man!”

“That’s right! The heavier a man’s scent, the stronger he is. You should appreciate it.” “Hahaha...”

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Chapter 668

The muscular men at the back began to poke fun. All of them were behaving brazenly, leering at them.

“Ms. Natasha, why don’t we leave for now? These people look difficult,” Edmund advised quietly, shrinking into himself.

“Why are you panicking, Dad? This is the Harmons’ home. What kind of trouble are they capable of kicking up here?” Abigail glared. She’d always looked down on her father’s cowardly tendencies, always recoiling at the most minor things. Was he even a man?

“You’d better get out of my sight while I’m not angry yet,” Natasha said, her expression cold as ice.

“Oh, you’re pretty feisty! I like it.” The bearded man rubbed his chin.

“Unfortunately, beautiful, those two wusses next to you can’t be your knights in shining armor.” As he spoke, he glanced at Dustin and Edmund. One was a much younger man, and another was a wrinkled old geezer. They were nothing to fear.

“Just me alone is enough to fight you!” Abigail said, slamming her palm into the table and jumping to her feet. Having been through Dustin’s training the past few days, her abilities had improved by leaps and bounds, which greatly boosted her confidence.

“Gorgeous, I’ll play with you, but I’d rather do it in bed,” the bearded man said, grinning sleazily.

“You-” Abigail was furious and humiliated. She was about to get violent, but Edmund stopped her.

“Abigail, don’t be rash. Harmony is of utmost importance.”

“You’re always like this. Can you grow a pair?!” Abigail frowned.

“I just don’t want you to get hurt,” Edmund said lamely.

“I don’t need your concern. Go away!” Abigail pushed her father aside and swung her fist at the bearded man’s face. She was going to teach these lechers a lesson.

There came a dull noise. The bearded man had easily caught Abigail’s full-powered punch without sustaining any injury.

“Huh?” Abigail’s expression changed. She finally realized that these people were far from ordinary.

“Beautiful, at your strength, your blows are nothing more than an itch for me. Take my advice and save your energy.” The bearded man grinned.

After he spoke, the other men behind him burst out into guffaws. They looked like a pack of hungry wolves setting their eyes on several sheep

At that moment, a furious roar rang out, “You scum of the martial world, let go of that young lady!”

Three young, upright-looking martial artists finally stood, denouncing the bearded man’s actions.

“Oh, does someone finally dare to save the damsels in distress?” The bearded man smirked coldly, pulling the knife out of his belt.

“We should always help one another, but you’re over there bullying a few women. You call that a

skill? Fight us if you dare!” one of them yelled.

“My knife never cuts those who are nameless. You, tell me your names!” the bearded man said.

“Listen up. We’re the White Stag Trio!” the three of them shouted in unison.

“The White Stag Trio? What the hell is that? I’ve never heard of you,” the bearded man said disdainfully.

“How dare you look down on us? You’ve got a death wish!” Upon hearing that, the three martial artists flew into a rage. Without another word, they brandished their daggers.

One side wanted to save the damsels in distress, while the other wanted to show off.

“You’re in over your head!” The bearded man snorted coldly. Alone, he went up to fight the trio.

There was a series of metallic clanging. The bearded man was practically a tiger foraging into a herd of goats—he was unstoppable. After several rounds, he had cut everyone to the ground. The White Stag Trio was defeated!

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Chapter 669

The White Stag Trio? Heh, you’re nothing but clowns,” the bearded man said disdainfully. He kicked the three of them and sent them flying.

“Huh?”

All the martial artists were shocked to see the three of them severely hurt and coughing up blood. Although they weren't exactly top dogs, they were still well-known in the martial world. Otherwise, the Harmons wouldn't have invited them.

However, even with the three's combined forces, they couldn't withstand a few moves from the bearded man. It was far from anyone's expectation

This clearly proved how powerful he was.

“Just who are you?” The White Stag Trio were both surprised and afraid.

“Listen up, I am the Glenstead Hoodlum, Marlon Cobb!” the bearded man said arrogantly.

“Marlon the Hoodlum?!”

Everyone was shocked to hear that, especially the White Stag Trio.

Marlon was a divine-level martial artist. He was extremely well-reputed in Glenstead. Because of his strength and ruthlessness, he gained the nickname “Hoodlum.” People cowered at the sound of his name.

If they had known who he was, they wouldn't have stepped forward and said anything.

“Who would've thought that even Marlon would be here? The Harmons seem to have invited a whole lot of experts.”

“Marlon the Hoodlum is a heinous criminal. I can't say if inviting someone like him here is a good or bad thing

The martial artists began to titter.

Although Marlon was strong, his personality was horrible. He didn't abide by the principles of the martial world at all. It wouldn't be an exaggeration to call him the scum of society.

After defeating the White Stag Trio, Marlon shifted his gaze to Natasha and the other women. Hey beautiful, I don't think anyone is going to stand up for

you anymore. What do you say? Do you want to go back to my room and have a good time?"

Finally, he was going to get lucky tonight.

"Asshole, you are too presumptuous!" At that moment, three people suddenly walked through the door. A man and two women, all dressed in white with swords strapped to their backs. They

appeared so dignified that they took everyone's breath away.

It was none other than Caelus, Maria, and Ivy!

"Oh, two more bombshells?" Marlon ignored Caelus and eyed Maria's and Ivy's bodies. The two women were beautiful and had slim figures. Their hair was neatly secured with a hairpin. The modest hairstyle made men want to dominate them

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"Marlon, you already have three gorgeous women serving you. Why don't you leave these two newcomers to us?" one of Marlon's lackeys said, laughing sleazily.

"No problem. After all, we're brothers. Good things are meant to be shared. You can pick which one you want. I want you to have a fun time," Marlon said heroically.

"Thank you, Marlon!" His lackeys brightened.

"I like that one with the big chest. Don't even think about fighting over her!"

"That one has a great butt. It looks super bouncy."

The lackeys pointed at the women while making all sorts of comments as if they were just toys.

"You shameless thugs, I'll cut your tongues out!" Maria and Ivy were infuriated. They pulled their swords out of their sheaths and charged toward Marlon and his lackeys.

As elite disciples of the Invincible Guardians, they had never experienced such humiliation before. If they didn't teach these bastards a lesson, they couldn't look anyone in the eye again.

"Come at me!" Marlon grinned, swinging his fist.

The three of them began sparring.

Maria and Ivy were exceptional swordswomen. They were also skilled at fighting side-by-side with their sharp and swift techniques. They performed move after move so quickly that it just seemed like a blur to everyone else.

On the other hand, Marlon's attacks were far simpler. He used both his hands as weapons to fend off their swords. He was not falling behind.

The women had excellent swordsmanship, but there was a significant power gap between them and Marlon.

Marlon was a divine-level martial artist, while the two women were only high-level martial artists. Sometimes, a gap like that could stretch into a chasm.

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Chapter 670

Maria and Ivy gave it their all. In the end, after almost thirty exchanges, Marlon still found a chink in their armor and dealt a blow to each of them.

The two women staggered back from the impact, and blood came out of their mouths. Instantly, they couldn't even muster any internal energy.

"Not bad!" Marlon grinned. He looked like he was still riding the high.

"You're shameless!" The two humiliated women flew into a rage. They wanted to attack again, but Caelus raised a hand to stop them!

"That's enough. You two are no match for him. Allow me."

"Caelus, this asshole is utterly shameless. You need to teach him a lesson!" the two women said indignantly.

“Don’t worry. Leave it to me.” Caelus leveled a cold gaze at Marlon. He slowly unsheathed the sword on his back.

Maria and Ivy bit back their anger and stood off to one side.

“Punk, you want to play the hero and save those damsels in distress? Are you capable of doing that? Don’t regret it when I smash all your teeth in, Marlon sneered.

“I’ll defeat you in less than ten moves,” Caelus said arrogantly.

“Ten moves? Heh, is your head okay? If you were one of the Heavenly Immortals, I might have some reservations. Where did a nameless pipsqueak like you find the courage to say such outrageous things to my face?” Marlon laughed coldly.

“You don’t believe me? Then try me.” Caelus beckoned with his finger.

“Fine! I want to see what you can do!” Marlon was getting a little angry. He brandished his blade and slashed it down on Caelus’ head.

Caelus’ expression remained calm. He raised his sword in response.

In an instant, the room was filled with the glinting of swords. Bursts of energy filled the room.

Everyone else took a step back, putting space between them and the fight. They were afraid that they might get hurt.

“Miss, that bearded guy is really strong. Can your fellow disciple handle it?” Abigail asked out of the blue.

From the earlier battles, one could tell that Marlon hadn’t used his full strength.

“Hmph, Caelus is the senior disciple of the Invincible Guardians. He’s extremely talented and strong. It will be a piece of cake for him to take down that scum!” Ivy said with confidence.

“That’s right! Just watch closely. Watch how Caelus scares off the enemy!” Maria said arrogantly.

“I hope so,” Abigail muttered to herself.

While they were talking, the spar had progressed rapidly. After a few blows, Caelus thrust his

sword violently, hitting Marlon's blade. There was a clang, and the sword broke.

Following the momentum, the sword pierced Marlon's shoulder. The broken end of the sword fell to the floor.

Marlon's expression changed. He staggered backward from the impact, wobbling on his feet.

"Marlon!" The lackeys were shell-shocked. They immediately helped Marlon up. They'd never thought that the unbeatable Marlon would actually be defeated today. Even less so at the hand of a young swordsman.

"Who are you? How is your swordsmanship so sharp?!" Marlon said with a dark look.

"I am the senior disciple of the Invincible Guardians, Caelus!" Caelus swung his sword, shaking off the blood. He was in his element.

"The Invincible Guardians?" Marlon was shocked.

The Invincible Guardians were a well-known guild in Glenstead. Although they were few in number, they were all elite fighters. Among all the guilds in Glenstead, the Invincible Guardians were in the top ten!

An ordinary martial artist like him couldn't afford to piss them off.

When he returned to his senses, Marlon lowered his head in apology. "Caelus, I didn't know who you were. Please forgive me for offending you."

"Kneel and apologize," Caelus said with an arrogant expression.

"Huh?" Marlon frowned. He hesitated, but he still fell to his knees with a thud.

He clearly showed what it meant to know when to surrender.

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Chapter 671

“Marlon!”

When Marlon knelt on the ground, his lackeys all seemed aggrieved. Although Caelus was very strong, if they all fought him together, they would have a shot at winning.

They couldn't understand why their leader would kneel in front of everyone. If this incident got out, their reputation would be done for

“Don't let me see you all again. Get lost!” Caelus snorted coldly.

“Let's go!” Marlon said nothing more and immediately fled with his lackeys. He didn't dare stay a

second longer.

“Amazing! What an amazing fight!”

“As expected of the senior disciple of the Invincible Guardians. He's truly impressive!”

“In less than ten moves, he defeated Marlon the Hoodlum! It's truly admirable!”

All the martial artists in the hall began to clap and cheer.

Marlon had a notorious reputation. After seeing him pick on women today, they were furious at him. It was just that none of them dared to fight him due to his strength.

Now that Caelus had taken down Marlon the Hoodlum, they rejoiced and praised him.

“Did you see that? That's how strong Caelus is. Now do you still dare question him?” Ivy raised her head pridefully. She had felt a little unhappy because of Abigail's doubt earlier.

“Ms. Natasha, when you were in danger, Dustin didn’t so much as say a word. Yet, Caelus stood up for you and defeated your harasser. I think it’s clear who is better.” Maria turned around to look at Natasha. She sounded a little proud.

“Hmph, what’s so impressive about that? Dustin is not any weaker than your senior disciple!” Ruth said indignantly.

She had witnessed Dustin defeat Terry with her own eyes during the fight with the Doyle family.

Caelus’ skills were far from average, but there was still a gap between him and Terry. Naturally, he wouldn’t be able to beat Dustin, either.

“Heh, if he’s really that strong, then he wouldn’t have shrunken back into his shell earlier.” Maria snickered coldly.

“Exactly! In the face of danger, he’d actually let a woman stand in front of him. He’s a worthless excuse for a man!” Ivy sneered.

“You” Ruth was suddenly at a loss for words. She turned around and said huffily, “Dustin, say something!”.

“What’s there to say? It’s meaningless to fight over this.” Dustin shrugged.

“Hmph, if you don’t have the chops, then just say so. There’s no need to sound so high and mighty. What a joke!” Caelus leaned over, not forgetting to make a snide remark.

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“Sure,” Dustin said indifferently. He didn’t bother to give a real response.

“It seems like you now know the gap between us. It’s like heaven and earth,” Caelus said

pridefully.

“Sure.”

“Ms. Natasha is well-respected and noble. Someone like you shouldn’t try to ride on her coattails. If you know better, you should stay away from her

“Sure.”

“Only a god among men like me is worthy of Ms. Natasha.”

“Sure.”

“Hey, can you respond with something else?!” Caelus was starting to get irritated.

Fuck, after all that, all he could say was “sure.” No one could stand that.

“Sure,” Dustin said. He opened his mouth wide and increased his volume.

“You f*cking-” Caelus flew into a rage. Just as he was about to blow up, the door was kicked open with a bang.

Immediately after, a group of mysterious masked men walked in, led by a tall man in a cloak.

As soon as he entered, he removed his mask to reveal a sinister face. He was completely bald-no hair, eyebrows, or facial hair. His complexion was deathly pale, his lips were purplish, and his cheeks were sunken.

Even more strangely, his eyes were blood red. He looked as scary as a ghost.

“Heh, I didn’t expect the Harmon family to invite a ragtag bunch of trash. How disappointing!” The pale man swept his gaze over his surroundings. He laughed coldly.

“Who the f*ck are you? How dare you act so atrociously here?!” a burly man in the crowd shouted angrily.

“Hmm?” The pale man tilted his head and turned to the burly man. He reached out to grab the air in front of him.

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Chapter 672

The burly man’s expression changed drastically. His body began involuntarily moving toward the pale man at high speed, as if there was an invisible rope pulling him forward.

All his struggles were in vain.

Finally, his throat ended up in the pale man's grasp

"You" The burly man was terrified. He opened his mouth, but before he could get a word out, the pale man clenched his fist.

There was a crack. The burly man's head fell to the side, and he died instantly.

"Ah!" Everyone was horrified by the gruesome sight. The pale man had simply grabbed a man and

killed him.

That move was frankly frightening.

"Don't panic, everyone. With Caelus here, no one would dare act out of line!" Maria said, trying to

calm everyone down.

"What unorthodox magic is this? How dare you act so boldly here?!" Caelus took two steps forward. His gaze was sharp and aggressive. The sword on his back began to vibrate slightly, as if ready to spring free from its sheath at any moment.

"I am the senior disciple of the Dark Lord, Gray Ghoul." The pale man tossed the burly man's corpse aside.

"Gray Ghoul? It's Bloody-Eyed Gray Ghoul?!" Everyone was scared senseless.

Bloody-Eyed Gray Ghoul was infamous in the martial world. He specialized in killing and robbing, often using cruel methods. If he appeared, then things usually ended in complete annihilation!

Back then, several upstanding martial arts tried to organize ambushes several times to eliminate

this scourge.

All of them ended in failure.

Afterward, all those involved in the ambush would receive revenge. They were hunted to the ends of the earth and died gruesome deaths. No one dared to ambush Gray Ghoul ever since.

Gray Ghoul had also vanished for some time.

However, no one expected him to turn up there.

“He’s finally here?” Natasha narrowed her eyes.

After three days on high alert, the Dark Lord finally attacked.

“So what if that’s Bloody-Eyed Gray Ghoul? He’s just a wayward martial artist. What’s the worst he could do?” Caelus said coldly.

“That’s right! We have power in numbers, and with Caelus here, what do we have to fear?!” The martial artists pulled out their weapons, ready to strike.

After all, the Harmon family had invited them there to ambush the Dark Lord and his minions.

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Since they’d taken the money, they had to do the work.

“Heh, it’s nothing but an overly ambitious effort.” Gray Ghoul smirked coldly. “Today, all of you here will die!”

“How wildly arrogant! Watch me cut your head off!” Caelus pulled out his sword and swung it in Gray Ghoul’s direction.

The force of this attack was terrifying. His sword was unstoppable, like a sun ray penetrating the sky.

“What a strike! That’s the senior disciple of the Invincible Guardians for you!”

“Once Caelus attacks, even Gray Ghoul would die an untimely death!”

Everyone let out gasps of surprise.

“Dustin, that move was the result of twenty years of training. Could you fend against that?” Ivy gloated while looking at Dustin.

“Ms. Natasha, watch closely. Once Caelus eliminates Gray Ghoul, you’ll finally understand who’s the god among men!” Maria said arrogantly.

As soon as Maria finished speaking, Gray Ghoul finally made a move. In the face of Caelus’ sharp attack, he didn’t try to dodge. Instead, he threw a punch head-on.

His fist hit the point of the sword with a terrifying force.

There was a loud blast. The moment they came in contact with each other, Caelus’ sword was instantly obliterated. It exploded into pieces.

At the same time, Gray Ghoul’s iron fist continued with its momentum and slammed into Caelus’ chest.

Caelus grunted. It was as if he’d been hit by a truck. He was sent flying almost fifty feet before crashing heavily into the floor, spewing blood everywhere.

In an instant, everyone fell deathly silent.

Today’s Bonus Offer

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Chapter 673

When everyone saw that Caelus had gotten sent flying from a punch, they were stunned.

This was none other than the senior disciple of the Invincible Guardians, a highly powerful martial arts genius. The same person who defeated Marlon the Hoodlum with just a few moves.

However, Gray Ghoul defeated a strong warrior like him with a single punch. It was unthinkable!

“How could this be? Caelus lost?”

“Who would’ve thought that Gray Ghoul would be so formidable? He defeated the senior disciple of the Invincible Guardians in one move. That’s horrifying!”

“Shit, if even Caelus is no match for Gray Ghoul, would any of us be able to hold against him?”

Right now, everyone was shocked and afraid. They all began to back out.

Caelus was already extremely strong, but Gray Ghoul was even more terrifying.

More importantly, he wasn't alone. He had so many lackeys, and none of them was ordinary.

There was no way around sheer force in numbers.

Ivy's and Maria's snapped out of their daze, and their expressions changed. “Caelus!”

They helped the injured Caelus to his feet. Then, they fed him a healing tablet.

“This bastard is too strong. Hurry, contact our master!” Caelus wobbled shakily on his feet. He pressed a hand against his chest, his face full of terror.

Gray Ghoul's punch had completely obliterated him. He wasn't able to fend it off at all. The power gap between them was far too wide.

Right now, the only way to subdue him was if his master and his master's colleague stepped in.

“The senior disciple of the Invincible Guardians is nothing. Since you have the courage to step forward, then you should die.”

After that punch, Gray Ghoul had gotten the upper hand. Unforgivingly, he threw another punch

into the air.

There was a loud whoosh. The huge burst of true energy transformed into a giant shadow fist, flying straight at Caelus.

“Caelus, move!” Maria and Ivy pushed Caelus aside. Then, they raised their swords against the

shadow fist.

A loud blast erupted. The two women's swords broke, and they flew backward. They were severely injured and coughing up blood.

They couldn't even withstand one attack.

"Maria! Ivy!" Caelus' expression changed. He was enraged.

However, he was not powerful enough. He was helpless.

"Hmm, what a close relationship between guild members!" Gray Ghoul grinned. He loved seeing

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these upright martial artists put up a last fight.

"Gray Ghoul, I'm warning you, don't do anything crazy!" Caelus yelled sharply. "We are from the Invincible Guardians. If you dare lay a hand on us, you will incur the wrath of the entire Invincible Guardians!" (1)

"There are a lot of people who want to kill me. Adding the Invincible Guardians wouldn't make a difference," Gray Ghoul said. He showed no fear.

"I know you're very powerful, but listen, my master is coming. Leave now, and you may be able to avoid trouble. Otherwise, once my master gets here, you'll all be dead!" Caelus threatened.

"Heh, by the time the leader of the Invincible Guardians makes it here, you'll already be dead." Gray Ghoul laughed coldly. He beckoned with his hand. "My dear disciples, hurry and slaughter every last person here. We still have more important matters to attend to."

"Yes!" The group of masked killers dressed in black pulled out their blades. Then, they charged forward like a swarm of bees, prepared to wreak havoc.

At that moment, there was the glint of a sword blade. The few masked killers at the very front couldn't dodge in time; their heads were chopped off, causing blood to spew everywhere.

Shocked, the others came to a stop. They surveyed their surroundings vigilantly.

-That slash just now was so fast to the point they couldn't even react.

“Who did that? Who was that attacking from the shadows?!” Gray Ghoul’s face darkened. He swept his gaze left and right.

“It was me.” Dustin stepped out from the crowd, wielding a broken sword.

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Chapter 674

Instantly, everyone turned to look.

“How dare you kill Nightshade’s disciples!” Gray Ghoul glared at Dustin.

“If you stop now, I’ll let you die in one piece,” Dustin replied. His calm words ticked everyone off.

“Who the f*ck does he think he is?”

“Does he have a death wish? How could he openly challenge Gray Ghoul?”

“He’s just an idiot trying to show off.”

The martial artists sneered at Dustin disdainfully Gray Ghoul was notorious for being so strong that even Invincible Guardians was no match for him. So, where did a nobody like Dustin find the balls to challenge that man?

“You better not act tough, Dustin. Even Caelus lost to him. What makes you think you have a winning chance?” Ivy jeered.

“She’s right. Your skills are pathetic!” Maria echoed

“Just because he lost doesn’t mean I will. Piss off.” Dustin snorted.

“What?” His words irked Caelus. “Who the f*ck do you think you are, Rhys? How dare you look down on me! I might have lost to Gray Ghoul, but I can still beat you!”

“Oh, shut up. You can’t even stand right now.” Dustin retorted without turning around.

“You f” Caelus gritted his teeth. If he hadn’t been severely injured, he’d already be setting Dustin straight by now.

“We’re only trying to warn you. If you don’t listen, you’ll have to face the consequences.” Ivy

frowned.

“Hmph! Stubborn bastards like him won’t listen. Let him die!” Caelus snarled. He couldn’t wait for Gray Ghoul to kill Dustin.

“You’ll let us die in one piece?” Surprised, Gray Ghoul laughed. “It’s been a while since someone spoke to me like this. Do you even know who I am?”

“It doesn’t matter. You only have two choices right now. You either give in or die,” Dustin stated.

coolly.

“Insolent fool! It’s time for you to die!” Gray Ghoul was finally angry.

He drew his sword and brought it down heavily on Dustin’s head. There was a loud hum as a violent light burst forth from the blade. It tore through the room and shook the furniture. The onlookers’ hearts stopped out of fear.

“My, what a ferocious attack!”

“Is this Gray Ghoul’s real strength? How terrifying””

“No one would be able to withstand that attack!”

The martial artists in the room were frightened by the strength of Gray Ghoul’s attack.

1/2

“Weren’t you dying to show off? Let’s see what happens now!” Caelus sneered.

“Shit!” Ivy and Maria sighed silently. Even Natasha and the others began to fear for Dustin’s safety.

Just then, Dustin made his move. With a flick of his wrist, a beam burst forth from his sword. It pushed past Gray Ghoul’s attack and split his blade in half before piercing his body in one fluid.

motion

“Aargh!”

Gray Ghoul’s body stiffened before his head rolled off his shoulders. It landed on the ground with a thud, smearing blood all over. The commotion stunned the crowd into silence.

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Chapter 675

The entire hall had gone silent as everyone gaped at Gray Ghoul’s head in disbelief. It all

happened so fast that they didn’t have time to process everything. No one expected Dustin to kill the invincible Gray Ghoul in mere seconds and with just a single strike.

“I-Is this for real? He killed Gray Ghoul?”

“He ended Gray Ghoul with one strike. Who is this monster?”

“What terrifying sword skills he has. Since when did someone like him exist?”

After finally realizing what had happened, the crowd burst into whispers. Gazes of shock, dismay, and disbelief were shot toward Dustin.

They thought it was the end for Dustin when they saw Gray Ghoul swinging his sword at him. But not only did Dustin survive, he even defeated Gray Ghoul effortlessly. How terrifying!

They also realized that the choices Dustin had so proudly laid out earlier had come true. “I-impossible! How is that guy so strong?” Caelus’ eyes widened in

disbelief. He always viewed Dustin as a weak nobody who was no match for the notorious Gray Ghoul.

“Who knew that he’s actually so strong?” Ivy and Maria exchanged shocked looks.

Even Caelus had lost to Gray Ghoul. If Dustin could cut Gray Ghoul down with a single strike, didn’t that mean he was more powerful than Caelus?

The two ladies couldn’t help feeling embarrassed for their rude words earlier. They never thought they’d be looking down on someone far stronger than them.

“I knew he was powerful!” Abigail jumped excitedly

“He’s awesome!” Ruth’s eyes twinkled, just as in awe of the man as Abigail was.

“That’s my man!” Natasha smirked proudly. She’d been worried when she saw Gray Ghoul’s attack. Fortunately, Dustin was strong enough to come out of it unscathed.

After a few seconds, Gray Ghoul’s decapitated body gradually toppled to the floor with a thud. It caused a cloud of dust to rise into the air.

“Gray Ghoul!” the group of masked killers exclaimed furiously. They never imagined that this invincible man would meet his demise so suddenly

“How dare you kill him! You’re dead meat!”

“Everyone, we shall wipe out the Harmon family to avenge Gray Ghoul!”

Battle cries echoed as each of the masked killers fished out a black ball and smashed it into the ground.

One by one, the balls burst apart on impact, and black fog wafted into the air.

“Watch out for the poison!” one of the martial artists cried out.

Everyone else immediately paled. They covered their mouths and noses frightfully.

“Natasha, lead everyone out of here. I’ll take care of this!” Dustin swung his sword. A burst of light

parted the poisonous gas, drawing a safe path.

“Hurry up!”

Natasha hurriedly gathered Mr. Robinson and the rest and ran out. She knew that they’d only be a burden to Dustin if they stayed behind.

“Caelus, we should run too!”

Ivy and Maria quickly lifted Caelus and followed Natasha. With their current condition, their best bet was to run away to stay alive.

As soon as they walked out of the door, the poisonous gas engulfed the room once more. Several martial artists tried to run away but were swallowed by the gas and began wailing in anguish.

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Chapter 676

By the time they emerged, those people's skins had begun to rot. Pus oozed from their skin, and blood trickled out of their mouths. They were going to die soon.

"Go after them! Don't let them get away!" Two of the masked killers went after Natasha and the others. However, before they could even get past the door, a flash of light sliced their heads off cleanly.

"I'm your opponent." Dustin stood in front of the door regally, holding a broken sword. Even the poisonous gas seemed afraid to go near him.

"Kill him! We need to avenge Gray Ghoul!"

With a loud cry, the killers charged toward Dustin. They utilized everything from weapons to poison and curses.

"None of you will escape today!" Dustin humphed before joining the fray, starting the bloody battle. Meanwhile, in the gardens, Natasha and everyone else were running in the blizzard. They left trails of footprints on the snowy ground.

"None of them seemed to have caught up to us. We should be safe now." Ruth was panting after running for so long.

"Ms. Natasha, Caelus has been severely injured. We need to stop somewhere safe and treat his wounds as soon as possible," Ivy said.

Natasha turned and saw Caelus, who was as white as a sheet. He was struggling to keep himself upright.

"Let's go to the meeting room. Our elite guards are having a meeting there." She immediately decided

"Let's go."

Just as everyone began to move, a bunch of large, round men emerged from the bushes. They were led by Marlon Cobb.

“Hello there, darlings. Where are you guys heading?” Marlon smirked as he gave the ladies a look

over.

“Marlon, why aren’t you helping when someone has infiltrated the place?” Natasha yelled.

“Help? Well, rather than hustling with those people, I’d much rather hustle with you girls.” Marlon wore a sickening grin.

“How dare you!” Caelus exploded. “Marlon, you better scram, or I’ll mess you up!”

“You?” Marlon sneered. “I might be afraid if you were uninjured, but you can’t even save yourself right now. How are you going to fight me?”

“I might be injured, but I can still get rid of you!” Caelus snarled.

“Really? Well, let’s see how strong you are now.” Marlon suddenly threw a punch.

“You!” Caelus tried to stop the other man, but his movements only aggravated his injuries. He

began to vomit blood, then collapsed.

“I haven’t even touched you yet. What a loser!” Marlon sneered.

“You better not play around, Marlon! The Invincible Guardians won’t let you off the hook!” Ivy yelled.

“If I kill all of you, how would others know?” Marlon retorted, unfazed by her threat.

“You wouldn’t!” Maria glared.

“But we’ll definitely have some fun before killing you guys” Marlon sneered viciously before signaling to his men. “What are you guys waiting for? Hurry up, the two chicks from the Invincible Guardians have been waiting for so long.

“Thanks, Marlon!” His subordinates immediately lunged toward Ivy and Maria.

“Let’s give it our all!” The two ladies gritted their teeth and faced the men’s attacks head-on. However, they were quickly subdued and forced to the ground. Although they were skilled fighters, they weren’t able to use their full strength due to their injuries. Eventually, they lost.

“We’re coming, darlings!” The men sneered. They yanked at the ladies’ clothes. Maria and Ivy shrieked in terror. They had never experienced something like this in their lives.

“Stop!” Caelus roared. He was powerless to do anything. He could only watch those men put their dirty hands on his allies.

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Chapter 677

“Stop, you f*cking mongrels!” Abigail yelled. She could not stand the sight of Ivy and Maria being assaulted by those beasts any longer.

“Awe, don’t rush us, darling. You’ll get your turn after we’re done with these two.” The men grinned sickeningly. Their predatory gazes were glued to Abigail.

“You’re taking things too far!” Abigail was furious and unsheathed her dagger. She charged

toward the men. The men were taken off guard. They couldn’t steer clear of her attacks quickly enough. Her blade left several cuts on them as they jerked backward.

“How dare you interrupt our fun! We’ll f*ck you first!” The men were pissed. They were about to draw their swords, but Marlon stopped them.

“Woah, how can you guys treat a lady like that?” He approached Abigail with a small smile. Honey, you should queue up if you want your turn with us.”

“Fuck off, or you’re dead!” Abigail threatened.

“Awe, don’t be like that. I mean no harm. Just hand me that dagger. It’s too dangerous for you.” Marlon smiled and extended his hand.

“Fuck off!” Abigail swung her arm. The sharp edge of her blade left a gash on Marlon’s palm.

“Hmm?” Marlon’s smile hardened, and his face darkened. “There’s a limit to my patience. You should be grateful for my offer!”

“Abigail, don’t be reckless!” Mr. Robinson hurried over. He put himself in front of his daughter, smiling apologetically. “Sir, my daughter is young and foolish. Please forgive her.”

“Forgive her?” Marlon sneered. “She cut me just now, so what should we do now?”

“W-we’ll pay!” Mr. Robinson withdrew the twenty million dollar check he had gotten from Felix.

earlier. He carefully handed it over to Marlon.

“Not too shabby.” Marlon accepted the check and stuffed it into his pocket.

“Since we’ve already paid for your injuries, could we leave now?” Mr. Robinson smiled sheepishly.

“Leave? Who said anything about leaving?” Marlon smirked. “Did you think twenty million dollars. would be enough? What do you take me for?”

“Sir, we should take care of this issue peacefully. Let’s be forgiving and understanding when necessary.” Mr. Robinson lowered his head.

“I don’t mind letting you guys go, but you’ll have to please me first.” Marlon pointed at his shoe. and ordered, “My shoe has gotten a little dirty. Kneel and clean it.”

“Hey, you better not go overboard!” Abigail snapped Dying with dignity was much better than enduring humiliation. Being forced to kneel and clean someone’s shoe was nothing short of humiliating.

“I’m not forcing you to clean it.” Marlon shrugged.

“I’ll do it.” Mr. Robinson nodded repeatedly. Then, he fell to his knees.

“What are you doing, Dad? Get up!” Abigail frowned.

“It’s fine. It’ll be over in a second.” Mr. Robinson smiled sheepishly. He rolled up his sleeves and began carefully cleaning Marlon’s shoe.

“You!” Abigail’s blood boiled. She didn’t understand how her father could be such a huge coward “Pfft! You sure are a wonderful pet.” Marlon smiled and patted Mr. Robinson’s head.

“Sir, your shoe is clean now. Why don’t you take a look?” Mr. Robinson lifted his head and forced a smile. But, he remained where he was.

“Good job. You can leave now.” Marlon nodded with a smile.

“Thank you, sir!” Mr. Robinson beamed and grabbed his daughter’s hand.
“Let’s go, Abigail!”

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 678 -

Chapter 678

“Let me go!” Abigail flung her father’s hand aside angrily. “You might be a coward, but I will never bow down to them like you do!”

She could leave now, but what about Natasha and the others? Was she supposed to abandon her friends and run away? She could never do that!

“Abigail, as long as you’re alive, there’s always a chance for you to seek revenge!” Mr. Robinson advised.

“You can leave if you want to, but don’t tell me what to do!” Abigail snapped coolly. She despised her spineless father; he bowed down to others no matter what.

He had never once acted like a man. Others had made fun of her all her life because of his timid actions. Therefore, she’d sworn that no matter what, she would never lose her dignity!

“Stop being so stubborn, Abigail. Let’s go!” Mr. Robinson tugged at Abigail anxiously.

“I told you not to tell me what to do! Scram!” Abigail shoved her father, and the man fell to the ground.

Marlon grinned at the sight. “You should have listened to your father, darling. You wouldn’t have been able to escape, but it would have been fun to watch you two try.”

He never planned to let them escape in the first place. He was merely playing a game of cat and

mouse.

“I knew you were up to no good!” Abigail clutched her dagger and tried to stab Marlon. As long as she could defeat that man, they would all be safe.

“What a fool.” Marlon shook his head. Then, he planted his foot into Abigail’s chest.

Abigail grunted as the force threw her backward. Blood trickled out of the corner of her mouth. For a moment, she was immobile.

“Since you like using force so much, why don’t we start with you?” Marlon slowly approached her with a leering grin. He wanted to take her clothes off.

Mr. Robinson was instantly alarmed. Falling onto his knees before Marlon, he begged, “Please forgive her, sir! She’s just a child. I beg you!” He bowed deeply.

“Fuck off, you old shit!” Annoyed, Marlon kicked Mr Robinson aside.

“Sir!” Mr. Robinson clambered back to his knees. Please let my daughter go! I’ll do anything you want!”

“Are you f*cking deaf? I told you to piss off!” Marlon kicked Mr. Robinson again, harder this time.

The older man grunted as he flew backward. Still, he staggered to his feet and lunged toward Marlon. He held the other man’s calf, begging, “Please, sir! Please don’t hurt my daughter!”

“You’re dead meat!” Finally losing his temper, Marlon planted a furious kick on Mr. Robinson’s back.

Mr. Robinson threw up blood that dyed the snow red. However, he refused to let go of Marlon’s leg.

1/2

“Just die already, you old coot!” His stubbornness ticked Marlon off, who planted kick after kick on his back. Each kick caused Mr. Robinson to throw up blood. Still, his grip never loosened.

“Fuck off!”

Furious, Marlon aimed his last blow at Mr. Robinson’s head. He kicked it like a football. Immediately, Mr. Robinson went flying and crashed into a tree. He was bleeding profusely.

“Dad!”

“Mr. Robinson!”

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 679 -

Chapter 679

Abigail, Natasha, and the others were devastated. They knew that the force Marlon used was enough to kill his opponent. Even the strongest martial artist would have died on the spot from that attack. There was no way Mr. Robinson was fine.

“That piece of shit dirtied my clothes.” Marlon tried to dust the blood off his pants legs, disgusted. “I’ll kill you!” Abigail howled. She grabbed her dagger and charged toward Marlon.

Marlon sneered and grabbed her wrist, effectively pressing her onto the ground.

“No one’s going to interrupt us now, honey. Let’s do it here.” Grinning perversely, he tore off her jacket, exposing her voluptuous figure.

“Fuck off!”

Abigail slammed her knee into Marlon's groin with all her might, her eyes bloodshot.

"Aargh!" Marlon wailed. His face was twisting in pain. "You b*tch! How dare you harm me! I'm going to kill you!" He pulled out his sword and swung it toward her.

The blade was going to slice through her, but a bloody hand appeared from nowhere and grabbed the tip of the blade.

"Huh?" Marlon lifted his head. The person who stopped his attack was Mr. Robinson! However, he seemed like a completely different person.

This Mr. Robinson was no longer timid and fearful, Instead, he was cold and ruthless.

"How are you still alive?" Marlon's expression sobered.

"Why did you have to push me?" Mr. Robinson sighed. "Couldn't you have just let this matter

slide?"

"What the hell are you talking about, old man?" Marlon frowned uneasily. He realized that the air around the older man was slowly shifting.

"I've already given you a chance, but you didn't appreciate it, so don't blame me." Mr. Robinson tightened his grip slightly, and Marlon's sword instantly shattered into a million pieces. At the same time, a burst of energy exploded out of him. It rippled through the wind and caused snow to whirl up. Even the plants around them began to sway and shake as if they were marveling at his strength.

Mr. Robinson inhaled deeply, and all the joints in his body cracked. He gradually absorbed all the natural essence surrounding him into his body. Soon, he became so powerful that it was hard for others to even look him in the eye.

"W-who are you?" Marlon scrambled backward in terror. He never expected the timid old man to undergo such a drastic change. Now, Mr. Robinson was like a ferocious dragon who had just woken up from his deep slumber. A mere peek at the man was enough to send shivers down one's spine.

Marlon had met countless masters in his lifetime, but Mr. Robinson was the scariest person he

had ever seen. In fact, Mr. Robinson might even be considered a god at this point—a being who stood higher than any human.

“You shouldn’t have hurt my daughter.” Mr. Robinson shook his head. He pointed in Marlon’s direction, and without warning, the man’s body exploded like a balloon. Marlon died in an instant.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 680 -

Chapter 680

“What?” Everyone gaped incredulously at the bloody mist that used to be Marlon.

Marlon was a Divine-level martial artist strong enough to take all of them down effortlessly. However, a finger was all Mr. Robinson needed to kill him. How terrifying! Was this really the cowardly old man they all knew?

“Run!” Once they got over the shock, the group of large men spun around and began to flee. They had no idea what had happened, but they knew Mr. Robinson was far stronger than expected. Marlon had been killed easily, so there was no way they’d stand a chance against that man.

“You shouldn’t have done all that if you were afraid of dying.” Mr. Robinson waved his hand casually, and the men immediately burst apart. They turned into a bloody mist.

“Uh...” Everyone was shocked by the sight, especially Abigail. Her eyes were wide open. She couldn’t believe that her cowardly father had suddenly turned so strong.

“Wow, he really kept his skills well hidden!” Dustin, who had just arrived, gaped at Mr. Robinson. He always thought he had a good eye. However, he never realized such a strong individual had been hiding under his nose this entire time.

“Mr. Robinson? Is that really you?” Natasha asked hesitantly, astonished.

“I apologize for scaring you, Ms. Natasha.” Mr. Robinson lowered his head. He quickly returned to how he was earlier. However, no one could look down on him anymore.

“Dad, how...” Abigail was at a loss for words. She couldn’t understand why her father would hide his powers and let others walk all over him.

“I’m sorry for deceiving you all these years. I wanted you to grow up as an ordinary person, but I didn’t expect things to turn out like this.” Mr. Robinson sighed. He knew how dangerous the martial world was, so he hoped his daughter could stay out of it. Alas, things didn’t always go as planned.

“Who are you? Why are you so strong? And why did you lie to me?” Abigail fired questions rapidly. Her head was completely blank at the moment.

“It’s a long story. I-” Mr. Robinson began.

Suddenly, a group of people emerged from the snow ahead. It was the rest of the Harmon family. The Harmon family’s strongest fighters, which consisted of hundreds of Harmon family elite guards and aids, were being led by Hector.

“Natasha, Ruth, are you girls alright?” Hector asked as he and his group braved the blizzard and trudged toward them. He stared at the bright red snow fearfully.

“We’re fine. We ran into some bastards earlier, but fortunately, Mr. Robinson was around.” Natasha forced a smile.

“Mr. Robinson?” Hector was taken aback. He surveyed the mess in dismay. After all, the pieces of flesh littering the ground could only have been caused by using powerful true energy to blast the bodies apart.

It would take at least a Divine-level martial artist to do that. Mr. Robinson was merely a servant in

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Today's Bonus Offer

GET IT NOW

Chapter 680

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us, he would pant after running a few steps. How

uet hall. The Dark Lord's disciples broke in. You kly told her father.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 681 -

Chapter 681

“Hurry! Let’s head over to the banquet hall!” Hector ordered immediately.

“No need. I’ve taken care of it.” Dustin emerged from the darkness. His white clothes were stained red as some murderous air lingered on him.

“That’s good.” Hector sighed in relief before asking, “Dustin, did you catch sight of the Dark Lord?”

“Not yet?” Dustin shook his head..

“As long as the Dark Lord is alive, our family will be in danger. All members of the Harmon 1

family, listen up! Split yourself into groups of five and root him out!” Hector commanded.

“There’s no need for that. I’m already here.” Just then, a sinister voice spoke out.

Everyone turned and saw a man standing proudly on the gazebo nearby. He wore a black cape and a mask that covered half of his face. The air surrounding the man was so poisonous that the ring. of plants around him had already withered. Even the snow that fell on his body turned black.

“The Dark Lord?” The Harmon family instantly had their guards up and their weapons drawn. The past few years have traumatized them. They couldn’t see or catch him, so they had to be constantly on guard against him since his methods were always baffling. He was skilled in poison, curses, and witchcraft and could easily kill someone undetected. His skills made it extremely difficult to anticipate his next move.

The Harmon family couldn’t help but feel a little scared. They could finally meet this nightmare

in person.

“You’ve finally shown yourself.” Hector narrowed his eyes, his expression grim. Knowing the Dark Lord’s personality, the man must have something up his sleeve if he was willing to show himself

today.

“We should end things now. It’s been a long time coming, after all.” The Dark Lord sniggered. “You have two choices right now. You either hand over your treasure, or your entire family will perish!”

“Our family will perish? Because of you?” Hector humphed. He prepared well just to fight against the Dark Lord. However, dealing with the man would have been difficult if he had been hiding in

the dark. Now that the Dark Lord had shown himself, they could finally take him down!

“I can deal with all of you myself!” The Dark Lord clasped his hands behind his back, his clothes dancing in the air.

“How dare you!”

“Insolent bastard!”

The Harmon family cried out angrily. The Dark Lord was feared for his mystic arts. So, the Harmon family had nothing to fear as long as everything came down to a battle of the fists.

“Move out of the way! I’ll deal with him!” Dylan stood forward and swore, “You’ve harmed our family for years, Dark Lord! Today, you will pay for your sins with your blood!”

“Foolish brat.” The Dark Lord humphed disdainfully

“How dare you look down on me! Go to hell!” Dylan drew his blade and leaped into the air. With a powerful swing, he brought his sword down with all his might.

There was a whistle as the force melted the snow in its path and headed toward the Dark Lord,

“What a powerful swing!” The Harmon family watched the battle animatedly. As the genius of the family, the time Dylan spent on the battlefield completely changed him. His sword was much more powerful than it once was.

“Oh, my genius boy!” Jacob watched his son proudly. Defeating the Dark Lord would make Dylan the family’s hero.

“Tree Flicker.” With a snicker, the Dark Lord struck out with his palm. A shadow phased through Dylan’s sword and planted itself into the young man’s chest.

“Aargh!” Dylan wailed as he collapsed onto the ground. He spurted blood everywhere.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 682 -

Chapter 682

“What?” Everyone was shocked as they watched Dylan land on the ground. The way he had leaped into the air tricked everyone into thinking that he had a winning chance against the Dark Lord. However, his opponent was able to get rid of him effortlessly, shocking the crowd.

“Dylan!” Jacob paled. He rushed over to hold his son up.

“I slipped, Dad...” Dylan forced out before his head fell to one side as he passed out. Jacob was tongue-tied. He couldn’t believe how stubborn his son was.

“How could he act so foolishly when he’s so weak? Does the Harmon family have no one else to send?” At the gazebo, the Dark Lord sneered at them scornfully.

“Don’t be cocky. We’ll deal with you!” A voice was heard as nine people emerged from the group of people. There was a mix of men and women, as each of them were powerful fighters well-known in the martial world. Without doing much, they gave off immense pressure on those around them.

“To tell you the truth, these are skilled martial artists we hired. With them around, you’ll meet your end no matter what tricks you use!” Trent declared, pleased.

“You better surrender if you don’t want to die!” Hector shouted.

The Harmon family called upon many martial artists for help, but most of them were nothing but smokescreens. Their true trump card was actually these nine fighters.

“Pfft! I can get rid of these nine pests easily.” The Dark Lord sniggered, unfazed.

“Insolent bastard!” His answer pissed off the nine fighters.

They were well-known fighters in the martial world and were confident they could each take on the Dark Lord by themselves, much less as a team

“Guys, on my mark, let’s get rid of this evil man!” An elderly man shouted as he sprung toward the Dark Lord, sword first. “Kill him!”

The remaining eight fighters followed closely behind, each using their best skills to fight the Dark Lord. Blades glinted, and gusts of wind rippled through the air as the trees and bushes around them were sliced down. Even the freshly laid snow had evaporated.

“With those skills, no wonder they’re the best fighters around.”

“With those nine people attacking him at the same time, there’s no way he can avoid their assault!

□

“Since he dared to invade our house, let’s make sure he never leaves!”

The Harmon family watched intently as the nine fighters surrounded the Dark Lord, eagerly waiting for the latter to be shredded into pieces.

“What a bunch of losers.” The Dark Lord chuckled before striking outward with both palms. There was a loud rumble as the two fighters closest to him were flattened into human pancakes. The Dark Lord then spun around and did the same to the two fighters behind him, killing them instantly.

Within seconds, nearly half of the nine fighters were dead.

While the Dark Lord was busy with the four fighters, the remaining five rushed toward the Dark Lord and swung their swords fiercely.

Sharp clangs rang out as their weapons hit the Dark Lord's body. As if they had hit solid steel, sparks flew from the points of contact.

"What?"

The five fighters' eyes widened in shock, and they paled. When they tried to jump backward, they realized that the true energy surrounding the Dark Lord's frame had glued their weapons to his body like a magnet.

"Who gave you the courage to fight me with those measly skills? You guys must have a death wish!" The Dark Lord's body shook, and a gust of terrifying true energy burst forth.

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Chapter 683

As if they had been struck by a train, the remaining five fighters were brutally thrown backward and landed in a pile of snow.

Some died, while others were severely injured, and none of them were able to stand up again.

"What? The nine fighters lost?" The Harmon family was devastated to see that the skilled fighters they spent a hefty amount to hire hadn't even been able to touch a hair on the Dark Lord's head.

"Who's up next?" The Dark Lord stood at the same gazebo, and he peered down at those useless fools.

"Even those nine fighters lost to him. There's no way anyone could win against him." The Harmon family exchanged fearful glances, none of them daring to step forward. Was this the end of the Harmon family?

"The two of us will have some fun with you, Dark Lord." Suddenly, a grave voice broke the silence.

Everyone turned to see two shadows emerging from the sky, nimbly making their way toward them. They moved as stealthily as a cat, making it hard for others to spot them.

“They’re awesome!” Everyone was amazed by the two men, who moved past the trees and toward the Dark Lord.

As they approached, everyone finally realized who the two elderly men were.

“Master Herman! Sir Leon!” Caelus was overjoyed to see them.

“They’re finally here!” Ivy and Maria cheered at the new arrivals, who were none other than the leader and assistant leader of the Invincible Guardians, Herman, and Leon Delgado.

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“You’re finally here.” Hector and the rest of the Harmon family heaved sighs of relief. Now that the leader of the Invincible Guardians was here, the Dark Lord couldn’t do too much damage. After all, these two men were martial artists who were close to becoming grandmasters.

“I hope you can forgive us for arriving late, Hector. Herman lowered his head respectfully.

“Of course. Having you two here is already a godsend.” Hector smiled. Things had seemed quite bad earlier, but fortunately, there hadn’t been much real damage.

“Let’s not waste time. We’ll take care of things from here.” Herman turned around to face the gazebo. “Dark Lord, you’ve committed grave sins Bold of-you to not surrender yourself now that the two of us are here!”

“No wonder you guys weren’t afraid. You had the Invincible Guardians protecting you.” The Dark Lord narrowed his eyes.

“If you’re scared, you better kneel and apologize right now. We might spare your life that way.” Leon bellowed.

“Scared? Pfft! Guilds like yours always like to bully people with numbers. How strong can you be? I challenge you to a one-on-one fight!” The Dark Lord taunted.

“Why would I need Herman’s help to deal with the likes of you?” Leon snorted.

“You better remember what you just said.” The Dark Lord’s gaze darkened, a sinister smile on his face.

“Hold on!” Dustin suddenly called out. “Sir Leon, you’re no match for him on your own. You have to work together if you want to have a winning chance”

“Nonsense!” Leon glared at him. “I’m nearly a Grandmaster martial artist. I can take care of this fat Divine-level bastard easily!”

“I’m just giving you a piece of advice. Even animals give it their all when catching prey much weaker than them, so there’s no need to risk it,” Dustin responded.

“Shut up! How dare a stupid brat like you tell me what to do! Step aside!” Leon was pissed that Dustin would question his capabilities.

“What?” Dustin frowned, and his expression turned cold. “If you insist on doing things your way, forget I said anything.”

He only gave that piece of advice because of the Harmon family, but since Leon refused to listen to him and even insulted him, he might as well just turn a blind eye.

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Chapter 684

“Hmph, foolish brat!” Caelus glanced at Dustin and sneered. “What would a stupid pig like you know about Sir Leon’s strength? You could never even hope to reach his level!”

“Dustin, Sir Leon is a semi-Grandmaster. You shouldn’t talk about things you don’t know. Others might laugh at you,” Ivy grumbled in displeasure.

“She’s right. You should watch how Sit Leon takes his opponent down!” Maria echoed. All of them saw Dustin as someone who liked to talk others down to make himself feel good. The Dark Lord might be a powerful person, but he was still a Divine-level martial artist, which was nowhere near the level of a semi-Grandmaster.

“Let’s hope things turn out the way you’re hoping they will,” Dustin simply responded. He’s said everything he needed to say. If he said anymore, he would just make a fool of himself.

“Sir Leon, I think he’s right. If you’re too scared to fight me alone, you can ask your leader to join the battle. Otherwise, you might suffer an embarrassing loss,” The Dark Lord taunted, aware that guilds like these cared more about their pride than anything else.

As he expected, Leon was furious at his words. “Yeah, right! Killing you is a piece of cake. I don’t need anyone’s help! Here I come!” He jumped into the air and unsheathed the long sword behind his back. Clutching the sword with one hand, he thrust it toward the Dark Lord at an incredible speed.

“His sword is so fast and powerful!”

“No wonder he’s a semi-Grandmaster. He’s so strong!”

The crowd marveled at his strength. They had never seen someone as strong as Leon.

“You’re doomed!” Leon bellowed, and his sword shone as his attack increased in power.

“Foolish bastard.” The Dark Lord chuckled coldly before swinging his hand, which was curled into a claw

This caused Leon’s blade, which was less than twenty inches away, to stop mid-air. The sword trembled violently but didn’t move at all.

“How is that possible?” Leon was shocked. Before he had time to react, the Dark Lord reached out and struck Leon’s chest with his palm. Immediately, blood spewed from Leon’s mouth, and he flew backward.

“Go to hell!” The Dark Lord took advantage of this opportunity and struck again. A huge shadow in the shape of a palm hit Leon hard.

“Leon!” Herman paled. He quickly drew his sword to counter the Dark Lord’s attack. There was a loud bang as the two attacks clashed before the shadow palm disappeared.

Herman reached out to catch Leon when the Dark Lord suddenly fused with the shadows and slammed into him.

“You must have a death wish!” Furious, Herman brandished his sword. Instantly, thousands of shadow swords appeared. They trapped the Dark Lord from all directions and then flew in the Dark Lord’s direction. However, they didn’t seem to affect the Dark Lord, who was able to phase

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through the shadows and counter with another strike.

“Oh no!” Herman’s eyes widened, and he instinctively raised his sword to block the oncoming onslaught. The blade shattered on impact, and the Dark Lork quickly followed up with another strike to Herman’s chest, crushing the man’s bones and causing him to cough up blood. Herman flew in the air before crashing into the ground, head-first.

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Chapter 685

It had only taken the Dark Lord two seconds to defeat Herman and Leon.

“What?” Everyone exclaimed, flabbergasted. No one had expected the two semi-Grandmasters to lose so terribly to the Dark Lord.

“Master Herman!” Terrified, Caelus, Ivy, and Maria dashed toward their mentor. Herman and Leon were severely injured; they bled profusely from their noses, and they couldn’t get back onto their feet

“How is this possible? The leader of the Invincible Guardians actually lost?” The Harmon family couldn’t believe their eyes. The two semi-Grandmasters had been their final trump card, and they’d thought they’d have a winning chance against the Dark Lord, yet the latter had eventually won, which begged the question: if the Dark Lord was stronger than Herman and Leon, which Harmon family member would stand a chance against him?

“If the two of you had come at me together, you could have won against me. Unfortunately, your confidence and pride blinded you.” The Dark Lord peered down at them.

“Aren't you just a fully developed Divine-level martial artist?” Herman gasped, clutching his chest.

“How was I going to lure you out if I didn't hide my true strength?” The Dark Lord chuckled. Although he had been confident that things would turn out in his favor, he still didn't want to take any risks.

“You treacherous and shameless bastard!” Jacob swore.

“Nothing matters as long as I can win.” The Dark Lord grinned. “Also, aren't you curious as to why I finally decided to show myself after all this time hiding?”

“Why?” Hector asked uneasily.

“I've been biding my time and building my strength” The Dark Lord puffed out his chest. “Actually, I've already evolved into a Grandmaster martial artist!”

His words shocked everyone, causing them to break out in a cold sweat. There were many skilled fighters in the martial world. However, it was rare to find anyone so strong. Countless geniuses spent all their lives trying to break that barrier and evolve.

Herman and Leon were the perfect examples. Although they were semi-Grandmasters who were halfway to becoming Grandmasters, the gap they had yet to fill was so profound that they'd been stuck at their current level for the past decade and still hadn't seen any improvements. Therefore, it wasn't an exaggeration to say that becoming a Grandmaster was near impossible.

Everyone finally understood why Herman and Leon had lost. Their opponent was a Grandmaster! “Shit! We're doomed!”

“How are we supposed to fight against such a strong opponent?”

“That's the end of our family!”

The Harmon family wore devastated expressions. The opponent they were facing was a

Grandmaster, which meant they had no chance of winning and could only let the Dark Lord do as he pleased.

“You’ve lost, Hector. I’ll let you guys live if you hand over the treasure.” The Dark Lord

commanded. He was powerful enough to crush the entire family.

“Knowing you, you won’t let us go even if we hand over the treasure.” Hector shook his head.

“You don’t have a choice in this matter.” The Dark Lord smiled coldly. It was true that he hadn’t been planning to let any of them go since obtaining the treasure map and getting rid of the Harmon family had been his target from the start.

“Since we’ll die no matter what, we might as well die honorably.” Hector took a deep breath. He suddenly raised his hand and shouted, “All Harmon family members, listen up! Draw your weapons and fight!”

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“Draw your weapons and fight!” Hector bellowed, his determined gaze psyching the rest of the family up.

“Fuck, let’s do this!”

“Charge!”

The Harmon family yelled and drew their weapons. Their conflict with the Dark Lord had been going on for years, and there was no way he would let them go easily. So, they might as well give it their best shot if they were going to die.

“You pests dare challenge me? You will all die!” The Dark Lord’s expression hardened. “Hector, since you’re being so stubborn, I’ll turn this place into a bloodbath today!”

He slowly pulled his hand back before slapping the ground harshly. Instantly, the ground shook, and snow exploded everywhere. A huge shadow palm fell from the sky and onto the Harmon family members, making it hard for them to breathe or even move. They realized that when their opponent was a Grandmaster martial artist, they couldn’t even run if they wanted to.

“Hmm...” Dustin frowned. He was just about to make his move when a pebble shot toward the shadow palm. There was a bang as the dark cloud dispersed.

Freed from the attack, the Harmon family began panting.

“Who the hell did that?” The Dark Lord studied the people around him with a sharp glare. He might have only used less than a third of his powers, but it was still more than what regular martial artists could withstand.

“Why do you insist on killing everybody? Can’t you just forgive them?” With a sigh, Mr. Robinson emerged from the crowd.

“Mr. Robinson?” Everyone was shocked. They never expected a family servant to stand up for them when things got rough. Alas, it wasn’t enough. Everything was useless when faced with a Grandmaster.

“Who are you? How dare you stop me!” The Dark Lord glared at the older man.

“I owe the Harmon family a debt, so I hope you could be generous enough to let them go.” Mr. Robinson requested politely.

“Hmph, who are you to talk to me like that?” The Dark Lord shouted.

“Come on, you come from the same family, so why do you have to fight them like this? You should stop now.” Mr. Robinson’s tone was grave.

“And if I don’t?” The Dark Lord narrowed his eyes, which glinted murderously.

“I’ll have to try and stop you then,” Mr. Robinson replied seriously.

“You stubborn, old thing!” The Dark Lord snarled. He launched himself forward and thrust his

palm at Mr. Robinson’s chest. The devastating force was so strong that it ripped through the air, causing the snow around them to evaporate and the trees around them to explode.

“Watch out, Mr. Robinson!”

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“Dad, duck!”

People cried out from the crowd. However, Mr. Robinson seemed to have frozen up in fear.

“Shit, he’s a goner!”

“No one can stand the attack of a Grandmaster.”

Everyone shook their heads, sighing silently.

Mr. Robinson’s courage was commendable, but he was still far too weak to save them. With a loud bang, the Dark Lord’s palm landed on Mr. Robinson’s chest.

Just as everyone thought that Mr. Robinson would be injured and die on the spot, a miracle happened. The small figure withstood the attack perfectly and without moving.

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Chapter 687

“How is that possible?” Everyone’s jaws dropped. Even Herman hadn’t been able to withstand a single strike from the Dark Lord, so how was the feeble old man still standing?

“I-is this really happening? Mr. Robinson blocked the attack with his body?” Jacob’s eyes were wide.

“Holy shit! When did he become so powerful?” Trent gulped, his face stunned in disbelief. Although Hector didn’t say anything, the shock was written all over his face.

“I didn’t know there was someone so strong in the Harmon family!” Herman and Leon were secretly in awe. Even if the Dark Lord hadn’t used all his might, his attack was still more than what most people could withstand.

“What?” The Dark Lord staggered backward, flabbergasted. He had used eighty percent of his strength just now, yet Mr. Robinson had blocked his attack like it was nothing.

“You should stop now.” Mr. Robinson shook his head, a clear warning in his eyes.

“Shut up! I’m going to kill you!” The Dark Lord’s gaze hardened. He took out a red ball and flung it at Mr. Robinson, which exploded midair.

“Watch out! That’s Demon Fire! It can burn anything and kill you instantly!” Hector paled and cried out a warning.

Demon Fire was an infamous weapon in the martial world. Anything it touched would immediately turn into ash, and its killing power was incredible.

Mr. Robinson was unfazed by the flame. With a gentle puff, a strong gust of wind raked by, putting the fire out instantly.

“What...” Hector was taken aback. How did such a terrifying weapon get put out so quickly? Was this even humanely possible?

“How is this possible?” The Dark Lord paled. Demon Fire had been his trump card. It was so powerful that even Grandmasters would have a hard time defending themselves, yet Mr. Robinson had blown it out so easily. How terrifying!

“You’ve had your turn. Now, it’s mine.” Mr. Robinson slowly raised his hand and pointed.

Bang!

The Dark Lord’s body slammed backward with tremendous force, blasting through trees, a fake hill, and the gazebo before eventually crashing into the snow somewhere back, unconscious.

“Holy shit!” Everyone was stunned and tongue-tied into silence. The Dark Lord, who was a Grandmaster, someone countless martial artists yearned to become, had been defeated by a single attack from Mr. Robinson. That’s incredible!

“W-who are you?” The Dark Lord staggered to his feet. His hair was tousled, and blood trickled out of his nose and mouth. He looked as though he would collapse at any moment.

“Michael Robinson,” his opponent answered frankly

“M-Michael Robinson?” The Dark Lord paled and stammered, “Y-you’re Michael Robinson, one of

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the five ultimate grandmasters in Balerno?”

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Chapter 688

“Michael Robinson?”

As soon as everyone heard the name, their jaws dropped in shock. Michael Robinson, one of the five ultimate grandmasters in Balerno, was just as renowned as Paul Hill and was a legendary figure with an amazing reputation

Ten years ago, he single-handedly defended Westward Fortress by himself. He defeated three foreign ultimate grandmasters and repelled tens of thousands of enemies from breaking in. With him alone as defense, his opponents hadn't been able to step a single foot in, and this battle had made him famous. In a short year, word of his achievements spread far and wide, making him known as one of the strongest people in Balerno.

No one expected the same person, who had gone missing for years, to suddenly appear here as an ordinary family servant. It showed that one should never judge a book by its cover.

"Mr. Robinson is the Grandmaster Michael Robinson? How is that possible?" Hector was dismayed. Michael Robinson was their family's ultimate trump card. His father had once told Hector that a distress signal could only be sent when the entire family was on the brink of destruction. However, never in his dreams did he expect such a legendary figure to be hiding right under his nose, blending in well with everyone else.

"No wonder Mr. Robinson was so strong." Natasha was astonished. Being able to kill Marlon by pointing at him and defeating the Dark Lord with a single strike was more than enough to prove Michael's identity.

"How unexpected!"

"With his capability, no wonder he's such a legendary figure."

"I can't wait to brag about being served by a Grandmaster before!"

The Harmon family was excited after finding out the truth, their views of Michael turned respectful. No one expected the timid servant, who was full of smiles, to be one of the five ultimate grandmasters in Balerno.

"Dad..." Abigail was at a loss for words, her head blank. She still couldn't wrap her head around the fact that her father was such an important figure.

"It must have taken you a long time to reach such a level. I don't want to kill you, so stop now," Michael stated calmly. No one dared to look down on him after what had just transpired.

“As a Grandmaster myself, I doubt you can kill me!” The Dark Lord gritted his teeth in displeasure.

“You should know that there are strong Grandmasters, and there are weak ones. You’re still a fresh Grandmaster, so it wouldn’t be difficult to get rid of you.” Michael shook his head.

“Cut the crap! I’ll kill you today!” The Dark Lord bellowed, black fog bursting forth from his body.

“Watch out, sir. He’s going to go all out!” Herman warned.

Almost immediately, the Dark Lord made his move. With a powerful stomp, he shot in the opposite direction like a rocket. He had run away!

the five ultimate grandmasters in Balerno?

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Chapter 689

The Dark Lord snuck away giddily, praising himself for his quick thinking that saved him from his death. There was no way he could have won against a monster like Michael. Only an idiot would have challenged that man.

After getting over the scare, the Dark Lord thought of something and smiled. “So what if my opponent is the legendary Michael Robinson? I still got away. He’s just a piece of trash!”

Suddenly, his grin froze as he sensed danger coming from behind. He instinctively turned around to see a beam of light shooting toward him at lightning speed.

“Aargh!” The Dark Lord shrieked in terror. He immediately used all his energy to form a shield. However, the barrier shattered as soon as it touched the light, which pierced his body. He howled in pain as he fell out of the sky and into the bushes.

“Great job!” The crowd cheered. They thought that the Dark Lord would get away once more, but all it took was for Michael to throw his sword like a javelin to take the Dark Lord down.

Just as they were basking in the happiness of defeating the Dark Lord, there was a red flash of light as the injured Dark Lord sprung up and dashed away rapidly, disappearing in a flash.

“A Blood Shield?” Michael was taken aback.

Blood Shield was a type of rare black magic. It drew energy from the user’s life force and allowed the user to have sudden bursts of strength and speed, which was extremely effective for both fighting and running away. However, it came at a cost. Each time a person used this technique, ten years of their life would drain away. Using a Blood Shield when injured was even worse, so even if that person didn’t die afterward, their fighting skills would drop significantly, and there was no way they could remain a Grandmaster anymore.

“He didn’t die. What a pity.” Hector sighed.

“That lucky bastard!” Trent gritted his teeth angrily

“The Dark Lord has been injured. He won’t get far. Men, go after him immediately!” Jacob ordered, leading the Harmon family’s elite guards. Everyone was aware that if they let the Dark Lord slip away today, the man would retaliate tenfold in the future.

“Mr. Robinson-I mean, Sir Robinson, thank you so much for helping our family today!” Hector lowered his head respectfully.

“Thank you, Sir Robinson!” Natasha and the rest of the family followed suit.

Mr. Robinson was no longer the timid old man they all knew. Instead, he was the renowned -Grandmaster-Michael Robinson!

“Don’t mention it. Mr. Harmon Senior helped me before, so I’m just repaying the favor,” Michael answered kindly as usual. However, his gaze was conflicted as it swept over Abigail. He had tried to keep his daughter safe by hiding his identity. Unfortunately, the truth had still come to light. If he became Michael Robinson once more, things would only become more troublesome.

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Chapter 690

Amidst the heavy snowfall, a figure in black dashed on frantically, ignoring the fierce winds. Blood trickled out of his wounds and dripped onto the fresh snow beneath him.

“That piece of shit. He nearly killed me! Thank God I used Blood Shield, or I’d be dead meat by now! * The Dark Lord gritted his teeth, only letting out a sigh of relief when he saw that no one was on this trail, his face still ashen.

Michael’s final attack had been so strong that it had pierced his protective barrier and even

managed to cut through his ametrine armor, leaving a deep gash on his back. If it weren’t for that armor, he’d be dead by now. No wonder so many people feared the five Grandmasters. Fortunately, he managed to survive, and he even got some shocking information.

The Dark Lord wheezed and coughed out blood as he dragged his battered body toward his hiding spot. After ten minutes, he finally reached a hidden area in the courtyard.

“Who are you?” Several masked women jumped out, firmly clutching swords.

“It’s me.” The Dark Lord unveiled himself.

“Master?” The women immediately lowered their heads.

“Where’s Azalea?” The Dark Lord croaked.

“She’s standing guard in the hall,” one of the ladies answered.

“Keep an eye out for danger,” the Dark Lord reminded before heading over to the hall.

Meanwhile, Azalea was intently observing a wooden jar. She watched, amused, as a poisonous scorpion and centipede fought furiously.

“Azalea!” Just then, the doors opened, and the Dark Lord tottered into the room.

“Yes?” When Azalea saw the man, she paled and rushed over. “Master! What happened? Who did this to you?”

“Michael Robinson was helping the Harmon family, so I lost.” The Dark Lord scowled.

“Michael Robinson, one of Balerno’s Grandmasters?” Azalea frowned. “Didn’t he disappear years ago? What’s he doing here?”

“He was hiding his identity, so no one knew who he was. Today’s just my unlucky day.” The Dark Lord sighed. He thought he’d finally be able to destroy the Harmon family after becoming a Grandmaster, yet Michael’s sudden appearance nearly cost him his life. He must have the most

rotten luck!

“As long as you’re alright, we’ll have many more chances to take revenge. Let me treat your injuries.” Azalea immediately got to work, swiftly applying medicine and patching the man up. However, his internal injuries would require constant medication before they could heal.

“I might have lost this time, but at least I’ve obtained a valuable bargaining chip,” the Dark Lord.

mused.

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Chapter 691

What is it?" Azalea asked curiously.

"You've heard of the Mystic Arts Order, haven't you?"

"Of course. It's the greatest dark faction of all time. It's even on par with Stonia's Celestial Alliance," Azalea answered.

The Mystic Arts Order was a mysterious faction. Despite having only a few disciples, everyone in the group was trained in the mystic arts as well as martial arts. And because of their ruthless way of killing their targets discreetly, they quickly became the strongest dark faction of all time.

"I used to be part of the group," The Dark Lord said wistfully. "I might not have been the brightest disciple there, but I was still a talented individual with a bright future. However, I was kicked out after committing a crime."

"Do you still wish to return there?" Azalea asked.

"Of course." The Dark Lord nodded. "That place is like heaven to people like us. It's filled with numerous secret arts and is home to many powerful fighters. If I can get back in, I'd be far stronger than I am now!"

"You sound like you have a plan." Azalea watched her mentor.

"You're such a smart girl." The Dark Lord smiled softly. "Michael Robinson is my ticket to return to the Mystic Arts Order. Do you know who his wife is?"

"No." Azalea was puzzled.

"Their Grand Sorceress, Katherine Hunter!" The Dark Lord revealed.

"The Grand Sorceress?" Azalea was astonished. The Grand Sorceress was the successor of the Mystic Arts Order and stood higher than anyone in the group. Most of the time, the leader would keep themselves hidden from the world outside, so the responsibility of taking care of the order would fall onto the Grand Sorceress' shoulders.

“Hang on...” Azalea suddenly recalled something. Didn’t the Grand Sorceress die a long time ago?”

“Katherine Hunter might be dead, but she has a daughter.” The Dark Lord smiled sinisterly. “Very few people know that she gave birth to a daughter after eloping with Michael Robinson. The leader of the order only discovered this after tracking Katherine down a decade later. To prevent their daughter from being taken away, Katherine and Michael fought against the order, and Katherine died during the battle. Michael then immediately fled with his daughter and hid

– himself from the world. I didn’t expect myself to discover this secret today.”

Azalea finally understood what the Dark Lord was implying. “Master, do you intend to trade this information with the Mystic Arts Order so that they accept you again?”

“Bingo!” The Dark Lord smiled. “Since Katherine died, Michael Robinson’s daughter naturally became the next Grand Sorceress, and the Mystic Arts Order would do anything to get their hands. on her.”

“I see...” Azalea’s eyes lit up. “We sure hit the jackpot today.”

1/2

Exactly! As long as we bring the Grand Sorceress back to the order, they will worship us endlessly,” the Dark Lord boasted. He laughed manically before he began to cough violently.

“Are you all right?” Flabbergasted, Azalea quickly comforted the Dark Lord.

“Michael managed to injure me earlier, and I was forced to use Blood Shield. I only have ten percent of my power left.” The Dark Lord wiped the blood off the corner of his lips. “But that’s nothing. As long as I can bring the Grand Sorceress back to the Mystic Arts Order, I’ll recover in no time. I’ll be stronger than ever!”

“I can’t believe you’re letting me know such a huge secret.” Azalea was touched.

“You’re my favorite disciple and like a daughter to me. What’s a little secret? As soon as I secure a position in the order, I’ll make sure to promote you too!” The Dark Lord smiled.

“Master, thank you so much. I don’t have anything to repay you with, so please accept my small gift.” Azalea lowered her head.

“What is it?” The Dark Lord inquired. Before he had time to react, a sharp dagger pierced his chest, shocking him.

“Here you go.” An evil smirk appeared on Azalea’s face.

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Chapter 692

“Ugh...The Dark Lord was stunned. With his eyes wide open, he looked at the knife in his chest, then up at the smirking Azalea. His pale face was a mix of shock, disbelief, and confusion. It happened so suddenly that he still hadn’t registered that he had been stabbed.

“W-why?” The Dark Lord asked in disbelief. He never expected his most beloved disciple to kill

him.

“Your skills have greatly plummeted since you’re seriously injured, rendering you defenseless.

Today is the best day to kill you.” Azalea smiled. “By the way, I applied some Tranqurin on my blade. You’re just like a little lamb waiting to be sacrificed now.”

“I’ve treated you well. Why would you betray me? Just when have I ever treated you badly?” The

Dark Lord trembled, blood dripping from the corners of his mouth.

“You’ve never treated me badly. In a way, you’ve been quite kind to me. However, you still have to die,” Azalea said plainly.

“Why why? Why!” The Dark Lord’s emotions surged as he grabbed Azalea’s hand, and his eyes turned red as he roared, “I’ve treated you like my daughter since you were young. The other disciples have yet to receive such an honor. Why would you do this?”

Azalea slapped his hand away, her expression growing colder by the second. “You want to know why? Fine, I’ll tell you. It’s because you killed my parents!” The Dark Lord froze at her words, his eyes betraying his shock.

“Why are you silent now?” Azalea scoffed. “15 years ago, on New Year’s Eve, you led a group of men

in the middle of the night, broke into my house, and slaughtered my entire family. My father was

killed at your hands, while my mother was violated to death. I watched as you, beasts, massacred

the people close to me! I could never forget, nor will I ever forget, those horrifying scenes!

“I endured 15 years of humiliation, all to find an opportunity to kill you! However, you were too

strong, and you got suspicious easily. I never felt confident enough to make a move. That was why I tried my best to please you in every way, lowering your guard slowly. Finally, I succeeded. It’s been 15 years! I’ve waited exactly 15 years for this opportunity!” By the end of it, Azalea was

seething.

Nobody knew how she endured those 15 years. She hid right beside her enemy, putting on a fake smile and acting thoughtful throughout the day. However, she had endless nightmares at night, never getting a peaceful night’s sleep. Every night, to prevent herself from sleeping talking, and revealing her identity, she sealed off her acupoints, rendering herself mute.

For 15 years, she was extremely cautious and walked on thin ice, for she knew that once her cover

was blown, it would not only put an end to her plans for revenge but also put her in a situation.

worse than death. Fortunately, after 15 years of waiting, determination, and hard work, she finally had a chance at revenge.

1

“H-how did you find out? Who told you?” The Dark Lord’s lips trembled. It was true that he slaughtered the Larsons back then. However, when he stormed into the final room and saw the little girl asleep on the bed, his heart was stirred with compassion. The little girl reminded him of his late daughter. Since he hadn’t exposed his identity, he made a bold decision. He killed all of

1/2

r, taking her under his wing. He never expected myself would lead to such a calamity.

ssed every one of your killings with my own eyes!

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Chapter 693

“No, impossible! You were only six years old back then, and you were fast asleep! The Dark Lord shook his head furiously.

Azalea responded, “I’d be dead now if I hadn’t pretended to be asleep ”

“You” The Dark Lord was at a loss for words He could not believe an experienced fighter like him had been played by a six-year-old

“Since you now know the truth, you can die now” Azalea flashed a smile again.

“Wait! You can’t kill me!” The Dark Lord panicked as he clamored, “Don’t forget that you still carry the curse that I planted in you If I die, you won’t survive either!”

He would plant a venomous curse on every new disciple The first reason was to control them better, while the second was to prevent betrayals The current situation was a perfect example.

“The curse? You mean this?” Azalea smiled playfully and took out a clear glass bottle. Inside was a red centipede.

“H-how did you get it out?” The Dark Lord’s expression shifted. The curse he planted was connected to him, no one was able to break it unless the elder of the mystic arts personally

intervened

“I knew today would come, so I asked a miracle doctor to break the curse in advance. What else do

you have to say?” Azalea reached out and squeezed, crushing the bottle with the centipede inside.

“Azalea, let me live, and I’ll teach you everything I know!” The Dark Lord panicked and pleaded. Due to the effects of Tranqurin, he wasn’t able to muster an ounce of internal energy and was

rendered useless.

“There’s no need. Once I find the Grand Sorceress and join the Mystic Arts Order, I’ll naturally get

what I want.” Azalea was unfazed.

“Azalea! Even if you kill me, your parents won’t come back to life. Vengeance only breeds more vengeance. Put down your blade and seek redemption. As long as you spare me, your soul can be saved!” The Dark Lord preached, desperately trying to live. However, as soon as he finished his plea, Azalea raised her sword and swiftly severed his neck, showing no mercy.

“Ugh The Dark Lord’s voice choked. The bloody line on his neck spread rapidly, and in the next second, his head rolled off his shoulders and onto the ground with a thud. He had died with

discontentment.

“Only when you die can my soul be saved.” Azalea kicked the Dark Lord’s headless corpse, sending it flying several feet away. Carrying his head, she walked out of the hall, coming to a stop in the courtyard. Looking up at the sky, the chilling snowflakes fell upon her face, carrying at

sense of desolation and sorrow.

“Mom Dad... Can you see it? This bastard is dead I personally killed him. I did it. I fulfilled my promise. I avenged the both of you!” With a thud, Azalea dropped to the ground heavily. As she knelt, two lines of tears streamed slowly down her face. She had endured 15 years of humiliation. Today, she finally slayed the murderer. Vengeance was hers

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 694 -

Chapter 694

As night fell deeper, the snow fell heavier.

Meanwhile, Hector and the others stood outside the Harmons' meeting room, waiting in silence. They occasionally stole glances inside, where Michael and Dustin were engaged in a hushed conversation. Half an hour earlier, Michael had asked everyone to leave so he could speak to Dustin privately.

“Mr. Rhys, that’s the gist of what happened. I concealed my identity to hide from the enemy and protect Abigail from harm.” Michael poured his heart out, finally releasing all the feelings he had bottled up

“I never expected that Abigail’s mother would turn out to be the Grand Sorceress of the Mystic Arts Order” Dustin was shocked.

The Mystic Arts Order was known as the most formidable dark faction in existence, composed of talented individuals and high-level experts. The position of Grand Sorceress was prestigious Dustin had always been curious about the protective seal inside Abigail. With her mother’s identity as the Grand Sorceress revealed, everything now made sense.

“Though the title of Grand Sorceress sounds grand, they don’t even have the basic right to freedom. I don’t wish for Abigail to follow in her mother’s footsteps.” Michael sighed.

“Mr. Robinson, I don’t understand. Why are you sharing your secrets with me?” Dustin was confused. The Mystic Arts Order’s Grand Sorceress was a prestigious position in which few had the privilege of knowing their identity.

“It used to be a secret, but it won’t stay a secret much longer.” Michael shook his head. “From the moment I attacked the Dark Lord, I had exposed my

identity. The Mystic Arts Order will probably be making a move soon.” The disciples of the Mystic Arts Order were spread all over the world. The Dark Lord was one of them.

“So, what’s your plan?” Dustin asked.

“I’ve been on the run for so many years. It’s time to face reality and resolve things once and for all.” Michael frowned. “Abigail is the only one I have left. I have a favor to ask of you-I hope you can

take care of her for me.”

“Me?” Dustin was shocked. “But I’ve never been a father.”

“You don’t have to be her father, you can be her mentor instead. ” Michael smiled. “I know you’ve been guiding Abigail in martial arts. Since she inherited her mother’s genes, she has a strong foundation. I sincerely hope you will take her in as your disciple.”

“Mr. Robinson, you think too highly of me. You’re a martial arts grandmaster. How could I dare accept her as a disciple with you here?” Dustin scratched his head.

“Mr. Rhys, you are too humble. I’ve been part of the martial arts world for over a decade. I’m good at reading people, too. However, I can’t seem to read through you. If I’m not mistaken, you should have already attained the level of a grandmaster. Am I right?” Michael smiled profoundly.

“You have a good eye. It’s no wonder that you are one of the five ultimate grandmasters.” Dustin

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didn’t deny it. Some things could be understood without being said aloud.

The younger generations are talented!” Michael’s expression was full of wonder. “A young grandmaster martial artist is hard to find in Dragonmarsh. It would be Abigail’s greatest honor to be your disciple.”

“You’re too kind, Mr. Robinson. Talents like Abigail are sought after by countless people.” Dustin smiled in response.

“Does that mean you’ve agreed?” Michael was surprised.

“As long as Abigail is okay with it, I naturally have no problems with it.” Dustin nodded. Abigail was talented, and they got along well. He would be happy to take her in as a disciple.

“Thank you, Mr. Rhys! I’m extremely grateful.” Michael stood up and shook Dustin’s hand.

“You’re welcome, Mr. Robinson. Perhaps I was fated to meet Abigail.” Dustin returned the gesture.

“Alright, I’ll send Abigail over to you officially as a disciple tomorrow.” Michael nodded in acknowledgment. After another short exchange, Michael left.

Dustin’s expression turned heavy as he watched the father-daughter duo depart. From their conversation earlier, he could tell from Michael’s tone that he was already passing on his final

wishes.

“Dustin, what did Mr. Robinson tell you?” At that moment, the members of the Harmon family

walked in.

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Chapter 695

The Harmons were naturally curious since Dustin and Michael’s conversation went on for some

time.

“Nothing much. Mr. Robinson just requested that I take care of Abigail in the future,” Dustin replied.

“That’s all? That can’t be.” Trent was suspicious.

“Yeah.” Dustin shrugged. He knew that Abigail’s identity as the Grand Sorceress shouldn’t be

made known for her safety.

“Alright, let’s set aside other matters for now. Our priority is to capture the Dark Lord. As long as he is alive, the Harmons will be in danger.” Hector changed the subject.

“Jacob has gone after him with some of his men. I wonder how he’s doing.” Trent was slightly worried. Although the Dark Lord was severely injured, he was still a Grandmaster martial artist. It would be a challenge to capture him.

“Mr. Hector...” At that moment, the butler rushed into the meeting room, holding a square gift box.

“What’s wrong?” Hector looked over at him.

“Mr. Hector, someone outside just passed us a gift earlier, asking us to deliver it to Mr. Rhys,” the butler responded.

“For me?” Dustin was perplexed. “What is it?”

“I’m not sure. That person said it was a surprise.” The butler shook his head.

“A surprise? I’m curious now.” Dustin smiled as he slowly opened up the box. Everyone else in the room watched, and their expressions transformed instantly. Inside the box was the severed and bloody head of the Dark Lord!

Meanwhile, inside the Grant family mansion, Tyler sat alone in his study, engrossed in a game of chess. Suddenly, a fleeting shadow glided by the corner. Moments later, a woman with a mask resembling a water droplet emerged slowly from the shadows.

“What?” Tyler remained focused on the chessboard, never once looking up.

“Master, I just received news that the Dark Lord failed. He didn’t manage to get his hands on the treasure map,” the masked woman reported in a hushed voice.

“What?” Tyler’s brows furrowed. “That trash! I spent all those resources to help him attain the level of a grandmaster, but he ends up not being able to deal with the Harmons? He’s better off

dead!”

“Something unexpected happened today, master. Michael Robinson appeared and injured the

Dark Lord,” the masked woman said.

“Michael Robinson? What was he doing at the Harmons?” Tyler was confused.

The masked woman replied, “Based on my investigation, the Harmons helped out Michael once. I

1/2

guess today was the day he repaid the favor.”

I didn’t expect the Harmons to have hidden a trump card.” Tyler was deep in thought.

Master, should we kidnap Natasha and threaten Hector to reveal the treasure map?” The masked woman suddenly asked.

“That’s a bad idea.” Tyler shook his head. “Once the existence of the treasure map is revealed, it will attract others’ attention. Not to mention, Natasha’s identity is somewhat special. Her maternal grandfather is no ordinary person. We can’t make a move on her for now. Hector is also stubborn and persistent, so it will be hard to snatch the treasure map from him: Since it’s difficult to deal with Hector, let’s change our approach.”

Tyler smiled as if he thought of something. “Traditionally, the treasure map has always been kept by the family patriarch. As long as we can sow discord among the Harmons and manipulate the succession of a new patriarch, our problem will be resolved naturally.”

“Master, you are a genius.” The masked woman caught on immediately.

“Go on. There is no room for failure this time.” Tyler waved his hand, gesturing for her to leave. “Yes, master!” The woman responded and vanished right away.

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An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 696 -

Chapter 696

Inside the chairman's office at Nicholson Corp., Dahlia stood before the expansive floor-to-ceiling windows, gazing pensively at the falling snow. The city shimmered with vibrant lights, yet she was there alone

Her mother had returned home yesterday while she remained in Millsburg to settle pressing work commitments. On one hand, she truly had matters to attend to, but on the other, she was hiding. She didn't know how to explain James' death to the family. Until the real culprit was caught, Dustin remained the prime suspect.

While she was lost in her thoughts, her phone suddenly rang. She was surprised to see that it was a call from Regulus Nicholson, the Nicholson family patriarch.

"Hello, Grandpa Regulus. How can I help you?" Dahlia was quick to greet him.

"Dahlia, I heard from your grandpa that you won't be spending New Year's at home and will be working overtime at the office instead?" Regulus asked in concern.

"I have pressing matters to attend to at work. It's more convenient for me to stay here." Dahlia

smiled

"Dahlia, it's good that you're devoted to your work. But you need to balance work and rest as well. Don't overwork yourself."

"Thank you for your concern, Grandpa Regulus. I'll take care of myself."

"Right, I called you tonight as there is something important I wish to discuss with you."

"Please go on."

“As I’m getting old, I’m no longer able to take on as many responsibilities. That is why I have decided to step down from my position and appoint you as the new head of the family,” Regulus declared, dropping a bombshell.

“What? You want me to become the matriarch?” Dahlia was shocked and refused immediately. “Grandpa Regulus, that won’t do! I’m too young. How can I possibly be worthy of taking your place?”

“I’ve witnessed your talents and capabilities firsthand. You are entirely capable of taking on the position and leading the entire Nicholson family,” Regulus said in a serious tone.

“Grandpa Regulus, I’ve only recently returned to the family. I won’t be convincing as the successor. Besides, there are plenty of talented individuals in our family who would be more suitable for the role.” Dahlia was in a dilemma. Managing Nicholson Corp. alone was already giving her a headache. Since her current standing within the family was still low, leading an entire aristocratic family would be an immense challenge.

“Our family indeed has talented people, but they are not ready to lead the family. You, on the other hand, are different. You built up your own family with your own hands and have long been ready to take on this responsibility. You’re the best among the young members of the Nicholson family. No one else is more suited for the role.”

“Grandpa Regulus, you’ve overestimated me. Firstly, I don’t possess the family’s wealth. Second, I

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lack connections, and third, I don’t have the resources. I’m simply not qualified.” Dahlia was feeling helpless. Even though she was ambitious and had considered fighting for the position, it was too early with her current standing.

“I can provide you with the wealth, connections, and resources you need. As long as you agree, I will personally support your succession,” Regulus declared boldly.

“I…” Dahlia was at a loss for words. Regulus was not merely valuing her but showering her with affection by sweeping away all obstacles for her.

“Grandpa Regulus, I don’t understand. Why did you choose me?” Dahlia inquired cautiously. With Regulus’ abilities, wouldn’t it be better to groom his grandson to be his successor? Why did he choose an outsider like her?

“Because you are the most suitable candidate and have the greatest potential to bring our family to greater heights!” Regulus sounded resolute. If he were honest, he made the decision not solely based on Dahlia’s exceptional talent but mainly because she had the support of a nobleman. 1

“But-” Dahlia was about to continue when Regulus interrupted her.

“Dahlia, stop refusing. Some things are meant to be fought for. I trust in your abilities. If you won’t be the matriarch, nobody else can!”

Since Regulus put it that way, Dahlia had no other reason to refuse. She could only nod, saying, “Thank you for having confidence in me. I will try my best. Please guide me when I fall short.”

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Chapter 697

Regulus chuckled heartily. “All right, as long as you agree! I’ll arrange a family meeting tomorrow morning and officially announce you as the new head of the Nicholson family!”

The surprising news came without warning, leaving Dahlia in a daze even after Regulus had hung up. She hadn’t achieved much, yet she was suddenly the Nicholson matriarch, dramatically elevating her status.

It felt unbelievable. Although Dahlia believed she had the talent, she lacked the confidence to lead such a prominent family at this time. However, she also realized that this was an opportunity for her to rise, and she shouldn’t let it slip away. She had to give it a try, regardless of whether she was prepared.

The next morning, the heavy snowfall had stopped, and it was finally the New Year. Dustin had just returned to the Flame Dragon Gang when he saw Nelson approaching him happily. “Sir Rhys! I have good news!”

“What? Did your wife give birth?” Dustin asked curiously.

“It’s better news than that.”

“She gave birth to twins?”

“Sir Rhys, can you have a better imagination?”

“A better imagination? Oh... I get it now. The children are not yours?”

Nelson was speechless, and the corners of his mouth twitched. Dustin’s responses were getting

more absurd.

“Sir Rhys, I’ll just tell you. We found James’ killer.” Nelson was not going to let Dustin continue guessing. Dustin might just say his wife ran off with another man next.

“The killer? Where are they?” Dustin’s gaze grew cold, and he turned serious.

“We beat him up half to death. He’s unconscious now, but he already ratted out the mastermind,” Nelson responded.

“Who was it?” Dustin asked.

“Nicholson Corp.’s Vice Chairman-Hank Hoffman!” Nelson’s expression was serious.

Dustin was surprised. “Hank Hoffman? Are you sure?”

Nelson explained, “Based on the statement, Hank intended to remove Ms. Nicholson forcefully from her position, but he couldn’t do so with you backing her. So, he decided to sow discord between the two of you. It would be easier for him to accomplish his goal if you weren’t on good

terms with Ms. Nicholson.”

“I can’t believe he resorted to such underhanded methods to gain a small advantage. This bastard deserves to die!” A murderous gaze flickered in Dustin’s eyes. He had previously rejected Hank’s attempts to bribe him. He didn’t expect Hank to retaliate by setting him up. If he hadn’t investigated the situation thoroughly, he would have fallen into Hank’s trap.

“Sir Rhys, what Hank did was unforgivable. I’ve already obtained his address and will send someone to capture him immediately!” Nelson said furiously.

“There’s no need. I’ll handle it personally this time. Show me the way,” Dustin said with a hardened expression.

“Right away!” Without hesitating, Nelson quickly went to get the car. The gravity of the situation was evident since Dustin had decided to get involved personally. Hank wouldn’t be able to escape this time!

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 698 -

Chapter 698

In a luxurious private room at Ibiza Club, Hank was enthusiastically entertaining a bald man in glasses. A few alluring hostesses were by their sides, providing attentive service.

“Mr. Niles, thank you for traveling all the way here. This is our show of sincerity. We hope you like it.” Hank took out a check and placed it on the table, sliding it forward. The bald Niles only glanced at it before ignoring it, and he continued to drink with the beautiful women beside him.

“Oh, look at me. I almost forgot to pass you a welcoming gift as well.” Hank caught on immediately and took out another gift box, passing it to him with both hands. Niles opened the box and saw a gold bar that weighed a few kilograms. It was worth around one to two million dollars.

Niles chuckled gleefully. “Hank, that’s so generous of you. There’s no need for such extravagant gifts between us,” he said as he put them away nonchalantly.

“Considering you traveled from Stonia, these are nothing.” While Hank smiled politely, he inwardly mused that this cunning individual seemed to be growing greedier. However, since he

needed Niles’ assistance, he could only remain silent.

“Mr. Niles, I’m wondering if you brought anything with you on your trip this time?” Hank asked tentatively.

“Don’t worry, I didn’t forget. This isn’t the first time anyway,” Niles said as he took out a small, purple vial from his pocket and passed it to Hank.

Hank’s eyes lit up as he reached out to receive the vial. However, Niles retracted his hand with a

warning. “Mr. Hoffman, I’m just reminding you that this is an extremely valuable item. There is

only one such vial made every year, and your grandmother relies on this precious herb to live. You

better not lose it.”

“Never. This treasure is more valuable than my life. I assure you, I won’t lose it!” Hank nodded

incessantly.

“Very well, I’m entrusting it to you now. You’re responsible for anything that happens after,” Niles said, placing the purple vial in Hank’s hands.

“Thank you, Mr. Niles!” Hank was delighted. He took out a safe he had brought with him, carefully placing the vial in it. This item was worth a fortune and couldn’t be bought with money. It was also a precious item that Alma relied on to survive. Naturally, he had to take extreme care of it.

“Hank Hoffman!” Suddenly, the private room was violently kicked in, and a group of fighters with menacing expressions barged their way in furiously. Each of them had a knife in hand.

“Who are you? How dare you make a scene in my area?” Hank’s expression darkened.

“You seem to be having fun, Mr. Hoffman. How is it that you have the time to be drinking here?” The men stepped aside to make way for Dustin and Nelson, who slowly walked inside.

“It’s you!” Hank’s brows furrowed. “Mr. Rhys, what is the meaning of this? There are no grievances between us, why have you brought your men here?”

“You son of a b*tch! You’re still pretending, I see. What do you mean by ‘no grievances’ when you set up our leader?” Nelson bellowed.

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Aldon't understand what you mean." Hank acted clueless.

You ordered James to be killed, didn't you?" Dustin asked out of the blue.

James? Hank shook his head. "I'm sorry, I don't know who that is. There must have been a misunderstanding."

"A misunderstanding?" With a frosty smile, Nelson gestured. "Bring him in!" On his orders, a man covered in injuries was forcefully brought in. Hank's expression shifted at the sight of the man. He finally realized something was up. These people had come prepared.

"Hank Hoffman, do you know this man?" Dustin asked calmly.

"No, I don't. Who is he?" Hank remained unyielding.

"You son of a b*tch!" Nelson raised his hand, delivering a forceful slap that sent Hank sprawling to the ground. Nelson berated. "You're still trying to argue at this point? This man confessed to everything, and you were the one who hired him!"

"Nonsense! I don't know any murderers! Stop making false accusations!" Hank shouted in fury, I'm warning you. I have the matriarch of the Glenstead Nicholsons backing me!"

[An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 699 -](#)

Chapter 699

"You dickhead! I don't think you realize the gravity of the situation!" Nelson was furious and was about to smack Hank again when Dustin stopped him.

"You mean the Nicholsons were involved in this?"

"Why, are you finally scared?" Hank sneered. "That's more like it. You'll be offending the Nicholsons if you offend me. Now, get out of here!"

"I'm giving you one last chance. Confess and surrender yourself to the authorities, and I'll let you go" Dustin's expression was cold.

“What a load of crap!” Hank glared at Dustin. “Don’t think I’m afraid of you just because you’re the

leader of the Flame Dragon Gang! Your small gang is nothing compared to the aristocratic

Nicholsons! They could exterminate you in seconds!”

“It seems like you won’t talk without a lesson. Slice his hand off!” Dustin cut through the

nonsense.

“Yes, sir!” Nelson smirked. He ordered two of their henchmen to pin Hank to the table.

“Wait! I’m warning you, don’t you dare touch me! The Nicholsons will not let you get away with it if you do!” Hank panicked and struggled desperately.

“Go on, don’t stop! Let’s see how long you can keep up this act!” Nelson raised his knife and

ruthlessly brought it down on Hank’s wrist.

“Ah-!” Blood splattered everywhere as Hank’s blood-curdling scream echoed throughout the room.

“Y-you!” Hank’s expression twisted in agony as he groaned. He couldn’t believe they had hurt

him. Weren’t they afraid of the Nicholsons’ wrath?

“Still not going to talk? Slice off his other hand,” Dustin ordered again.

“Yes, sir!” Without another word, Nelson raised his knife once more.

“Mr. Niles, save me!” Hank screamed in fear.

“Stop right there!” At that moment, Niles, who had been silent the entire time, finally stood up.

“Who are you? I’m warning you to mind your own business!” Nelson’s expression was hostile.

“Hmm?” Niles’ expression darkened. “Do you know who I am? How dare you talk to me like that?”

You must not want to live!”

“I don’t f*cking care who you are!” Nelson was getting impatient.

“The audacity! He’s a prominent figure from Stonia-The Killian family’s butler!” Hank cried out.

“The Killians?” Nelson could feel his eyes twitch, and his earlier arrogance disappeared instantly.

The Killians were one of Stonia’s prestigious aristocratic families. As a family with a history spanning over a hundred years, they wielded immense power. Even the Tremendous Three of Millsburg were inferior to the Killians. After all, Stonia was the capital city. Any random, minor aristocratic family from Stonia was already leagues above any family in Millsburg, let alone an influential one like the Killians.

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Chapter 699

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1/2

“Hah! Why did you go silent? Where’s all that arrogance now? I dare you to try anything with the Killian family’s butler here!” Hank’s expression twisted into a hideous sneer. He knew that few would dare to provoke the Killians.

This is between us and Hank. It's best if the Killians stay out of it," Dustin responded calmly.

"Hey, kid, are you lecturing me?" Niles took his time lighting a cigar before taking two deep puffs. With an air of arrogance, he declared, "You seem oblivious to my status. Listen up; I'm not going to repeat myself. I am the Killian family's butler. You ants will always remain beneath me, as I hold the power to play with your lives! I can have all of you killed with just one word! Now, I order you to immediately-"

Before Niles could finish his sentence, a thunderous noise similar to an explosion rang out. He had been sent flying, crashing heavily into a wall. His bones shattered as he spewed blood, and he was rendered unconscious on the spot.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 700 -

Chapter 700

"My ears hurt." Dustin's expression turned frosty. Without hesitation, he sent Niles flying with a brutal kick.

"What?" Nelson and their men were dumbfounded at the sight. Hank couldn't believe his eyes either, and he momentarily forgot about his pain. Nobody expected Dustin to act so ruthlessly without uttering a single word

He had just kicked the Killian family's butler and a prominent figure from Stonia! One simple word from him could end their entire lives. Most importantly, the butler represented the Killians. Humiliating their butler was akin to humiliating the family themselves. How could Dustin be so daring and seemingly unconcerned about his own life?

"Y-you... You dared harm Mr. Niles? Do you know what you just did?" Hank was scared and furious as he cried out.

"He's just the Killians' servant. What's the big deal?" Dustin turned his attention back to Hank and warned coldly, "You, on the other hand, will be in big trouble if you don't start talking.

After meeting Dustin's icy stare, Hank felt a chill run down his spine. He was genuinely terrified at that moment. To him, Dustin seemed like a madman for daring to harm Niles.

“Silent still? Cut off all his limbs,” Dustin ordered once again

“Yes, sir!” Nelson grinned as he raised his blade once more.

“Wait! I’ll talk…” Hank was terrified and surrendered immediately.

However, despite that, the steel knife still came down with a whoosh, slicing Hank’s hand off. Hank’s mind went blank as he met Nelson’s twisted smile.

“You damned-!” Hank’s words were cut off by the intensity of the pain, and he lost consciousness. “Lightly bandage up his wound. We’re heading to Nicholson Corp.,” Dustin ordered.

“Yes, sir.” Two henchmen dragged Hank out after wrapping his arm up

“Sir Rhys, take a look at this. Suddenly, Nelson’s sharp gaze noticed the safe on the table. After they opened it up, they saw a delicate purple vial inside.

Dustin picked it up and brought it to his nose. After a sniff, his expression betrayed his surprise. “I didn’t expect it to be Zirtanium. Interesting.”

“Zirtanium? What is that?” Nelson was curious.

“It’s a slow-acting poison, but taking it induces a comfortable and energized feeling. They won’t even feel any more pain. It’s effective in treating specific illnesses. As it is extremely rare, it is worth a fortune,” Dustin explained.

“Is it really that amazing?” Nelson’s eyes lit up.

“Indeed it is, but it is still poison after all. One will get addicted easily, and it has been banned in the martial world,” Dustin responded.

“What would Hank need it for?” Nelson scratched his head.

“Who knows? Let’s just hold onto it for now. It’s worth a lot anyway,” Dustin replied nonchalantly and kept the vial in his pocket. He knew it could act as a lifeline for certain people.

In the chairman’s office at Nicholson Corp

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 700 -

Chapter 700

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1/2

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In the chairman’s office at Nicholson Corp

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 701

Chapter 701

Dahlia was going over some documents while drinking coffee. Suddenly, her office door was pushed open. Florence and Julie rushed in energetically, their expressions filled with

happiness.

“Mom? Didn’t you go back to Swinton already? Why are you back so soon?” Dahlia was confused.

“Dahlia, tell me truthfully, have you been chosen as the next matriarch?” Florence asked with a sense of urgency.

“How did you find out?” Dahlia was surprised.

“Hahaha... It is real!” Florence was extremely excited. “Last night, your grandfather told me you were going to be the matriarch of the Nicholsons. I didn’t believe him at first, but I can’t believe you’ve come this far! This is amazing news!”

“Congratulations on your achievement, Dahlia! From now on, you are the queen of the aristocrats!” Julie flattered. While she was jealous and unyielding toward Dahlia in the past, it has now been replaced with flattery.

The Glenstead Nicholsons were the most wealthy and influential aristocratic family, and Dahlia’s sudden rise to wealth and power was something most could only dream of.

“I don’t think you should call me that. I’m still learning. It’ll take a long time for me to truly be able to lead the Nicholsons.” Dahlia had a clear head. Although the Nicholson matriarch title sounded good, she considered it merely a facade. She still required Regulus’ guidance and support to succeed.

“No need to be humble, Dahlia. The patriarch already chose you as his successor, and that is enough proof of your skills. Sooner or later, the Nicholson family will be yours!” Florence looked proud, taking pride in her role in raising an exceptional daughter.

“That’s right! Next time, we will be able to enjoy these fortunes with you!” Julie said with a grin. Since Dahlia had become the matriarch of a wealthy family, their entire family would also bask in the glory.

“Dahlia, it has only been a few days since we last met, yet you’ve become the matriarch. Congratulations.” At that moment, Dustin walked into the office, and the smiles on everyone’s faces disappeared instantly.

“Rhys! Why are you here?” Florence’s expression darkened, and her gaze was hostile.

“Hmph! Did you find out Dahlia is now of a different status and came here on purpose to suck up to her?” Julie looked at him in disdain. Only a vile person would come and curry favor right after they heard the news!

“I said I would catch James’ murderer in five days. I’m here to fulfill my promise.” Dustin gestured as he spoke. Soon, Nelson and a few more people dragged a bloody Hank into the

office.

“He’s the murderer!” Dustin grabbed Hank by his hair and lifted his head.

“Mr. Hoffman?” Dahlia frowned when she saw him.

“Hmph! Enough with the tricks! Do you think you’ll be able to clear yourself of guilt just by capturing a random person? Dream on!” Florence’s expression was filled with hatred.

“That’s right! Who knows if you’ve found a scapegoat? Julie chimed in.

“Hank, why don’t you tell them what happened?” Dustin shot him a cold glance.

“Hoffman! If you tell the truth, the worst you’ll face is around ten years in jail. If you lie, don’t blame me for being merciless!” Nelson glared at him fiercely.

“I’ll talk, I’ll talk...” Hank eyed his surroundings and freed himself when nobody noticed. He threw himself at Dahlia’s feet and cried out. “Ms. Nicholson, save me! I beg you. Please save me!

“It’s Dustin! Dustin is framing me! He asked me to take the blame. When I refused, he beat me up and tortured me! Look at my hands. He cut them off! I

didn't do anything, Ms. Nicholson! I know nothing about what happened!
Dustin did it; he killed your brother. He is the real murderer!"

Dahlia and the others' expressions darkened as he spoke.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 702

Chapter 702

“What?” Dustin’s expression darkened as Hank twisted the truth, and a murderous gaze flickered through his eyes. Hank deserved death for biting them back at this stage.

“You fucking slanderous dickhead, I’m going to kill you!” After a moment of disbelief, Nelson’s anger erupted, and he brandished his knife, ready to attack.

“Ms. Nicholson, save me!” Hank panicked and hid behind Dahlia.

“Hold on!” Dahlia took two steps forward to stop Nelson. “Until everything is clear, you’re not going to touch him!”

“Ms. Nicholson, this scumbag is full of lies. I need to teach him a lesson!” Nelson’s expression was murderous. On their way here, Hank had promised to confess everything and surrender himself. However, in the end, he went back on his word and even bit back at them. It was abominable”

“Hmph! You’re just trying to silence the witness!” Julie suddenly cried out. “Are you furious that Hank refused to be your scapegoat and told the truth?”

“Rhys! You’re a bastard framing the innocent! You not only killed my son, but you’re also deceiving my daughter! You’re despicable!” Florence criticized Dustin.

“That’s right! You’re despicable!” Hank hid behind them and cried out. He knew very well that if he confessed to murdering James today, he would be a dead man himself. He’d rather gamble and use Dahlia’s sympathy to pressure Dustin into backing off.

“Nelson, stand down.” Dustin gestured backward.

“Yes, sir.” Nelson gritted his teeth and took a few steps backward. However, his murderous never left Hank.

gaze

“Hank Hoffman, do you think you’ll survive by playing tricks in front of me?”
Dustin was calm

“There you go! Did you hear him, Ms. Nicholson? He’s planning to silence the witness. Get someone to apprehend him immediately!” Hank screamed in panic.

Dahlia was solemn. “Dustin, you said Hank was the mastermind. Do you have any evidence? This was a crucial moment. If Dustin didn’t have evidence, he wouldn’t be able to clear his name

“That’s right! All you said were just empty words. Why should we trust you? Bring out the evidence if you have it!” Julie chimed in.

“Hmph! He is the murderer! What evidence would he have?” Florence spat out.

“You want evidence? Fine.” Dustin nodded and gave Nelson a look. Nelson caught on immediately and made a phone call. Moments later, the man from earlier who was covered in multiple injuries was brought to the office.

“This man right here was the man Hank hired He confessed to everything Ask him if you don’t believe me “Dustin pointed at the man

“Did you have something to do with James’ death? Dahlia sized him up, her expression heavy

“Y-yes, but Hank ordered me to do so! He paid me three million to kill James with a poisoned needle,” the man explained in fear. He’d rather go to jail than be tortured to death

“You’re spouting nonsense! I don’t know you!” Hank glared at the man as he bellowed

“Rhys’ Do you think a random actor you hired would be able to trick us? Do you take us as fools?” Florence scoffed loudly

“Oh, Dustin, you’re spending so much effort to frame Mr. Hoffman Don’t you think you’re vile for stooping so low?” Julie pushed

“Ms Nicholson, the both of them have teamed up to frame me You can’t believe them!” Hank started fanning the flames.

“I have evidence to prove that Hank is the mastermind” the man suddenly claimed.

“What evidence?” Dahlia questioned immediately.

“I thought ahead when Hank asked me to kill someone and recorded our entire conversation. Here

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 703

Chapter 703

The man took out his phone as he spoke and played a video for everyone present. In the video, Hank was seen sitting across from the man at a cafe. Their voices could be heard, and they were discussing their plan to kill James and frame Dustin. Hank even paid a deposit on the spot. The entire process was recorded clearly, leaving everyone dumbstruck after watching it.

Florence, who was hostile earlier, was in disbelief. The sarcastic Julie was also rendered speechless. They had been so sure that Dustin was the killer, yet he turned out to be innocent. For a moment, they couldn't accept the truth.

As for Hank, he stood frozen in his spot, his face drained of color. He thought they would have nothing against him as long as he didn't confess. He didn't expect the cunning guy to secretly record their interaction as a precaution.

"See that!" Nelson was indignant. "All of you kept suspecting Sir Rhys and even hurled multiple insults at him. The truth is out now! What else do you have to say?"

"I ..." Florence and Julie exchanged glances, looking embarrassed.

"Hank, you bastard!" After regaining her composure, Dahlia turned around and slapped Hank hard on the face. Hank stumbled from the hit, almost falling to the ground, and his face swelled quickly. "I'm going to kill you for taking my son from me!" Florence roared and lunged at Hank, kicking and punching him. She poured out all her pent-up anger. How could she hold it in when her son's murderer was right in front of her?

Hank was overwhelmed by their attacks and covered his head, begging for mercy. After a while, when the three of them had had enough, Dustin said impassively, "Nelson, take him away. Find a place to bury him."

"Yes, sir!" Nelson grinned and immediately gave the order to tie Hank up.

"N-no, don't kill me! I'll confess and surrender!" Hank panicked and started crying.

“You’ll confess and surrender now? You should have done that much earlier! Take him away!” Nelson didn’t bother with his nonsense and forcefully dragged Hank out the door.

“Hold it right there!” Suddenly, they heard someone yell. A white-haired elderly woman walked in angrily with a group of people.

“Madam Alma?” Dahlia was surprised. The white-haired elderly woman was no ordinary person. It was the Nicholson family’s matriarch and Regulus Nicholson’s first wife-Alma Hoffman. Her standing in the family was second only to Regulus. Her authority was unquestionable, and no one dared defy her commands.

“Aunt Alma, save me!” Hank was ecstatic at Alma’s appearance. He kept calling out to her for help, looking like he had seen his savior.

“Madam Alma, why are you here?” After Dahlia returned to her senses, she immediately went up to greet her. However, in the next second, Alma landed a resounding slap across Dahlia’s face, stunning everyone into silence.

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Chapter 704

“Huh?” Dahlia clutched her burning face, feeling confused. She never provoked Alma. She wondered why Alma hit her as soon as they met.

“Hey, you crazy bitch! How dare you hurt my daughter? You need to be taught a lesson!” Florence lost her temper immediately after she witnessed her daughter slapped. She rolled up her sleeves, prepared for a fight.

“How dare you!” At that moment, a huge man stepped forward, and said with a fierce tone, “Be careful of how you speak to my grandma, or else I’ll shut your mouth up forever!”

Intimidated by the man’s imposing manner, Florence stopped in her tracks but continued with her insults. “What? You think I’m afraid of you because you have more men?”

“Security! Chase these people out of here!” Julie ordered

“Chase us out?” The man sneered coldly and said, “The entire Nicholson Corp, belongs to our family. Who would dare chase us out?”

“Oh, you have quite the attitude. Who the hell are you? How dare you be so arrogant?” Julie

mocked

“I’m Julian Nicholson, Regulus Nicholson’s eldest grandson!” The man puffed up his chest slightly with a proud look and continued, “As for my grandma, she’s the Nicholson family’s matriarch!”

“The Nicholson family’s matriarch?” Julie and Florence were shocked by his revelation. Their earlier arrogance vanished instantly and was replaced by fear.

Among the Glenstead Nicholsons, the matriarch was only second in power to the patriarch, Regulus Nicholson. She had the power to mobilize all the resources of the Nicholson family freely, and a single word from her could

determine the fate of many lives. They couldn't afford to offend these prominent and powerful figures.

"Hmph! What a bunch of ignorant country bumpkins!" Julian sneered with disdain.

Julie and Florence exchanged glances, remaining silent.

"Madam Alma, I don't understand what I have done to make you angry." Dahlia took a deep breath, trying her best to keep her composure.

"What? Do I need a reason to teach you a lesson?" Alma said coldly. Dahlia frowned at her words. They were simple, yet they carried an overwhelming sense of authority.

"Madam Alma, there is nothing wrong with teaching me a lesson, but can you at least tell me what I did wrong?" Dahlia's expression never wavered.

"Hank is one of my men. Look at how you hurt him. Don't you think you deserve a lesson for that?" Alma questioned.

"Madam Alma, there is a reason for everything. You should be asking what Hank has done." Dahlia stood her ground.

"I don't care what he did. He's not someone you can touch" Alma's tone was stern. "You should think twice before beating someone up. If you dare beat up my people, don't blame me for what I

do next!" Dahlia furrowed her brows upon hearing her words. She didn't expect Alma to be so

overbearing.

"Hey! Be reasonable. Hank is at fault. How can you blame us?" Julie couldn't hold back her anger any longer.

"Reasonable? Hmph! Everything I said is the most reasonable!" Alma's expression was frosty.

"You-!" Julie gritted her teeth. In the end, she had no choice but to remain silent since Alma had a few powerful bodyguards behind her.

“Madam Alma, Hank hatched a plan and had my brother killed. Are you going to protect someone like him?” Dahlia’s expression grew cold.

“That’s right! He must pay for killing my son!” Florence yelled.

“How would I know if you are telling the truth? Do you have any evidence?” Alma’s expression never faltered

“The evidence is here. Please have a look.” Dahlia received the phone and tapped on the video before handing it to Alma.

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Chapter 705

Dahlia thought that would be enough to change Alma's mind. However, in the end, instead of watching the video, Alma threw the phone on the ground. She stomped on the phone hard, shattering it completely.

"The evidence is gone now," Alma said impassively.

Dahlia and the others' expressions darkened instantly upon witnessing the scene. How could she openly destroy the evidence to cover up for the murderer? Where was justice in this?

"Madam Alma, what do you mean by this?" Dahlia frowned.

"You saw everything. Is there a problem?" Alma asked with a scrutinizing expression.

"If you insist on doing this, then I'll have to report it to Grandpa Regulus." Dahlia's expression was frosty.

"Do you think you are worthy of using the patriarch's name to threaten me?" Alma scoffed.

"Why not? Sir Regulus himself has appointed my daughter as his successor, and she will rise as the new matriarch of the Nicholson family soon. When that time comes, all of you will have to show deference to her!" Florence's voice gained volume as her confidence grew.

"Successor? New matriarch? Who said so?" Alma looked at them with condescension.

"Sir Regulus said so himself. If you don't believe us, you can call and ask him yourself!" Florence declared and lifted her head proudly.

"Call him? I'm afraid that won't be possible now." Alma continued impassively, "Last night, Regulus suffered from a brain ailment. His condition is critical. He is now in a coma."

"What? A coma?" The sudden news left everyone in shock.

“How could that be? Grandpa Regulus was perfectly fine last night. How did he suddenly fall ill?” Dahlia exclaimed in astonishment. When Regulus called last night, he sounded strong and

energetic, not like someone who was ill. How could he just suddenly fall ill overnight?

“With Regulus’ age and the burden of his responsibilities, which led to exhaustion, he fell ill. As a result, I am now in charge of the family’s affairs. Any objections?” Alma’s icy gaze swept across

the room.

“I ...” Florence and Julie exchanged glances, both at a loss for words. Dahlia, on the other hand, had

her brows locked in a frown, her expression gloomy. They were just celebrating her promotion not long ago, but now, everything had changed in a blink of an eye.

“Alright, since there are no objections, I will take Hank away with me.” Alma gestured, and the two bodyguards behind her helped Hank to his feet.

Hank chuckled gleefully. “You didn’t expect it to turn out this way, did you?” Hank taunted. sarcastically, “That’s right, I hired someone to kill James. But, so what? Without evidence and power, you can only watch as I go free. How sad!”

“You-!” Florence and the others were seething with anger, but none of them had the power to do anything.

1/2

Chapter 705

“And you.” Hank turned his attention to Dustin and mocked, “Rhys, even when you tried so hard to have me captured and dragged here, you still had to let me go. How do you feel? Are you mad? You should be! It’s so much fun to see you guys stare at me in anger, unable to do a thing. Hahaha!” As Hank spoke, he suddenly howled in laughter, displaying an unruly attitude. He was the epitome of a dickhead taking advantage of his backing.

Right at that moment, Dustin suddenly moved forward and kicked Hank hard in the abdomen. A deafening blast reverberated through the room as Hank was sent flying, crashing through the glass windows. He plummeted from the 30th floor, meeting a gruesome end.

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Chapter 706

Everyone was quiet as a dull thud was heard. None of them could react in time to what happened. It was all too sudden. One second, he was laughing uncontrollably. Then, the very next second, he fell to his death.

“How dare you? How dare you murder so openly?! Who gave you the audacity?” After a brief moment to collect herself, Alma roared furiously. Hank was not only someone who worked for her, but he was also her nephew! How could this bastard just kill Hank on a whim and blatantly disregard her?

“Madam Alma, please don’t go around accusing others! I did nothing! He was the one who leaped off of his own initiative,” Dustin said nonchalantly

“There were so many of us watching you. How dare you deny it?” Alma pressed with evident displeasure.

“Who saw it?” Dustin looked at Nelson and the rest. “Did any of you see it?”

“No, I saw nothing.” Nelson shook his head.

“Did you see it then, Dahlia?” Dustin turned to look at her.

“Me neither.” Dahlia, too, shook her head. Hank killed her brother. He deserved it.

“There you go, nobody saw it.” Dustin shrugged and said with a smile, “Madam Alma, is your age catching up with you already? Maybe you need to get your eyes checked.”

“Playing the fool with me, aren’t you? I’m telling you, you lot are messing with the wrong person!” Alma growled with a dark expression.

“Madam Alma, you have to be careful of your words. Please provide evidence for everything, or else refrain from making unfounded claims,” Dustin said airily. “Oh, right, I’ve noticed that you’re pretty pale, you’ve barely got anything holding your skin to your bones, your gaze looks dull, you’re emotionally unstable, and your fingers tend to twitch every so often. I’m guessing that you don’t have long to live. I suggest you take care of your health.”

“You impudent bastard! How dare you curse my grandmother? Do you have a death wish?” Julian fumed, ready to throw hands.

Florence and the rest of them were also startled at how brazen Dustin was to offend the matriarch of the Nicholson family, but they didn't show it.

“Don't you dare try to provoke me, you brat! You'll regret it.” Alma spat through gritted teeth, her gaze icy cold.

“Madam Alma, you best keep your temper at bay. Getting angry often may speed up your aging,” Dustin advised calmly.

“You pesky bastard! I see you're the type to only cry and regret when it's too late!” Alma could not hold it in any longer. She roared exasperatedly, “Men! Get him!”

“Yes, ma'am!” Her bodyguards immediately charged forward on her orders.

“Don't you dare lay a finger on Mr. Rhys!” Nelson instantly pulled his sword out and began slicing

his way through them to protect Dustin. The men he brought with him today were all elites in their gang. Several bodyguards were no match for them at all. In just minutes, all the Nicholson bodyguards were on the ground, all battered up.

Alma's expression darkened further at the sight. Julian, too, was beyond furious. He hadn't brought any men with him, as he had rushed over in a hurry. Had he known this would happen, he would have brought the best guards the Nicholson family had along with him.

“Dahlia Nicholson! How dare you! Are you trying to go against the family?” Alma roared. Seeing that she couldn't use force against them, she immediately turned on Dahlia and put the blame on her.

“Madam Alma, I was the one who beat them up. If there's anything you're not happy with, you should come at me instead,” Dustin reminded her nonchalantly.

“Hah! You lot are all in this together!” Alma yelled angrily. “Dahlia Nicholson! You let your guards go against your elders and harm your family. I am

officially dismissing you from your position! From now on, you are no longer chairman of Nicholson Corp.!"

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Chapter 707

“Dismissed?” Everyone was shocked by Alma’s announcement.

“Do you have the authority to do that? My daughter was personally appointed by the patriarch of the Nicholson family! You have no right to dismiss her!” Florence was furious.

“Exactly! Ever since Dahlia assumed her position as chairman, she has brought in great revenue for the company! She managed to bring in over 500 million in profit within just a month! What right do you have to dismiss her from her position?” Julie was extremely pissed by Alma’s actions.

Before Dahlia became chairman of Nicholson Corp., it had always been in a state of loss. It was only through Dahlia’s hard work and determination to reform the company that it was brought back to life. Now that it was finally starting to pick up, Alma was going to dismiss her as she wished. How ungrateful!

“I am now standing in as head of the family, so what I say goes! None of you have the right to interfere with my decisions!” Alma bellowed.

“Y-you you’re too much!” Florence and Julie were beyond furious, but there was absolutely nothing they could do.

As for Dahlia, she only watched with a dark expression and said nothing. She might be the chairman, but a majority of the company’s shares were held by the Nicholsons. She had no grounds to object to their decision.

“Madam Alma, are you sure you want to do this?” Dustin squinted his eyes at Alma

“What? Are you afraid now? It’s too late! My decision is final, and nobody is changing that!” Alma was arrogant, thinking she had the upper hand.

“Madam Alma, don’t say I didn’t warn you, but I’m the only one who can cure you. If you insist on being stubborn, I’m afraid your days are numbered,” Dustin said coolly

“Nonsense! Do you think I’d buy your treacherous lies?” Alma looked annoyed.

“It’s up to you whether you believe me or not. After all, it’s not my life that’s at stake.” Dustin seemed unbothered.

“Hmph! What a load of crap! I don’t want to waste my breath with the likes of you. Let’s go!” With that, Alma turned and left with her men in tow.

She had not been able to find fault with Dahlia in the past. But now that the opportunity presented itself, she would grab ahold of it and use it against Dahlia. She was going to be merciless.

“This is all your fault, Rhys! If you didn’t attack them, Dahlia would not have been dismissed!” The moment Alma left, Florence unleashed all her anger on Dustin.

“That’s right! Dahlia had a bright future ahead of her, even possibly becoming the next head of the Nicholson family! But because of you, now everything’s gone down the drain!” Julie complained.

“This isn’t Dustin’s fault. He did that for us.” Dahlia spoke up for Dustin because, though he acted impulsively, he did nothing wrong.

his way through them to protect Dustin. The men he brought with him today were all elites in their gang. Several bodyguards were no match for them at all. In just minutes, all the Nicholson bodyguards were on the ground, all battered up.

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An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 708 -

Chapter 708

As Alma left Nicholson Corp., she was in a terrible mood. A person of her status has never had anyone question her decisions. But today, she was publicly challenged and even lost one of her loyal aides. There was no doubt that she’d be in a foul mood. However, they are currently in Balerno. If she wanted to get revenge, she’d have to arrange for her trusted confidants to come over from Glenstead.

“Grandmother, Dahlia was personally appointed by Grandfather to be chairman of the company. Will it put you in a predicament when Grandfather comes around to find that you’ve dismissed her from her position without consulting him about it?” Julian asked hesitantly. Although Alma’s actions had pleased him greatly, he was certain that such overbearing actions would be frowned.

upon.

“What do I have to fear when we don’t even know if he’s ever going to come around?” Alma said nonchalantly.

“Isn’t Grandfather just suffering from some of his old ailments? He should be alright after resting up for a bit, shouldn’t he?” Julian was curious about what Alma meant by that.

“It isn’t an old ailment. I poisoned him. He most likely won’t ever be coming around anymore,” Alma said coldly.

“What?” Julian felt like he’d been struck by lightning as he stared at Alma in bewilderment. “Gr grandmother, you’re joking, are you?” Julian said in a trembling voice, his eyes grew wide as

saucers.

“Do I look like I’m joking to you?” Alma looked at him frostily, her gaze just as cold to match.

“B-but why? Why would you do that?” Julian seemed to lose his cool as a cold sweat broke out. It was a major crime to harm the family head. There were unthinkable consequences if anyone found out. Most importantly, his grandparents had been married for half a century! Though they did not publicly show their affection for one another, they had been through thick and thin for 50 years! Julian could not comprehend why his grandmother would want to poison his grandfather. Was there some sort of deep grudge between them?

“Your grandfather had not been in the right mind when he thought of appointing Dahlia as the next head of the clan. He had intended to announce his decision to the whole family today. I advised him against it, hoping he would change his mind. But the old geezer was so stubborn and insisted on doing so. I was left with no choice. I could not let him do that, so I poisoned him last night. He’ll spend the remainder of his life on the bed,” Alma said calmly, as though it were the most reasonable thing to do.

“B-but even so, y-you shouldn’t have harmed him.” Julian gulped dryly.

“Who do you think I’m doing this for? I’m doing this for you!” Alma huffed.

“You’re my grandson and the first legitimately born grandson of the Nicholson family. No matter what, you are the rightful heir of the family. But look at what that old man did. Not only did he not put you in a position of importance, he even insists on appointing an illegitimately born brat as the next family head! I consider myself merciful for not taking his life!”

Julian fell silent at that, his thoughts were a mess. No matter how he saw it, he was indeed the

one who should have been the next head of the family. He genuinely refused to accept Dahlia as the next head.

“Alright now, stop overthinking things. When the time is right, I’ll support you so that you become the next head of the family. Whoever stands in your way must die!” Alma said decisively

“Thank you for your support, Grandmother!” Julian quickly came to terms with what Alma said. Since his grandfather no longer seemed to be thinking straight, he might as well just stay in bed. In the future, he would be the one in control of the Nicholson family!

“Grandmother, I’m just curious about one thing. Since Dahlia is the threat, why didn’t you take action on her instead?” Julian suddenly quipped.

“Even if I kill Dahlia, there’s always going to be a second one. The Nicholson family has a lot of descendants, and they are all threats to you. To solve the issue once and for all, we have to address the problem at its root.”

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Chapter 709

“I see. But why did you get Hank to murder James, then? Isn’t that unnecessary?” Julian wondered why his grandmother would waste such effort to have James dead. James was an unimportant side character, and it was a waste of resources to even deal with him.

“James? I don’t even know who that is. Why would I want to kill him? I suppose Hank decided to take things into his own hands and just get rid of him. Anyway, that’s not important. It doesn’t affect us in the least what happened to him.” Alma waved her hand dismissively.

As she spoke, she suddenly shuddered, and her breathing became erratic. A piercing pain hit her and spread out across her entire body.

“Are you alright, Grandmother?” Julian immediately noticed that Alma didn’t look good.

“It’s nothing new. Go and get me my medicine from the car. Hurry,” Alma instructed.

“Yes, Grandmother.” Julian dared not hesitate even for a moment and quickly ran over to the Rolls- Royce parked in front of them before he started rummaging around. In no time, he came back with a purple bottle.

“Grandmother, your medicine.”

Alma quickly opened the bottle and poured out its contents, only to find it empty. “Where’s the medicine? Have I run out of them so soon?” She frowned

as the pain in her body increased in intensity, and she began shivering uncontrollably. "Quick! Go, search Hank's body! My medicine is with him! Hurry!" Alma reacted quickly.

She did a mental calculation and recalled that it was scheduled for today the Killians should have provided her with the medicine. Previously, Hank had always been in charge of retrieving the medicine from them and then secretly sending it over to Glenstead and into her hands. Usually, the transaction should have already been completed by this time.

"Hang on, Grandmother." Julian immediately left with two men and hurried over to where Hank had fallen to his death.

A short while later, he came running back, drenched in sweat. "Grandmother, I've searched him thoroughly. The medicine is not with Hank."

"He doesn't have it? Could it be possible that he hasn't gotten it yet?" Alma frowned and hastily urged Julian, "Call the Killians' butler right away. Have him send the medicine over!"

By then, Alma was already having difficulties standing up and had broken out in a sweat.

"Yes, Grandmother!" Julian fished out his phone and made a call. But nobody answered. He made multiple calls, but they were all left unanswered.

"Grandmother, I can't seem to reach the Killians' butler!" Julian was at his wit's end.

"That useless piece of trash! He's never there when you need him!" Alma gritted her teeth as the pain got unbearable. "Call Mr. Killian immediately. Ask him what all this is about!"

Without a moment to waste, Julian made another call. He managed to get hold of Mr. Killian and asked him a series of questions to clarify the situation. His face fell. "Grandmother, Mr. Killian said that the medicine had been passed to their butler, and the transaction was completed not too long ago." Julian looked perplexed.

"If the transaction has been made, then where's my medicine?" Alma was panicking.

“Mr. Killian said that someone showed up to disrupt the transaction. The medicine has likely been intercepted.

“Who? Who dares take my medicine?” Alma roared, furious.

“They do not know yet. But they are looking into it now.” Julian shook his head.

“Hurry! Go, find out who it is! I don’t give a damn how many men you dispatch or what price you have to pay. Get me my medicine!” Alma roared.

“Yes, ma’am!” All their men dispersed without a moment’s hesitation.

“Please calm down, Grandmother, I’ll help you to the car.” Julian helped his grandmother over to the car for a rest. But before they could get far, Alma’s legs gave out, and she fell weakly to the ground. Her body convulsed, and she foamed at the mouth as her condition worsened.

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Chapter 710

“Grandmother!” Julian was terribly shaken when he saw Alma collapse suddenly. Without a moment to spare, he quickly started the car and sent her to the hospital.

After the doctors tended to her, Alma was no longer in life-threatening danger. But her condition was far from good.

“Doctor, how’s my grandmother doing?” Julian immediately went up to the doctor the moment he stepped out of the ward.

“Mr. Nicholson, has your grandmother been frequently taking some special medication?” the doctor asked.

“Yes. She’s been feeling unwell, so she takes some supplements occasionally,” Julian admitted.

“I’m afraid those aren’t as simple as supplements.” The doctor shook his head. “The patient’s heavily reliant on the medication, and she has great amounts of toxins in her body. And with her old age, I’m afraid there isn’t much we can do for her.”

“How is this possible? This is the best hospital there is! Is there nothing you can do?” Julian frowned

The best solution now is to let the patient resume her medication to keep her body running for the time being. If we stop the medication so suddenly, I’m afraid she’ll have less than three days left to live.” The doctor sighed.

Julian was shocked by what the doctor had said. If his grandmother were to die, what was he going to do? He wasn’t the head of the family yet. Without his grandmother backing him up and his grandfather in a coma, things would be difficult for him in the future.

“Julian...” Right then, Alma, who was on the bed, slowly opened her eyes. Though the doctor had administered her painkillers, it was only a temporary relief that did not solve the problem at hand.

“Yes, Grandmother?” Julian swiftly went up to her and held her hand.

“My medicine... Have you found it yet?” Alma asked weakly.

“There’s no news of it yet.” Julian shook his head.

“How about Mr. Killian? Have him send another bottle of the medicine over. I’ll pay double the price,” Alma said.

“Mr. Killian said that the medicine is too rare and that there’s a limited production of it annually, so even if they manufactured it immediately, it’ll take at least a month for us to get it,” Julian said sombrely

“A month? I can’t wait that long! Think of something else!” Alma was getting anxious.

“I...” Julian was at a loss for words. He couldn’t get his hands on the medicine, and there was nothing the doctor could do. What was he supposed to do?

“Ma’am, we’ve got news!” One of the Nicholson guards barged in and reported. “Based on our investigations, it was a man by the name of Dustin Rhys who intercepted your medicine.”

“Who’s Dustin Rhys?” Alma frowned. She could not recall knowing such a person, even after

racking her brain.

“Ma’am, Dustin Rhys is the person who kicked Hank off the building!” the bodyguard replied.

“So it was him!” Alma’s expression darkened. “So you mean to say that Dahlia has my medicine now?”

“That b*tch! She looks like a decent person. Who would have guessed that she’s so rotten within? How dare she mess with your medicine?” Julian hissed through clenched jaws. From how he saw it, this was Dahlia’s ploy. She had planned to threaten his grandmother by taking her medicine away. How ambitious and wicked!

“Julian, go find Dahlia right away! Make her give me back my medicine!” Alma spat.

“Yes, Grandmother!” Julian immediately left with several of their men upon receiving her orders.

Over in the chairman’s office at Nicholson Corp.

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Chapter 711

“Dahlia, are we really leaving?” Julie seemed reluctant to part with the huge and luxurious office. Due to her position as the chairman’s secretary, she got to enjoy lots of benefits. No matter where she went, people were ready to shower her with attention and flattery. As a result, she even slept with several young and attractive men. But now that Dahlia has been dismissed from her position as chairman, Julia was no longer her secretary.

“We’ve got no choice. They have the final say. Before the head of the family comes around, we have no choice but to obey their instructions for now.” After she cleared up the office, Dahlia sighed softly. It had not been easy for her to get to where she was. Of course, she wasn’t ready to give up yet. But Alma was now in charge, and Dahlia had no means of going up against her.

“This is all your fault! If you hadn’t crossed the matriarch of the Nicholson family, Dahlia would not have been dismissed from her position!” Julie turned to glare at Dustin, who was leisurely sipping on a cup of coffee. They were almost about to be kicked out of the company, and there he was, still eating and drinking like he had no care in the world! How heartless!

“Why are you so flustered? Didn’t I tell you that it wouldn’t be long before the old lady comes and apologize? She’ll even grovel at Dahlia’s feet to ask her to resume her position as chairman’ Dustin said confidently

“Hmph! She’ll do that? Do you think I’m naive even to believe you?” Julie rolled her eyes at him. Alma was the matriarch of the Nicholson family and had noble status. Dustin might be well-off financially, but he was no match for the prominent Nicholson family.

“Rhys! Don’t forget what you promised. If Alma doesn’t do as you predicted, you’ll have to return us the plot of land free of charge!” Florence suddenly quipped. Though her daughter had lost her position as chairman, it would make up for their loss if they could get their hands on that plot of

land

“Don’t worry. I never go back on my word,” Dustin assured.

“Alright, the car’s here. Let’s go.” With one final lingering glance around the office, Dahlia turned and left.

Just as they made their way out of the building, a white Toyota Alphard pulled up in front of them. The car door opened, and Julian and several bodyguards came out. They stormed up to them angrily.

“Dahlia, isn’t that Julian? Why is he back?” Julia wondered aloud.

“Are they back to give us trouble?” Florence cowered, an unknown panic creeping up on her.

“They’re not here to give us trouble; they’re here to beg us for a favor.” Dustin smirked.

“Hey! Are you delusional? Don’t you see the vicious look on their faces? What makes you think they’re here to beg for anything? You should thank your lucky stars if they don’t just come up to you and start chopping you up!” Julia huffed angrily.

“Dahlia Nicholson!” Julian roared the moment he got near. “Give me back my grandmother’s medicine right now!”

“Medicine? What medicine?” Dahlia was caught off guard and stared at him quizzically.

“Hah! You’re playing the fool now? You think we don’t know that you’ve sent someone to intercept my grandmother’s medicine?” Julian glared threateningly at Dahlia

“This has nothing to do with her. I was the one who did it.” Dustin took two steps forward and said with full confidence, “The medicine you’re referring to, I assume, is this? The Zirtanium?” He took out a purple bottle from his pocket.

“That’s right! Give it back!” Julian’s eyes lit up, and he immediately reached out, ready to snatch it out of Dustin’s hand. But Dustin easily dodged him

“What’s the meaning of this?” Julian asked with a dark expression.

“I can give you the medicine. But I have three conditions,” Dustin said calmly.

“You have no right to talk about conditions! Give me the medicine now, or I’ll see to it that today is the day you die!” Julian threatened.

Without another word, Dustin lifted his hand and delivered a hard slap across Julian’s face.”

Where are your manners? Can’t you speak properly?”

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Chapter 712

Thrown off by the sudden slap, Julian held his burning cheek with his hand in disbelief. No one had ever dared to hit him all his life, so it took some time for the fact to settle in with him.

Florence and the rest of them exchanged looks between themselves and stared with bewilderment. Dustin was too bold to slap the eldest legitimate grandson of the Nicholson family! “You... How dare you slap me?” When Julian finally came to his senses, his expression was dark, and his gaze looked like he could murder them at any moment.

“Yes, I’ve slapped you. So what? You speak so arrogantly. Did you think you didn’t deserve that?” Dustin countered calmly.

“You impudent bastard! Get him!” Julian bellowed.

“Yes, sir!” The bodyguards pulled out their weapons and charged toward Dustin.

But before they even managed to lay a finger on him, Dustin kicked each of them and sent them all sprawling to the ground. Just like that, the fight was over.

Julian’s face fell as he stumbled backward. They were the most well-trained bodyguards the Nicholson family had’ And Dustin managed to wipe them all out single-handedly? It was clear that he was a skilled martial artist.

“Now, can we speak like civilized adults?” Dustin asked.

“How dare you, Rhys? Do you know what you’ve done? You’re blatantly challenging the Nicholson family!” Julian roared as he glared at him.

“Cut the crap. If you wish to strike a deal, talk properly. If you do not wish to do so, I’ll just dispose of the medicine as I see fit.” Dustin had had enough of Julian’s big talk.

“You-” Julian gritted his teeth. But in the end, he swallowed his anger and asked, “What on earth do you want?”

“I told you, I have three conditions. If you agree to my conditions, I’ll give you the medicine,” Dustin stated calmly.

“What are your conditions?” Julian asked with annoyance.

“First, I want you to apologize to Dahlia sincerely, and I want you to mean every word. Dustin held up one finger.

“Apologize? Why should I?” Julian’s pride would not allow him to do so. He was the first legitimate grandson of the Nicholson family, the one who should have been the rightful heir. It was embarrassing for him to apologize to some illegitimately born brat of the family.

“Because I have this.” Dustin raised the purple bottle in his hand. “Now, will you do it?”

Julian faltered for a moment, but his eyes still burned with rage. But for his grandmother’s sake, he complied and went up to Dahlia with his head hung low. “I’m sorry. I apologize for my previous

actions.”

Dahlia, Julie, and Florence were all astonished by Julian’s actions. They had never imagined that Dustin would be able to deliver what he had said earlier on. He had indeed succeeded in getting

Julian to apologize without a fuss.

“Are you happy now?” Julian straightened up and asked frostily, “What’s the second condition?”

“It’s simple. Let Dahlia return to her original position.” Dustin raised a second finger.

“Okay. I can promise you that.” After a few seconds of contemplation, Julian nodded.

“This is great!” Julia cheered happily. “Dahlia, we don’t need to leave anymore! You’re still the chairman of the company!”

“This kid is pretty impressive! But there goes my plot of land worth two billion.” Florence shook her head disappointedly.

However, Dahlia wasn’t too surprised. Instead, she fell deep into thought.

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Chapter 713

It would not change a thing if Dahlia was reinstated. If the Nicholsons weren’t happy with her performance, they could still dismiss her at any moment they wished.

“And the third condition?” Julian pressed.

“My third condition is for you to transfer all the shares of Nicholson Corp. to Dahlia with absolutely no charges.” Dustin raised three fingers.

“What? All the shares? You might as well rob a bank or something!” Julian’s frown deepened. Nicholson Corp. was worth over 100 billion dollars, and the company had a promising future ahead. With the shares that they currently had, they would be worth at least 60 to 70 billion if they converted them into cash. Even for a family as wealthy as the Nicholsons, it was considered a huge amount.

“It’s quicker to extort you than to rob,” Dustin said reasonably. “Anyway, I’ve listed my conditions. It’s up to you whether you agree to them.”

“No way! That’s impossible!” Julian turned him down without much thought. Once he becomes the family head, these assets would all be his. How could he just give them away like that?

“Well, if you do not agree, then forget it.” Dustin gave a nonchalant shrug.

“Dustin Rhys! I have already fulfilled your ridiculous conditions! Not only have I apologized, but I even reinstated Dahlia to her position as chairman. You better not push your luck!” Julian did not look like he would bend to Dustin’s will anymore.

“Let’s be real. Zirtanium costs a bomb. Of course, if you want it, you have to pay a price.” Dustin shook the bottle, and the pills rattled inside.

“Dustin Rhys! Don’t bite off more than you can chew! You can’t have the shares of Nicholson Corp. If you insist on having it, you’re just asking for trouble. And if it comes to that, don’t think that Dahlia will be reinstated to her position of chairman anymore!” Julian threatened.

Florence and Julie’s expressions immediately darkened when they heard that. All they wanted was for Dahlia to maintain her position as chairman. They dare not even dream about the company’s shares. They knew that if they were too greedy, they might end up with nothing at all,

and that would be terrible for them.

“Dustin, take what you can get and stop while you’re ahead. Pushing too hard will get you nowhere!” Florence went up and persuaded him.

“That’s right... We can’t afford to offend the Nicholsons. It’s good enough that we can benefit a little from this,” Julie echoed.

“I need to make the most of this opportunity. We won’t be getting another opportunity like this anymore.” Dustin shook his head stubbornly.

“What do you mean you need to make the most of this? Who do you think you are? Do you believe that you can get the better of the Nicholsons?” Florence was on edge. She considered themselves lucky enough that Dahlia was reinstated. It would be greedy of them to ask for more.

“Dustin, you have only two options. Give me the medicine, and Dahlia gets reinstated, or I’ll give

you hell, and you end up with nothing. The choice is yours to make.” Seeing Florence back down, gave Julian the confidence he needed to throw his weight around.

“I stand by what I said. If you’re unwilling to give up the shares, then we don’t have a deal,” Dustin insisted.

“Are you really so adamant about burning bridges?” Julian snarled.

“Don’t scare me. I’m easily frightened. Who knows? I might just tremble and drop this bottle of medicine into the sewers. We’d be in trouble then, wouldn’t we?” Dustin gave the bottle another

shake.

“You!” Julian was so furious. But he had said and done all that he could, and nothing seemed to

work!

“If you can’t call the shots, call your grandmother. Ask her if she agrees to my condition.” Dustin suggested to Julian

Julian took a deep breath and fished out his phone, giving his grandmother a call. It was true that he wasn’t in a position to call the shots on such a huge matter that concerned the entire family.

“Hello, Grandmother. The medicine is indeed with Dustin. But, he has a condition that I can’t agree with...” Julian started discussing the issue with Alma once she picked up the call. His expression was quite a sight to behold, it changed with every second that passed. No one could tell what Alma was saying on the other end of the line.

“Dustin! Are you out of your mind? If the matriarch of the Nicholson family loses her temper, not only will we not be getting anything out of this, but we’ll also be implicated and get into trouble because of you!” Julie grumbled.

“Rhys! If my daughter loses her position as chairman because of you again, you’re never going to hear the end of this!” Florence was agitated.

Wouldn’t things have turned out just fine if he’d just agreed to give them the medicine? Why did he have to insist on making them pay such a ridiculously high price for it? Things would get out of hand if they burned bridges!

Just as Florence and Julie were about to lose their cool, Julian ended the call with a frown on his face. “Grandmother has agreed to your condition

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Chapter 714

“Madam Alma agreed?” Both Florence and Julie were dumbstruck when they heard that. All their grumbles and doubts transformed into pure shock. They hadn’t expected the Nicholsons to agree to the unreasonable request from Dustin. Those were shares worth billions! Could they bear to let it go like that? Wasn’t that too much of a price to pay?

At that moment, even Dahlia looked surprised. She could not comprehend why the Nicholsons were willing to pay such a ridiculous price for just a bottle of medicine.

“Since she’s agreed, then get your grandmother to make a trip here to sign the papers. We’ll make a fair transaction.” Dustin smiled. He wasn’t the least bit surprised by Alma’s choice. He knew very well what people heavily reliant on Zirtanium were like. They would never be able to resist the temptation. After all, the Nicholsons had trillions in assets! Sacrificing one company wouldn’t hurt them too much.

When Julian finally drove off, Dahlia could no longer hold back her curiosity. “Dustin, what was that medicine you had with you? How did you manage to make Madam Alma buy it at such a ridiculous price?”

“That was Zirtanium. It’s a type of chronic poison. But for Madam Alma, this is what she needs to stay alive.” Dustin explained,

“So that’s what it was.” Dahlia nodded in understanding. No wonder the Nicholsons yielded to his absurd request. So it turns out that Dustin held Alma’s lifeline in his hands.

She had initially been worried that the Nicholsons would go back on their word and dismiss her from her position as chairman after reinstating her. But now that Dustin had gotten the shares of the company from them, there was no way they could do that anymore.

“The older a person gets, the more they value their life. To Madam Alma, paying several tens of billions to live another year amounts to nothing.” Dustin smiled.

“This Zirtanium, where did you get it from?” Dahlia wondered

“I intercepted it from Hank Hoffman, of course.” Dustin wasn’t one to hide his actions.

“Hank Hoffman?” Astounded, Dahlia quickly understood what he meant. “So you mean to say that you used what had originally belonged to Madam Alma to threaten her?”

“You could say that.” Dustin nodded.

“Um...” Dahlia and the rest of them were all rendered speechless

It was one thing to be greedy but to threaten someone with what had originally been theirs without even having to give anything up for it was something else. Dustin was basically a con man! Despite being shocked, they had to admit that his ways were indeed effective.

What followed next was a smooth transaction between both parties. When Alma arrived, she signed the papers that approved the transfer of shares to Dahlia without any hesitation.

Once Dustin made sure that there was nothing wrong with the signed papers, he returned the Zirtanium to her.

Dahlia finally heaved a sigh of relief when she saw that the company’s shares were now hers

From that moment on, she would have full control over Nicholson Corp.

As for Florence and Julie, it would be an understatement to say that they were over the moon because they would also benefit from Dahlia’s ownership of the company.

“Grandmother, do we give them the shares?” Back in their car, Julian was very upset when he saw how pleased the group of them looked.

“Hmph! I’ll give it to them now. But we’ll just wait and see if they’re able to handle it!” Alma didn’t look any happier about the situation than Julian did. “Go back to Glenstead and get our men here immediately! I want them to give back everything that they’ve taken from us and more!”

“Yes, Grandmother!” A cruel smile broke out on Julian’s face. As expected from his grandmother. She wasn’t one to let anyone get the better of her! Dahlia and the rest of them were up for a tough

time ahead!

“Dustin, you’ve helped me out once again! Thank you.” It was rare to see such a radiant smile on Dahlia’s face.

“Why are you thanking him? He was the one who brought all this trouble on us! He was only doing what he needed to do to rectify the problem!” Florence huffed.

“Exactly!” Julie nodded. “Dahlia, never praise your men too much. It gets to their heads.”

“Hey, isn’t it time both of you upheld your end of the deal?” Dustin wasn’t pleased by what he heard.

“Deal? What deal?” They looked at each other quizzically.

“Don’t go back on your word. We promised this. If you lose the bet, you’ll have to bark like a dog,”

Dustin reminded.

“Who agreed to that? Why don’t I remember ever agreeing on something like that? Do you recall this, Aunt Florence?” Julie resorted to playing dumb.

“Of course not!” After a slight pause, Florence promptly shook her head. “Rhys! Don’t go around spreading lies! We never said anything like that!”

“You’re playing dumb, are you?”

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Chapter 715

Dustin simply smiled and pulled out his phone before playing the voice recording of their conversation. Their agreement on the bet was loud and clear. After listening to the recording, both Florence and Julie blushed a crimson red. They hadn’t expected Dustin to record it.

“Dahlia, there are things to handle in the company, so I’ll be off now!” Julie quickly wormed her way out.

“Oh! Right! I’ll go help her out.” Florence nodded furiously. Then, the two of them escaped in a flash, without a moment to lose.

“That’s just how they are. Please don’t take it to heart.” Dahlia was exasperated too.

“Forget it. I’ll let it slip this time. But only for your sake.” Dustin appeared benevolent.

“Thank you. You’re the best!” Dahlia smiled. Then, as though having a sudden thought, she bit her lip and said shyly, “Dustin, I appreciate you always being by my side. Why don’t we get married again?”

“What?” Dustin was stupefied the moment he heard what she said. For a moment, he simply didn’t know how to react!

“To be honest, I’ve been giving it some serious thought for the past few days. I had acted too rashly in the past. I’d like to make up for my mistakes, and I hope that things can return to how they were before.” Dahlia had a serious look on her face. Because of how shy she felt, both her ears were flushed red, but still, she plucked up the courage to say the words that had been on her mind for quite some time. She just never found the right opportunity to say them. She knew that if she didn’t say them now, someday he’d be taken by someone else.

Dustin began to sweat profusely. Had it been in the past, he would have nodded straight away without a moment’s hesitation, but now, things were different. He realized that his feelings were more complicated now that Natasha was present.

On the one hand, it was his ex-wife, with whom he had three years’ worth of memories together, and he still had lingering affection. On the other hand, it was a gentle and caring friend who had romantic feelings for him. He really could not choose between the two.

He considered himself both courageous and witty and was always decisive in various situations. However, when it came to love, he had to admit that he was a mess. Sometimes he resented himself for his indecisiveness when it came to things like this.

“What, are you not willing? Or do you despise me?” Dahlia’s brows knitted together slightly when she saw Dustin staying silent.

“Of course not! It’s just...” Dustin broke off mid-sentence.

“So, it’s because you can’t bear to part with Natasha?” Dahlia had a wistful expression. “Then answer this: between Natasha and me, who do you like better?”

Dustin’s thoughts became even more of a mess when he heard that. Who did he like more? Honestly speaking, he didn’t know either!

Dustin was anxious as beads of sweat formed on his forehead. Then his phone began to ring. That

seemed to be a lifeline for Dustin, and he quickly fished his phone out to answer the call. “Hello? Who’s this?”

“Hey, Rhys! It’s me, Adam.” A familiar voice came from the other end of the line.

“Oh, hey buddy! Is anything the matter?” Dustin was pleased to receive the call from Adam. At least he proved himself useful in Dustin’s time of need.

“To be honest, I’ve got some good news for you.” Adam beamed and chuckled. “My sister has taken a leave from work, and she’s making her way to Millsburg as we speak.”

“Scarlet?” Dustin’s eyes widened. “What’s she coming here for?”

“To meet you, of course!” Adam feigned helplessness as he let out a sigh. “You have no idea how much she’s tortured me just to get out of me some information about you. I had no choice but to give in and tell her your whereabouts. Please don’t blame me for betraying you, brother. You have no idea what she is capable of. I really couldn’t take it any longer. I believe you have the means to handle her. Of course, you don’t need to worry too much. She doesn’t listen to anyone else but you. Everything will end up just fine if you can deal with her.”

“You fuc-”

“Oh right, I have some matters to attend to. I’ll hang up now. Good luck!”

Dustin was so frustrated that he was a hair’s breadth away from cursing, but before he could curse at him, Adam had already ended the call. Dustin could

only clench his teeth to suppress his rising anger. That bastard really knew how to make things difficult for him. He was already having such a hard time handling both Dahlia and Natasha at the same time. If another person were to be added to the equation, a catfight might just break out!

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 716 -

Chapter 716

Somewhere on the outskirts of Millsburg, in a military base, several thousand soldiers stood neatly at attention. From generals to privates, everyone stood with their backs straight. They all stood in well-arranged rows, and it was a grand sight to behold. Other than the usual troops, prominent figures from both the military and political fields were there. They all stood there in anticipation, a little nervous.

“General Winslow, will the Scarlet Warrior really be here today?” Dylan, who stood near the front, whispered to General Winslow, who stood in front of him. He had suddenly received notice from the army that the Goddess of War, Scarlet Spanner, would be visiting Millsburg. As a high-ranking commander of the Dark Panther Cavalry and a direct subordinate of Scarlet Spanner, he rushed over immediately.

“Of course! Don’t you see that both of her trusted aides are here?” General Winslow gestured for Dylan to look in front of them.

Dylan looked over, and just as General Winslow said, there were two graceful and stunning female generals standing at attention right in the front row. They were both major generals of the Dark Panther Cavalry and considered third-ranking officials. They stood out in stark contrast to all the other high-ranking officials around them just because they were Scarlet Spanner’s trusted confidants. Because of that, they held a higher status than those around them, so much so that even the second-ranking officials had to show them a certain level of respect.

As though noticing something amiss, one of the major generals turned around and met Dylan’s gaze with her own cold and stern gaze.

Startled, Dylan lowered his head guiltily, not daring to meet her gaze. When facing such a person of authority, his arrogance disappeared, and there was only fear. It was true that he looked down on others. Regardless of their gender, the generals of the Dark Panther Cavalry were all elites, whom he was in no position to look down on

Just then, a whirring sound came from above. Everyone lifted their heads and looked up, only to see a military chopper quickly making its way toward them. The wind from the whirring blades

hit them all.

“She’s here!” Dylan’s expression turned serious as he straightened up, puffing his chest out.

When the chopper reached the military base, it hovered overhead for quite some time, not making

its descent.

“What’s the matter?” Just as everyone began to wonder, the helicopter’s door opened up, and a figure fully clad in red stuck its head through the door, looking around inquisitively. Then, amidst the troops’ stares of horror and bewilderment, the figure leaped out the door, jumping down from over 300 feet in the air.

With a loud thud, the red figure landed heavily on the ground, appearing like a deity that had descended from the sky. For a moment, the ground shook, sending billows of dust into the air.

What just played out shocked the crowd silly as they all gaped in amazement. How could someone survive jumping at such a height?

As the smoke and dust cleared, they noticed a huge crater, and right in the middle of it stood an elegant figure in red.

It was a lady dressed in a red tracksuit who had a long sword in one hand. She had her silver hair cropped short and had looks that were to die for. She could captivate someone with just a single glance. However, unlike the usual gentleness of women, there was a deep set of strength etched in her brows, exuding grace and grandeur. Her eyes, especially, were aloof and indifferent, seeming to see through everything. She seemed uninterested in everyone. Just one look from her was enough to make one feel inferior and ashamed of themselves.

[An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 717 -](#)

Chapter 717

The lady was none other than Scarlet Spanner, one of the two well-known aces of the Spanner family and the best Goddess of War Dragonmarsh ever had.

“As expected of the one and only Goddess of War. It’s truly amazing how she made her appearance!” Dylan exclaimed inwardly, marveling at her.

She had just jumped from a height of over 300 feet and appeared to be perfectly fine. That was no feat that an ordinary human could accomplish! Though he was from the Dark Panther Cavalry, he had only ever seen her heroic moves from afar. To be able to see her pull such a dangerous stunt up front and near truly left him shell-shocked.

“Welcome, General!” Her two trusted aides bowed and greeted her first.

“Welcome, General!” The rest of the troops followed after them, bowed, and greeted her. Their voices reverberated throughout the entire military base.

Scarlet gave them a sweeping glance. It was nothing more than a simple act, but everyone felt an inexplicable pressure just from her gaze, making it difficult for them to even breathe. It wasn’t until Scarlet looked away that the pressure gradually disappeared.

She walked up to her two confidants and asked casually, “Do you have any information on the person I was looking for?”

The two major generals were named Georgia and Bridget, respectively.

“We’ve searched the entire Millsburg for someone with the same name, but none of them was the person you wanted. We suspect that the person isn’t here,” Georgia said with her head bowed.

“That’s impossible!” Scarlet said. “Adam would never have the guts to lie to me. He must be here but under a different name. Keep searching!”

“Yes, ma’am!” Georgia answered and quickly left with her men.

“I plan to stay here for an extended period. Get me a place to stay,” Scarlet ordered.

“I’ve already arranged for that, General! It’s at Fallonge estate,” Bridget reported.

“Lead the way!” Scarlet wasted no time on small talk.

“Yes, ma’am!” Bridget nodded and drove off with Scarlet, leaving the rest of the troops in their dust.

“Who exactly is the Goddess of War here for, General Winslow? She seems so anxious to find that person.” Dylan could no longer hold in his curiosity when he saw the car leave.

“How would I know?” General Winslow rolled his eyes. “Who dares meddle in her personal affairs?”

“You’ve got a point there.” Dylan chuckled awkwardly. Scarlet was an intimidating figure in the army, so nobody dared speak freely about her.

“I’m not sure who she’s after, but I’m certain that it’s a man,” General Winslow said thoughtfully.

“A man?” Dylan’s eyes widened. “No way! What kind of man can make the Goddess of War place such importance on him?”

Scarlet was such a skilled martial artist, second to none, and was an amazing woman who

trumped every woman in Dragonmarsh. If word were to get out that she had traveled such a distance to Millsburg just for a man, it would create a significant commotion among the public! At the thought of that, Dylan could not help but feel slightly jealous. Scarlet was a gorgeous fighter who was beyond everyone’s reach. To be able to get Scarlet’s attention was something worth boasting about. Dylan wondered who the lucky bastard who caught her eye was.

Over in the moving car, Scarlet carefully pulled out a well-kept photograph. In it were a teenage boy and girl, at the peak of their youth. The young girl leaned on the boy’s shoulder, a hint of a smile replacing her usual aloof expression. Looking at the pair of youths in the photo, a look of melancholy came over Scarlet, as though she was reminiscing about the past.

After gazing at the photograph for a moment, she pressed it to her chest and sighed. “Where are you, Logan? I’ve been searching for you for the past 10 years.”

[An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 718 -](#)

Chapter 718

“Achoo!” Dustin, who had finally wormed his way out of his predicament with Dahlia, began sneezing the moment he got back to the Flame Dragon Dojo. He wondered if someone was bad- mouthing him behind his back.

“Sir!” Right then, someone called out to him. Dustin looked up to see Abigail standing up from her seat, waving excitedly at him. It looked like she had been waiting for quite a while.

“My apologies, I was caught up with something else earlier on, that’s why I’m late.” Dustin walked up to her with a smile on his face.

“That’s alright, I just got here too.” Abigail wasn’t bothered by it.

“Oh, right, where’s your father?” Dustin looked around but did not see Michael.

“Dad ran into some urgent matters he had to handle, so he can’t make it here. He told me to come here myself. Also, he wanted me to pass this letter to you.” Abigail pulled out a letter and handed it to Dustin.

Dustin opened the envelope and found two objects in it. One was a neatly folded letter, and another was a gold pendant with an ‘R’ engraved on it. After going through the letter, Dustin was certain that Mr. Robinson would not be returning any time soon.

“What did Dad say in the letter, Sir?” Abigail’s curiosity got the better of her.

“Your dad said that he needs to go away for a long time. Probably as long as half a year. But if things get settled quickly, he might be able to come back after a month. He says that you should pay attention to your martial arts training and practice well.” After a slight pause, Dustin continued, “Also, if we were to run into any issues, we can go to Ronald Reeds with this pendant, and he’ll help us out. He’s got a deep friendship with your father.”

“Ronald Reeds? Who’s that? Is he really powerful?” Abigail scratched her head, wondering.

“Ronald Reeds is one of the five ultimate grandmasters of Balerno. Do you think he’s powerful?” Dustin smiled.

“One of the five ultimate grandmasters? Of course, he is!” Abigail’s eyes lit up.

“Consider this a good luck charm from your father. Keep it well. Make sure you don’t ever lose it.” Dustin handed the gold pendant to her. The value of a token from a grandmaster was priceless.

“But Sir, this pendant is a gift from my father to you; you should have it.” Abigail quickly decided

against taking it.

“I have no use for it. Since you’re going to be my student anyway. I’ll give it back to you. Now, you hold on to it.” With that, Dustin stuffed the gold pendant into Abigail’s pocket.

“Thank you, Sir!” Abigail smiled sweetly at him, and then, standing on tippy toes, she swiftly planted a peck on his cheek.

“Hey, kiddo! I’m your mentor now! Watch your manners!” Dustin tried to look stern.

“Got it!” Abigail stuck her tongue out at him, looking naughty and adorable.

“Mr. Rhys...” Just then, a smartly dressed middle-aged man who was slightly paunchy made his

trumped every woman in Dragonmarsh. If word were to get out that she had traveled such a distance to Millsburg just for a man, it would create a significant commotion among the public!

At the thought of that, Dylan could not help but feel slightly jealous. Scarlet was a gorgeous fighter who was beyond everyone’s reach. To be able to get Scarlet’s attention was something worth boasting about. Dylan wondered who the lucky bastard who caught her eye was.

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“Hey, kiddo! I’m your mentor now! Watch your manners!” Dustin tried to look stern.

“Got it!” Abigail stuck her tongue out at him, looking naughty and adorable.

“Mr. Rhys...” Just then, a smartly dressed middle-aged man who was slightly paunchy made his

way in. It was Roderick Brooks, who was also known as Big Bucks Brooks.

“Mr. Brooks, what brings you here?” Dustin smiled at him. “Abigail, go pour Mr. Brooks a cup of tea,

he instructed.

“No need for that.” Roderick raised a hand to stop her as he said with a chuckle, “I’m here to bring you some good news today.”

“What’s the good news?” Dustin’s brows furrowed slightly with doubt. Adam had given him a call and said that he had good news for him too. That turned out to be anything but good.

“You wanted me to keep an eye on the Stoneray Order and to keep tabs on the whereabouts of the 900-year green lotus, didn’t you? We have the results now!” Roderick smiled.

“So? How is it? Were they successful?” Dustin asked with anticipation. As he had no use for the green lotus due to its age previously, he hadn’t bought it back then. But some time later, he heard that the Stoneray Order had purchased it, and Dr. Linden Watkins even had a special method to speed up the aging process. Hence, he got Roderick to get his men to keep an eye on it and verify

if the news was indeed true.

“To tell you the truth, Dr. Linden Watkins had already come out of his laboratory last night, and the 900-year green lotus that he had been working on has already been transformed into a thousand-year green lotus!” Roderick told him what he had learned.

“Great! That’s wonderful!”

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Chapter 719

Dustin felt excited. He had been searching for the thousand-year green lotus. He only needed a Cherusia to produce the nine-fold Longevitum if he got it.

“It is wonderful, Mr. Rhys, but I’m afraid it wouldn’t be easy to get it.” Roderick’s comment lowered Dustin’s spirits.

“I’ll buy this precious herb no matter how much it costs!” Dustin had an unwavering determination to get his hands on it.

“It isn’t about money, Mr. Rhys. The Stoneray Order does not lack money.” Roderick shook his head.

“Well, what do they want if not money?” Dustin wondered.

“The Stoneray Order likes collecting rare and precious objects. The rarer, the better. Whether you are seeking medical help or special herbs, they only want rare items as payment,” Roderick explained.

“Where would I be able to get rare objects so suddenly?” Dustin frowned. Things would be much easier for them if they could pay them off. But it would be tricky if the Stoneray Order did not accept money.

“Mr. Rhys, I’ve prepared some rare objects. But I’m not sure if Dr. Watkins will accept them.” Roderick had his doubts.

“We have to give it a try no matter what. Please come with me, Mr. Brook,” Dustin invited.

“My pleasure.” Roderick nodded.

The three of them then drove to Stoneray Valley.

Stoneray Valley, as the name suggested, was a huge valley tucked away in a mountain range.

Mountains surrounded it on three sides, and there was only one entrance. It had a strategic location where a large river separated it from the outside world. There was only one way to get into Stoneray Valley, which was by boat.

After a two-hour drive, Dustin, Abigail, and Roderick finally arrived near Stoneray Valley. However, when they made their way to the entrance, they were shocked by what they saw.

A little way off, the place was packed with people. The queue stretched a long way out, and they could not begin to imagine the number of people there.

“Mr. Brooks, is Stoneray Valley usually so crowded?” Dustin was shocked by the sight before him.

“There is usually quite a crowd here to seek medical help, but it was never so packed. It is quite weird.” Roderick didn’t understand why there were so many people there either.

“With the amount of people here, we’d have to wait until tomorrow before we can get in.” Abigail sighed. Had their two-hours journey been a wasted effort?

“Hey, excuse me, buddy.” Roderick approached a man in front of him and asked politely, “May I know what’s going on here today? Why is there such a huge crowd?”

“Don’t you know? Today is the day Dr. Watkins will take a new student. Whoever passes his

examination and gets first place will be accepted into Stoneray Order and granted a wish," the man informed them.

"A wish?" Roderick turned to look at Dustin. "What do you think, Mr. Rhys?"

"Of course, we can't miss out on such a great deal!" Dustin smiled. It'd be perfect if they could get the thousand-year green lotus without having to give anything in return.

"But Sir, look at the line! How long are we going to have to stand in line for?" Abigail crouched on the ground, resting her chin on her palms with a look of defeat.

"Who said anything about standing in line? Watch and learn." Dustin walked up to the few people at the front of the line and whispered something in their ears. Once they reached a deal, he

returned and said, "Alright, that's settled. They've agreed to swap places with us. Go on over."

"Swap places?" Abigail was stunned. "They're at the front of the line! Why would they agree to do that?"

"Why not? I gave them one million each. They're more than happy to swap places with us," Dustin said casually.

"A million?" Abigail could not believe her ears.

"What? Is there a problem?" Dustin asked calmly.

"Well..." Abigail was stunned. There wasn't much she could say at this point.

Was this the power of money? It was amazing!

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Chapter 720

Dustin and the rest took a boat into Stoneray Valley after registering themselves. They passed by green mountains, clear blue waters, and lush

trees. The scenery was beautiful. After traveling about ten miles, they reached their destination and got out of the boat.

There was a huge building that looked like a palace. It was majestic and breathtaking. They followed the crowd and went up a flight of stairs. Then they entered a lavishly decorated hall.

There were already many people gathered in the hall. Everyone hoped they would be chosen by Dr. Watkins and be accepted into the Stoneray Order.

The Stoneray Order was famous and distinguished in Millsburg. Even the Fabulous Five and the Tremendous Three had to show them respect. To be accepted into the Stoneray Order was the same as making it big in life.

But Dr. Watkins was strict when choosing his students. And he would only accept ten students each year. It was almost a one-in-a-million chance to be his student.

As Dustin admired the hall, a commotion broke out by the door.

They turned around to see several young people walking in with their heads high. Leading the group were a beautiful woman dressed in white and a man dressed in black. The others behind them looked like regular lackeys who tagged along to show off their powers.

“Hey.. Isn’t that Miranda Killian from the Killian family? I didn’t expect to see her here.”

“I heard that Miranda Killian is an unmatched medical genius. When she was 18, she was already

on the same level as reputable doctors in Stonia.”

“And it’s not just Miranda Killian! That man beside her is amazing too! He’s Preston Huffner, Dr. Bruce Darby’s best student. He’s so young, but his medical skills are out of this world!”

The crowd whispered among themselves when Miranda Killian and Preston Huffner appeared.

One was a medical genius and the daughter of a well-known family. The other was a famous doctor's best student with exceptional skills. No matter where they went, they were the center of

attention

"Hmph! They are just a bunch of people with average skills. How boring." Preston looked around

with disdain.

"Preston, I guess one of us will be the best student this year," Miranda said with a smirk.

"If you want it, I'll let you have the position of best student. How's that?" Preston seemed generous.

"I'll thank you in advance, then, Preston." Miranda hid her giggles behind her hand. She was interested in something other than the best student position.

She was only competing for that position because of the thousand-year green lotus. She could have her wish granted if she passed the examination and became the best student. And she had her eyes on the thousand-year green lotus.

As Preston and the gang walked into the hall, they paused as their path was blocked.

"Hey! Get out of the way! Even dogs know better than to block people's way!" Preston glared at the

group of three in annoyance.

Everyone willingly made way for them except for these three. The three stood there indifferently, not showing them any respect.

"And dogs know better than to force their way through. So quit complaining and get lost." Dustin countered.

"How dare you insult me?" Preston's expression darkened. "Do you even know who I am? How bold of you to speak to me like that!"

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 721 -

Chapter 721

“Does it matter to me who you are?” Dustin shrugged.

“You insolent bastard! I am the leader of Asclepia, Dr. Bruce Darby’s best student! Your disrespect toward me is a direct disrespect toward Asclepia! Just a word from me is enough to make you vanish from the medical field! Don’t test me!” Preston threatened.

The people who showed up were people involved in the medical field. Asclepia’s power stretched across the nation. And all prestigious entities in the medical world respected them. It was easy for them to wipe out a small fry.

“Oh, I’m so scared. Well, go ahead and do as you wish, then,” Dustin replied dismissively.

His unconcern attitude and disregard fueled Preston’s anger. “Y-yo-you bastard! Just wait!”

“Are you done yet? If you are, please get lost.” Dustin waved his hand impatiently as if he was driving a bug away.

“You-!” Preston gritted his teeth.

As he was about to get violent, Miranda tugged on his arm. “Preston, there’s no need to stoop to levels of such lowlife. People like him can only hope he’ll ever get to our level. He’ll never be as good as us, so all he can do is run his mouth.”

“That’s right! Only incompetent people waste their time talking. People with real skills speak with their actions!” Their lackeys added.

“You rascal! You sound sure of yourself. If that’s the case, let’s have a challenge.” It was clear that Preston wasn’t pleased. Since he couldn’t win him in an argument, it was time he put his skills to

use.

“I’m not interested.” Dustin flat-out rejected.

“Hah! Are you not interested, or you don’t have the skills? Or perhaps, you simply don’t have the guts?” Preston snickered as if he had seen through Dustin’s brave act.

“Hmph! Here I was thinking that maybe we’ve got ourselves a worthy opponent. It turns out he’s just a cowardly chicken!” Miranda mocked.

“This is what we call a champion boaster. They always win in an argument. But once things start getting serious, they chicken out faster than anyone else.”

“A slacker will always be a slacker. No matter what they say, the facts won’t change!”

The lackeys ridiculed and mocked Dustin, looking at him as if he were nothing more than a mere clown.

“Hey! That’s enough!” Abigail was angered. Had it not been for her concerns for decency, she would have taken action much sooner. They were a bunch who did not watch what they said.

“What? Are you just going to stay silent and let a girl stand up for you? What a worthless bum!” Preston continued to taunt.

“I intended to ignore you, but you seem adamant about getting on my nerves. Fine, you wish to challenge me, don’t you? I’ll take you up on that challenge.” Dustin did not wish to tolerate them

anymore. Just because he couldn’t be bothered to take action did not mean that he wasn’t capable of doing so.

“Wow! You’re finally acting like a man!” Preston gave a cunning grin.

“Alright, I won’t take advantage of you. Let’s just go through with Dr. Watkins’ examination. Whoever gets a higher rank in the examination wins. The loser will be the winner’s dog. How’s that? Do you dare to take up the challenge?” Preston was dead set on winning.

Preston was going to defeat Dustin so that he could crush him under his feet, utterly humiliating him. Only by doing so could he vent the anger in his heart.

“Well, if you insist on becoming my dog, I’ll agree to it, then.” Dustin had an impassive look.

“Hmph! Keep talking tough. Let’s see how much longer you can stay arrogant!” Preston sneered.

“Everyone, did you all see that? We are all witnesses to the challenge. The loser shall be the

winner’s dog.” Miranda was quick to back Preston up.

“That’s right! The loser will be a dog!” The lackeys followed along.

It wasn’t every day that they came across someone they could humiliate. They were going to grab hold of every opportunity that came their way.

“This young man is acting so recklessly. Why would he accept Preston’s challenge? At a medical examination too! Isn’t he inviting defeat upon himself?”

“If he doesn’t have the ability, he should admit defeat. But he insists on being arrogant! He’s going to embarrass himself when he loses.”

“Young people these days are too proud. They don’t know their limits.”

The crowd around them started whispering and commenting on Dustin’s actions. From their point of view, Dustin was too arrogant and would end up embarrassing himself.

[An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 722 -](#)

Chapter 722

“Silence!” As everyone got into a heated discussion, a loud voice roared. Then, a group of elders of the Stoneray Order entered the hall.

Dr. Linden Watkins, leader of the Stoneray Order, walked before the group. Several other elders and some of the administrative disciples followed behind him.

“Is that Dr. Linden Watkins? He has such a grand aura coming from him!”

“Whoever does well in the examination today will be chosen as Dr. Watkins’ student. And will be learning from Dr. Watkins himself. The chosen one will have a bright future ahead!”

The mood turned serious when Linden entered. Everyone looked at him with respect in their eyes.

Linden was the best of the great three doctors in Balerno. Not only was he a skilled doctor, but he also had many students in the entire country. Everyone respected him. It would be a big achievement to become his student.

“We have some interesting candidates here today.” He looked at the crowd, briefly focusing on Preston and Miranda

Asclepia had managed to make a name for themselves in the medical field. And now their influence increased and would soon be on the same level as the Stoneray Order. Preston and Miranda’s presence within Asclepia helped them recruit more geniuses. Linden paid close attention to these rising talents of the younger generation.

“Let’s begin.” Linden nodded to the rest of the elders. Then he sat in the center as the other elders sat on both sides of him.

“The examination will begin.” An invigilator dressed in black stood before the crowd. Then he announced, “There are three parts to this examination. First, you will need to identify some drugs. Second, you will have to produce a medicine And finally, you will cure a sick patient.”

“Now, please get ready for the first test.” With a wave of his hand, more than ten disciples of the Stoneray Order walked in. They held a wooden box with medicine bottles inside.

“These bottles contain medicine that we’ve prepared. For your first test, you will taste it and identify the herbs used. Each of you will get a piece of paper, so list its components. Ten points will be deducted for each mistake. If you make three mistakes, you’re disqualified,” the invigilator announced.

The hall immediately buzzed with discussion when they heard that.

“My goodness! They call this simple? How are we supposed to identify the herbs used by just the taste of it? Can anyone even do that?”

“Exactly! I don’t think anyone can do that without at least 20 years of experience!”

“If the first test is this tough, I can’t imagine how difficult the next two tests will be!”

Everyone began complaining about how difficult the test was. Though everyone knew that the Stoneray Order had strict criteria for accepting students, this was harder than they thought.

“Silence!” The invigilator roared. “If anyone is dissatisfied, you can choose to give up. The Stoneray

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“Wow! You’re finally acting like a man!” Preston gave a cunning grin.

“Alright, I won’t take advantage of you. Let’s just go through with Dr. Watkins’ examination. Whoever gets a higher rank in the examination wins. The loser will be the winner’s dog. How’s that? Do you dare to take up the challenge?” Preston was dead set on winning.

Preston was going to defeat Dustin so that he could crush him under his feet, utterly humiliating him. Only by doing so could he vent the anger in his heart.

“Well, if you insist on becoming my dog, I’ll agree to it, then.” Dustin had an impassive look.

“Hmph! Keep talking tough. Let’s see how much longer you can stay arrogant!” Preston sneered.

“Everyone, did you all see that? We are all witnesses to the challenge. The loser shall be the winner’s dog.” Miranda was quick to back Preston up.

“That’s right! The loser will be a dog!” The lackeys followed along.

It wasn’t every day that they came across someone they could humiliate. They were going to grab hold of every opportunity that came their way.

“This young man is acting so recklessly. Why would he accept Preston’s challenge? At a medical examination too! Isn’t he inviting defeat upon himself?”

“If he doesn’t have the ability, he should admit defeat. But he insists on being arrogant! He’s going to embarrass himself when he loses.”

“Young people these days are too proud. They don’t know their limits.”

The crowd around them started whispering and commenting on Dustin’s actions. From their point of view, Dustin was too arrogant and would end up embarrassing himself.

Chapter 722

“Silence!” As everyone got into a heated discussion, a loud voice roared. Then, a group of elders of the Stoneray Order entered the hall.

Dr. Linden Watkins, leader of the Stoneray Order, walked before the group. Several other elders and some of the administrative disciples followed behind him.

“Is that Dr. Linden Watkins? He has such a grand aura coming from him!”

“Whoever does well in the examination today will be chosen as Dr. Watkins’ student. And will be learning from Dr. Watkins himself. The chosen one will have a bright future ahead!”

The mood turned serious when Linden entered. Everyone looked at him with respect in their eyes.

Linden was the best of the great three doctors in Balerno. Not only was he a skilled doctor, but he also had many students in the entire country. Everyone respected him. It would be a big achievement to become his student.

“We have some interesting candidates here today.” He looked at the crowd, briefly focusing on Preston and Miranda.

Asclepia had managed to make a name for themselves in the medical field. And now their influence increased and would soon be on the same level as the Stoneray Order. Preston and Miranda’s presence within Asclepia helped them recruit more geniuses. Linden paid close attention to these rising talents of the younger generation.

“Let’s begin.” Linden nodded to the rest of the elders. Then he sat in the center as the other elders sat on both sides of him.

“The examination will begin.” An invigilator dressed in black stood before the crowd. Then he announced, “There are three parts to this examination First, you will need to identify some drugs. Second, you will have to produce a medicine. And finally, you will cure a sick patient.”

“Now, please get ready for the first test.” With a wave of his hand, more than ten disciples of the Stoneray Order walked in. They held a wooden box with medicine bottles inside.

“These bottles contain medicine that we’ve prepared. For your first test, you will taste it and identify the herbs used. Each of you will get a piece of paper, so list its components. Ten points will be deducted for each mistake. If you make three mistakes, you’re disqualified,” the invigilator announced.

The hall immediately buzzed with discussion when they heard that.

“My goodness! They call this simple? How are we supposed to identify the herbs used by just the taste of it? Can anyone even do that?”

“Exactly! I don’t think anyone can do that without at least 20 years of experience!”

“If the first test is this tough, I can’t imagine how difficult the next two tests will be!”

Everyone began complaining about how difficult the test was. Though everyone knew that the Stoneray Order had strict criteria for accepting students, this was harder than they thought.

“Silence!” The invigilator roared. “If anyone is dissatisfied, you can choose to give up. The Stoneray

Order will not accept incompetent students!”

His simple statement was enough to silence the crowd’s grumbles and complaints. None of them were ready to give up so quickly after such a long journey there.

“If we have no objections, we will begin now. You will be given a medicine bottle and must list the ingredients within 30 minutes. Whoever completes this within the given time will continue to the next test.” The bottles were given out, and the timer started counting down.

Upon receiving the bottle, everyone quickly tasted the medicine.

Every second counted. Whoever finished the test in the shortest time would show that they were better than the rest. They might even attract the attention of the invigilators.

However, everyone frowned when they tasted the medicine. This was much more challenging than they had thought.

There were all sorts of herbs in the medicine. After they were brewed together, it was impossible to identify the specific herbs used. The taste was a mixture of bitter, sweet, and sour. It tasted disgusting.

“Challenging indeed. But I’ll handle this just fine.

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Chapter 723

Preston smiled faintly after taking three sips of the medicine and wrote on the paper. He listed down all the herbs in the medicine.

When he was halfway through, he took another sip to ensure he did everything correctly. When he was sure of his judgment, he listed the rest of the ingredients. It took him less than 10 minutes.

“I’m done.” Preston raised his hand to inform the invigilators that he finished. Although he spoke softly, he managed to attract the attention of everyone in the hall.

“Is he serious? He’s finished already in such a short time?”

“Hmph! I don’t believe he’s that good. I bet he just guessed the herbs!”

The crowd whispered among themselves. Some were amazed, while some were doubtful.

“Let me check.” The invigilator went to Preston and took his answer script. His eyes immediately lit up after going through the list.

“Not bad at all. Your answers are all correct. There’s not a single mistake. Perfect score.” The invigilator praised.

An uproar broke out among the crowd at that.

“Damn it! Did he get a perfect score? Is he that good?”

“As expected of Dr. Darby’s best student! He lives up to his name!”

“Fuck! I haven’t written a word, and he’s already listed every ingredient and is continuing to the next test. We’re not even competing at the same level.”

The crowd was shocked. Preston’s talent showed them how much they lacked medical skills and knowledge. They had no hopes of getting first place. So, they could only focus and try for second or third place.

“I’m done too.” Right then, Miranda raised her hand.

The invigilator approached her and nodded in satisfaction when he saw her answers. “Very good.

Perfect score as well.”

“Another perfect score? Aren’t they too good at this?”

“Oh man... What can I say? They’re way too good for people like us.

“They are terrifying! I don’t think I’m cut out for this. I’m giving up!”

Miranda’s perfect score destroyed everyone’s spirit. Many could not stand the pressure and chose

to give up.

“Hey, buddy! Are you not done yet? Do you need some help?” Preston turned to look at Dustin, a sarcastic smile on his face.

“Preston, I think he needs some help. He hasn’t even written a word!” Miranda turned to look at Dustin’s paper and covered her mouth to hide her snigger. She looked just like a mean b*tch.

“No way! It’s such a simple test! You can’t even manage to think of a single herb? My, aren’t you a

dumbass?” Preston mocked him, exaggerating his words.

“What’s the rush? We have lots of time,” Dustin answered casually.

“No matter how much time you have, it won’t change anything. Trash will always be trash. It doesn’t matter how hard you struggle. You’re never going to succeed.” Preston taunted.

“I say, stop struggling and just be Preston’s dog. At least he might give you a bone when he feels like it,” Miranda said with a smirk.

“Are you sure that you’re going to be the winner?” Dustin asked suddenly.

“Why not? We’ve both scored full marks, and you have not even written a word. Isn’t it obvious who the winner will be?” Preston’s lips curled into a mean smile.

“Well, seeing how confident you are, I’ll teach you a lesson today.” Without another word, Dustin quickly wrote a long list of ingredients on the paper

He wrote with great ease, without any hesitation. The crowd was stunned and amazed, wondering if he was secretly an expert.

Even Preston and Miranda were flustered. He wrote so fast and with complete certainty. They began to doubt if they had chosen the wrong person to bully.

“Done.” While everyone was still shocked by Dustin’s fast writing, he had already submitted his answer to the invigilator.

The invigilator frowned when he saw Dustin’s answer. Then, in a frosty voice, he said, “Wrong answer. You get zero marks!”

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Chapter 724

“Zero?”

Everyone was shocked before they burst out in laughter. They looked at Dustin like he was a fool.

“Hahaha... How hilarious! The audacity he has to act so arrogantly when he got zero marks!”

“He looked so certain of himself that I had begun to think he was all that. In the end, he was just pretending!”

“Even I could at least get a few points if I simply wrote some herbs. How did you manage to get zero points? What a joke!”

Everyone started to ridicule him.

They initially thought Dustin was an expert when he wrote confidently and quickly. But in the end, the zero he received said a lot about him and exposed him as a fool.

“Rascal, I must say, you sure are shameless. How can you behave so arrogantly when you’re getting zero? I am amazed.” Preston sarcastically gave him a thumbs-up.

“If you don’t have the ability, then admit that you don’t. You are humiliating yourself if you insist on being arrogant!” Miranda looked at him like he was an idiot.

“Zero?” Dustin ignored the insults thrown at him and looked straight at the invigilator. “Are you sure you didn’t make the wrong judgment?” Dustin asked.

“What? Are you questioning me?” The invigilator raised a brow.

“I don’t think I’ve made any mistakes with listing the herbs, so I’m just curious why you gave me zero points.” Dustin countered.

“You’ve indeed got most of the herbs right, but you added aconite to the list,” the invigilator said icily

“Alright, let’s put aside whether I got that wrong. Even if aconite were a wrong answer, I’d only get ten points deducted. Why did I end up with zero?” Dustin pressed.

According to the rules, one mistake meant he lost ten points. He would only be disqualified after three mistakes. He really could not comprehend how he ended up with zero marks.

“If it were just a regular mistake, I would not have given you zero points. But the problem is, you listed aconite as one of the ingredients, which reacts with the Fritillaria bulb in the medicine and becomes a deadly poison! If a doctor

cannot even understand the difference between medicine and poison, what makes you think you can join the Stoneray Order? And this is the reason why I've given you zero points. Are you happy with my explanation?" the invigilator asked gravely.

"Of course not," Dustin answered. "You were the ones who brewed the medicine. I'm only listing what I think is in there. So even if it's poisonous, that's your problem, not mine."

"How dare you!" The invigilator lost his cool right then and there. "Why would the Stoneray Order put something poisonous into our medicine? You are simply spouting nonsense!"

"Hey, rascal! Are you just here to create problems for everyone? You know you can't win, so this is your way of disrupting things?" Preston asked with irritation

"We should drive this troublemaker out, or things will only worsen." Miranda looked at him with

contempt.

"Get out! Get out!" Many of the people there echoed in agreement. How dare a person who scored zero marks behave so arrogantly? He was only going to embarrass himself even more.

"Guys, throw him out of here!" The Stoneray Order's disciples rushed toward Dustin on the invigilator's order.

"Hold on." Just as they were about to grab Dustin, Linden, who sat at the main seat and had

watched everything happen, spoke up. "He's a promising talent. Let's keep him around."

Upon hearing that, everyone was taken aback. No one expected Linden to speak up for someone

who was trash.

"Dr. Watkins, this person is making baseless claims and slanderin

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Chapter 725

“He said nothing wrong. There is aconite in the medicine.” Linden’s words shocked everyone.

“What?” That invigilator froze in disbelief. “Dr. Watkins, you must be mistaken. I remember that aconite wasn’t listed in the recipe.

The elders beside Linden did not say anything but had puzzled expressions. The medicines were brewed according to a recipe, and no one would dare to change it. How is it possible that it contained aconite?

“Originally, Aconite was not included. But I just felt like adding it, so I did,” Linden said casually,

“You felt like it?” When the crowd heard that statement, they exchanged looks with each other. Wasn’t Linden too carefree?

“Dr. Watkins, when aconite is combined with the Fritillaria bulb, it becomes poisonous. Why would you add it?” The invigilator frowned.

He had said the same thing just now to criticize Dustin. Now, Linden had confirmed that there was really aconite in the medicine.

“It’s to test everyone, of course,” Linden said casually. “If we strictly follow the recipe, it would be too simple and boring. They would easily be able to guess the ingredients.

“However, adding aconite would make things more interesting. Everyone must think outside the box to notice the little surprise I prepared for you.

“Unfortunately, none of you noticed it. Except for this man, who was sensitive enough to spot it. So technically speaking, he is the only one with a perfect score!”

The crowd became uneasy when they heard that. It seemed this was all planned by Linden. Most importantly, Dustin was the only person who successfully noticed the special ingredient added to the medicine!

Before Linden revealed the truth, the crowd thought that Dustin was just an attention seeker, SO they mocked him as much as they wanted. None of them expected that they were the real fool.

“How’s that possible? I didn’t even notice that there was aconite. How did that bastard know?” Preston’s brows furrowed as he frowned. He was usually proud and arrogant because of his talents. He could not accept losing to someone else.

“Does this scoundrel have some insider information?” Miranda had a doubtful look on her face. Even though she was talented, it took her a few years to be on the same level as her seniors. Even her mentor, Dr. Darby, always praised her and considered her a potential successor.

She had never once made a mistake regarding medicine. That was until today. So she was annoyed.

“So, I was wrong?” The invigilator’s lips twisted to a frown, and he was speechless. He felt ashamed of his actions.

“Young man, you surprised me. But I have a question for you. Can you guess why I’ve added aconite to the medicine?” Linden smiled at him thoughtfully

“It’s to poison us,” Dustin answered confidently.

“Oh? Could you explain?” Linden raised a brow

“Based on the herbs, their properties, and the dosage. The toxic effect should start in about 30 minutes. And if I’m not wrong, this is all for our second test,” Dustin said calmly.

“And what else?” Linden nodded in approval.

“They mentioned that the second test is to produce medicine. But what you want us to do is to come up with the antidote while we are poisoned. However, it won’t be easy to produce the antidote while we are experiencing the effects of the toxin.” Dustin revealed the truth.

“Hahaha... Young man, you sure have talent!” Linden laughed heartily, his eyes shining with admiration toward Dustin.

“You are right! That is our next test for you. Whoever manages to produce the antidote will move on to the next round. Whoever fails to do so will never live to see the next day!”

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Chapter 726

“What?” Everyone shouted in shock. A bottle fell out of someone’s hand and broke into pieces as it crashed to the ground.

Nobody expected the medicine they tasted to be poison!

It was supposed to be just an easy examination to identify the components of the medicine. How did it turn into a life-threatening situation? Was it necessary for the examination to be so extreme?

“Dr. Watkins, isn’t this going too far?” The invigilator frowned. Linden had always done his best to save lives, so using poison to test them seemed unusual.

“There is a fine line between medicine and poison. There are times when poison can also be used to save lives. It all depends on how someone uses them. As long as it’s effective, it doesn’t matter how it’s being used,” Linden said seriously.

“But-”

“Enough.”

The invigilator was about to say something when Linden raised a hand and cut him off. “The Stoneray Order does not accept incompetent students. Anyone who isn’t confident in your own skills, you may choose to quit.

“All you need to do is walk straight to the door, collect the antidote, and get the hell out of here. However, your life will be in your own hands if you continue.”

“I. I’m out!”

“Forget it. I don’t want to risk it. I’m giving up.”

“Damn it! This is gambling with our lives! Who would be brave enough to continue? I’m quitting too!”

When they learned their lives were in danger, most gave up.

Although being accepted into the Stoneray Order would promise them a bright future ahead, nobody was willing to risk their lives for it. The price to pay was too high.

Furthermore, if the first test was so difficult, won't the second test be even more challenging?

Who would want to take such a risk when they were not confident?

Before 30 minutes were over, most people in the hall had left, and only a few people stayed. The remaining ones were either really confident or really skillful.

Since Dustin had already made known that there were aconite and Fritillaria bulbs in the

concoction, it increased their chances of producing the antidote.

"Alright, those who should leave have already left. Those who passed the first test can proceed directly to the second test," Linden announced.

As soon as he said that, a large door at the side of the hall slowly opened, leading to a big alchemy

room.

It had everything they would need. Many herbs, alchemy furnaces, charcoal, and minerals were

available for them to use.

"Go in." The invigilator led the group into the alchemy room.

It was a large room. Besides the alchemy equipment, there were rows of cabinets filled with various medicinal herbs. At a glance, it had all sorts of medicinal ingredients. There were even some rare and precious herbs.

"Your second test is to produce a medicinal pill." When everyone was ready, the invigilator

continued, "On the table before you is a recipe. All you need to do is produce Curax, which will be

your antidote.

“The judging criteria are easy. Whoever produces a higher-quality Curax will receive a higher score. You have an hour. If the pill is successfully produced before times up, it will be considered

a pass.

The timer started counting down, and the invigilator announced, “Your test starts now!”

With no time for hesitation, everyone began moving.

Producing a medicinal pill was challenging to accomplish. And with the time limit of an hour, it was even more difficult

Everyone had to be quick and careful to avoid making mistakes while producing the medicine. Once there was any mistake, it would be a failure.

“You just got lucky in the previous round, bastard! This time, I’m going to crush you!” Preston glared at Dustin and then quickly made his pill. He was going to beat everyone by producing the highest quality Curax!

“Hmph! He’s just an ordinary doctor! Let’s see what other tricks he has up his sleeves!” Miranda said angrily, unwilling to admit defeat.

She put all her effort into producing the medicinal pill. Her pride as a genius did not allow her to be defeated a second time.

“Curax?” Dustin ignored them and read the recipe given. He smiled thoughtfully.

Many people were able to produce medicinal pills. But to stand out and beat everyone, one must put in extra effort and skill.

“That’s odd. Why does my head hurt?”

“I’m having a stomachache. I feel like I might shit my pants!”

“Oh no! It’s the poison’s effect!”

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Chapter 727

Right then, many of them began showing signs of poisoning. Some felt dizzy, and others experienced severe abdominal pain. Some even had cramps.

Although their symptoms were different, it would affect their production of the medicinal pill. But giving up was not an option. They could only grit their teeth and continue.

“Who do you think will be number one today, Dr. Watkins?” an elder with a white beard asked.

“Preston and Miranda are performing well and gifted in the medical field, so they are considered geniuses. But I think the young man will do better.” Linden looked at Dustin.

“Him?” The elder followed and looked at Dustin too.

Then, he asked, curious, “But Dr. Watkins, he’s a nobody. Maybe he was lucky in the previous round. He’s still not on the same level as Preston and Miranda.”

No matter their family background, talents, or medical accomplishments, they were not on the same level. And Dustin’s good luck would not change anything.

“Hahaha... We’ll find out soon enough.” Linden smiled and said nothing else. He sat and watched. He refused to believe that someone who could see through his plans was just a nobody.

“Bang!” After a moment, an explosion was heard in the hall.

A man’s alchemy furnace burst when he made a mistake. The hot liquid, burning charcoal, and

furnace fragments splattered all over his face.

“Ah!” The man screamed in pain as he clutched his burned face.

“Somebody bring him away!” The invigilator waved his hand, and several members of the Stoneray Order moved to help the man.

“Bang!”

“Bang!”

“Bang!”

As the first person was carried away, several others had their furnaces explode as well. They had burned faces and were carried out too.

Some made mistakes because of the poison’s effects and the pressure they were under to save themselves. Some burnt their pills, some could not solidify their pills, and some of their furnaces

exploded

The number of people who were eliminated increased quickly.

“Done!” When there were still 30 minutes left, Preston shouted as he showed the crowd the red pill

he had taken from the furnace.

The invigilator walked to Preston and looked at his pill. Then he praised. “Not bad, you have indeed produced a Curax And it is a good quality one!”

“A good quality Curax? That’s amazing!”

“As expected of Dr. Darby’s best student! Impressive!”

“He managed to produce a Curax of good quality even though he was poisoned! That’s amazing!”

Everyone was shocked to hear what the invigilator said.

Preston quickly completed the task under such stressful conditions. It showed how amazing his medical skills and accomplishments were.

“Done!” Not long after Preston was done, Miranda finished hers. The pill she produced was like Preston’s in both looks and properties.

“Very well done. A good quality Curax too!” The invigilator nodded, very pleased. The two geniuses from Asclepia had not disappointed him.

As time continued, others successfully produced the Curax. Yet, they mostly failed. Soon, one hour was almost over.

“Dr. Watkins, it seems like Preston and Miranda are winning. As for that young man you had your eyes on, I guess he won’t pass this test if he hasn’t produced the pill by now.” The elder smiled. Suddenly, Dustin’s furnace exploded with a loud bang.

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Chapter 728

“Bang!” When Dustin’s alchemy furnace exploded, everyone turned and looked at him. Some were shocked, some were confused, and some were enjoying what they saw.

After a moment of shock, Preston and Miranda laughed out loud.

“Hahaha! His furnace exploded? And here I thought he might secretly be an expert. It turns out he just managed to make his furnace explode?” Preston ridiculed.

Because of Dustin’s excellent performance in the previous test, Preston thought he was a strong opponent. So, he did his best to produce the pill.

But now that Dustin’s furnace exploded, Preston thought he had just been overreacting. If someone’s furnace exploded, that person was not suitable to be considered his rival.

“What were we expecting? Trash will always be trash. Just because he got lucky once will not change anything. Under a bit of pressure, he can’t take it and starts making mistakes.” Miranda looked down on Dustin.

How could an ordinary doctor compare to medical geniuses from Asclepia like them?

“Dr.

Watkins, you always had an eye for talent. But I think you might have made a mistake today. The elder had a faint smile on his face.

It was a big problem for an alchemist’s furnace to explode and was considered a rookie mistake. No matter how well Dustin did in the previous round, the fact that his furnace exploded proved that he was still bad at alchemy when compared with Preston and Miranda.

“We don’t know that yet.” Linden shook his head.

“Dr. Watkins, time is running out, and that young man’s furnace has exploded. How will he be able to succeed?” The elder chuckled.

Linden remained silent as he watched on.

“You failed to produce the medicinal pill, so you’re eliminated!” the invigilator announced as he walked up to Dustin.

“Hang on... Who said I failed?” Dustin asked calmly, not giving up yet.

“Didn’t you fail when your furnace already exploded?” The invigilator frowned. He believed that Dustin was only there to create trouble for them.

“Hey, bastard. You should just admit your defeat. There’s no point in continuing to be unreasonable. If you can’t produce a single Curax, how are you different from trash?” Preston looked at him with mockery.

“Stop embarrassing yourself here. Just leave!” Miranda glared at Dustin too.

“Why are **you** two complaining non-stop? It’s true that my furnace has exploded, but that doesn’t mean I failed to produce a pill,” Dustin said calmly.

“What? Are **you** still continuing to be stubborn? Do you think that you can just magically produce a Curax out of thin air?” Preston smirked.

“Why not? Now open your **eyes** wide and look here. This is the real Curax!” With that said, Dustin brushed aside some shards of the furnace. Then, he took out a dark red pill from the broken pieces.

It was really a Curax!

“What the f*ck? He actually did it? Is this true?”

“It’s true! It is Curax! In fact, it looks like it’s good quality!”

“Damn it! He produced that even after his furnace exploded? That’s amazing!”

The crowd excitedly commented when they saw the pill in Dustin’s hand.

Logically speaking, an exploded furnace would mean that one had failed. But this young man had broken all the rules and surprised everyone.

“You... How did you do it?” Preston stared at him, wide-eyed with disbelief.

Miranda was shocked too, and she refused to believe it. She had thought that they’d easily be able to defeat Dustin. But he actually made it and managed to produce it!

“If you can do it, there’s no doubt I’d be able to do it too.” Dustin smiled faintly.

As he spoke, he passed the pill to the invigilator.

The invigilator frowned after taking a good look at the pill. From the looks of it, it was indeed Curax. But it seemed like there was something else in there.

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Chapter 729

The Curax that Dustin produced was different from the regular Curax in terms of color, scent, and size.

“Hmph! So what if he managed to produce the pill? Just looking at it, we can tell its quality is not up to standard!” Miranda folded her arms arrogantly.

“Exactly! The test for the second round is to compare the quality of pills that we’ve produced. This pill that he produced from an exploded furnace is definitely trash!” Preston regained his confidence.

The pill he produced was good quality, and Dustin's was a low grade. They were on completely different levels!

"How weird..." The invigilator studied the pill for a while.

Because he was scared to make a decision by himself, he took the pill and showed it to Linden and the rest of the elders. "Dr. Watkins and elders. I think there's something strange about this Curax. But I am not sure."

"Oh? Is that so? Let me see?" An elder took the pill and looked at it seriously. Then, he was shocked.

"Dr. Watkins, this young man is something else. Please have a look." After studying the pill repeatedly, he passed the pill to Linden.

"Interesting." Linden smiled widely after looking at the pill. The young man indeed had many tricks up his sleeves.

"Dr. Watkins, what quality is this pill?" the invigilator asked.

"Can't **you** tell? This is a top grade pill!" The elder said.

"What? Top grade?" The invigilator was taken aback,

Though good quality pills and top grade pills sounded like they weren't that much different, there was actually a very big difference between the two. It would not be an exaggeration to say that 100 good quality pills were no match for one top grade pill.

Not even Linden could produce a top grade pill. Even Preston and Miranda were still not capable of making top grade pills. Was it possible that Dustin was even more skillful than Linden?

"Don't just stand there. Go ahead and announce the results!" Linden urged.

"Sure..." The invigilator gulped before he turned around and raised the pill in his hand.

With a loud voice, he announced, "According to our united decision, this pill is a top grade pill. The person who produced this has received a perfect score!"

"Top grade pill? How is that possible?" The crowd shouted.

However, Preston and Miranda stood there, frozen in place, disbelief on their faces.

Everyone knew how difficult it was to produce a top grade pill. Even professional alchemists could only make one top grade pill out of every 100 pills that they created. And even then, it was

“Why not? **Now** open your eyes wide and look here. This is the real Curax!” With that said, Dustin brushed aside some shards of the furnace. Then, he took out a dark red pill from the broken pieces.

It was really a Curax!

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“**If you** can do it, there’s no doubt I’d be able to do it too.” Dustin smiled faintly.

As he spoke, he passed the pill to the invigilator.

The invigilator frowned after taking a good look at the pill. From the looks of it, it was indeed Curax. But it seemed like there was something else in there.

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Chapter 730

“What? He changed the recipe?” Everyone was surprised by Linden’s explanation.

Every recipe was created only after millions of experiments. The smallest change in ingredients or dosage would disrupt its balance and cause the production of the pill to fail.

For someone to change the recipe, they needed talent and lots of experiments. **For** someone to be able to change up the recipe on the spot and succeed right away, he had to have crazy good luck,

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or he must be a medical genius who was out of this world.

“No way! That’s impossible!” After a moment of shock, Preston continued, “There’s no way you can change the recipe so easily! Even my mentor can’t change a recipe that’s meant to produce a good quality pill into one that produces top grade pills within such a short time frame! How is it possible that this bastard can do that?”

“Exactly! He’s just an ordinary doctor! How would he be able to change the recipe?” Miranda added.

Even with her talent, she was still unable to do something so complicated. There was no way that bastard doctor was better than her!

“Young man, these people don’t seem to believe in your ability. Would you like to explain how you did it?” Linden shot him a faint smile.

“There’s nothing to explain. I simply added a few other herbs,” Dustin said.

“Hmph! You claim that you added other herbs. So tell me, what were the herbs you added?” Preston glared at him.

“Angelica root, licorice, white creepers, and honeysuckle.” Dustin did not find it necessary to hide the information from them. He wasn’t worried that they might steal the recipe from him, as it took skills to produce top grade pills.

Besides, it was just Curax, not some rare or expensive medicine. There was no point in keeping it a secret **from** them.

After processing the information, Preston exclaimed with his brows furrowed, “That doesn’t sound right! **It** is true that Angelica root, licorice, and white creepers can enhance the effects of Curax. But **honeysuckle** reacts adversely with some other herbs in the recipe. It might cause some harmful effects when added!”

“**If** you don’t understand, don’t try to show off.” Dustin looked at Preston like he was looking at an idiot.

“Though Curax functions to detoxify the body, all the herbs used are considered to have strong effects. So when weak people take the pill, they will feel nauseous. Honeysuckle can neutralize the effects of the stronger herbs, making the medication easier for weaker patients. You should know this, don’t you? To think that you’ve been accepted into Asclepia! I expected better of you!” Dustin’s last sentence was directed toward Preston.

“You-!” Preston was at a loss for words, and his expression darkened.

Dustin’s words made so much sense that Preston couldn’t even retort him. Is it possible that this bastard **could produce top grade** pills?

“Hahaha! Brilliant! Absolutely brilliant!” Linden laughed and clapped after hearing what Dustin said.

The more Linden looked at Dustin, the more pleased he was with him. In fact, he even had the urge to have Dustin marry his granddaughter!

“Who is this person, and why is he so good?”

“Who knows? But he sure is a secret genius! There’s no doubt that he will be accepted into the Stoneray Order.”

“He beat Preston and Miranda in the first two rounds. I wonder how he will do in the final test.”

The crowd whispered among themselves excitedly. Their view of Dustin was now different.

“If there are no objections, then we shall continue to the third test.” Without wasting any time, Linden waved his hand.

Soon, an old man in a wheelchair was pushed in by two students of the Stoneray order. The old man’s face was pale, and he had sunken cheeks. Because of long-term paralysis in the legs, the muscles in his legs had shrunk, making them appear much smaller compared to the upper body. “Your third test is to heal a patient. This patient has been paralyzed for eight years. He has recently asked us for help.

“Many of our disciples don’t know what to do with his sickness. Your task **will** be to find out the cause of the condition and try your best to help the patient feel sensations in his legs.

“Within the time limit, you are allowed to observe and touch the patient yourself. But you are not allowed to ask the patient any questions. The result is based on your own abilities. Each of you will have 15 minutes to treat the patient. Who’s going first?”

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Chapter 731

Linden looked around the place.

There were only a few who made it through the second round. They were either very skillful or extremely gifted.

“I’ll go first!” A middle-aged man stepped forward confidently. It was finally time he showed off his 20 years’ worth of experience with acupuncture.

He walked up to the old man and examined him closely. Then, he felt his pulse. Finally, he took out several silver needles and inserted them into different pressure points on the old man’s leg.

But the patient stayed expressionless and did not react at all. The middle-aged man frowned and continued inserting several more needles, but it was all useless.

“Time’s up! You have failed!” the invigilator announced all of a sudden.

“Wait! I’ll try one more time.” The middle-aged man did not want to accept his failure

“Drag him away!” The invigilator did not want to waste any more time and ordered other disciples to drag the middle-aged man away.

“Hah! How could he just perform acupuncture without even finding out the cause of the sickness? What a terrible doctor! Watch me!” A lady walked up to the patient.

Then taking out a pill that could improve blood circulation, she fed it to him. Next, she began massaging the patient’s leg and his hips.

The lady was confident with what she was doing. She had assumed that the patient’s circulatory pathways were blocked. So once she gave him a massage and cleared the pathways, he would regain sensation in his legs.

Unfortunately, things did not go as expected. No matter how hard the lady massaged his legs, the patient remained unresponsive even when she broke out in a sweat as she massaged harder.

“Time’s up! You’re out too!” the invigilator announced once again.

The lady could only accept defeat with a resigned sigh.

Two other people tried treating the patient, but none of them succeeded. The patient simply sat there, unmoving.

“What a bunch of useless people. Let me do it!” After so many failures, Preston could not continue

watching.

Based on his observations, he was sure he knew what was the cause of the old man’s sickness. He

was confident he could treat the old man and make him feel his legs.

“Hey, bastard! You’re better than me in alchemy. But you’re still not as good as me when it comes to treating patients! Watch how I’ll defeat you today!” Then, Preston began his treatment.

He first took out two silver needles and inserted them into the back of the patient’s head. Then, he inserted a few more along his spine, neck, back, hips, and knees. He added another ten needles in

total.

With his jaws clenched, Preston pulled out a white pill but looked unwilling. Then, he fed it to the old man.

“Hey, could that pill be ... Tigarius? The pill that can renew one’s blood marrow?”

“It is Tigarius! That thing’s worth is almost the same as gold! It’s so rare that you can’t buy it even **if** you’re rich!”

“As expected of a member of Asclepia. He’s so rich and generous!”

The crowd commented and praised Preston for his bold and generous action.

Tigarius was

a pill that could improve someone's health and renew their blood marrow. If an ordinary person took it, it would promote health and life span. If martial artists were to take it, it could greatly increase their powers and bring them to the next level.

It was truly a rare treasure that was hard to come by..

"You have to give some to win some. It is worth sacrificing a Tigarius to win the competition!"

Preston drew a deep breath and waited for Tigarius's effects. Then, he inserted a final needle into the patient's chest.

The next moment, the patient sat up and his legs, devoided of any sensation, began to move.

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Chapter 732

“His toe moved!”

“Oh, my God! It worked! That’s amazing!”

“No wonder he’s Dr. Darby’s best student!”

Everyone was shocked to see the old man’s toe twitch. After all, doctors must be highly skilled and talented if they wanted to pass the third test.

Yet all the other doctors had failed to treat the old man. On the other hand, Preston managed to

make the old man’s toes twitch when his legs had been paralyzed for the last eight years.

It was amazing!

“How do you feel, sir?” Preston removed his silver needle and smiled.

“I-I think I’m starting to feel my legs again!” The old man was overjoyed. Since he lost all sensations in his legs, nothing he did could make them react anymore.

Now, his legs felt numb, and he could even control some of his toes. Although the results were just small changes, it was still a miracle for someone who had been in such a state for the last

eight years.

“That’s good to hear. You’ve been paralyzed for too long, so you’ll take a while to recover. But don’t worry, I just have to treat you for another month, and you’ll be fine by then!” Preston promised. confidently.

“Thank you so much! You’re incredible!” The old man was grateful.

“No problem. It was an easy task,” Preston replied proudly.

As Bruce's disciple, treatments like this were not new for him. And to treat his patient, Preston was willing to use something as valuable as Tigarius. So, it was impossible for the old man not to

recover.

"You managed to help the patient regain sensation in his legs in such a short time. That's impressive. You have passed the test!" The invigilator nodded in approval.

"Congratulations, Preston" Miranda smiled. The fact that Preston passed all three tests while others failed showed how good Preston's skills were

"You're next, Miranda Let's show that person how powerful Asclepia disciples truly are!" Preston shot Dustin an arrogant smirk.

So what if Dustin was good at alchemy? He would merely be a pharmacist.

Preston was skilled in everything, including alchemy, medicine, and even witchcraft The gap between the two of them was as clear as day

"Don't worry, Preston I'll teach him that there's always someone better than him" Miranda glanced at Dustin hatefully before approaching the old man to start the treatment.

If she wanted to pass the test, she had to continue what Preston had begun And although the patient's condition was hard to treat, she felt more confident after seeing Preston's results

"I'll begin now."

Miranda took a deep breath and pulled out her silver needle. She lifted the old man's foot and inserted it into a pressure point under his foot.

The old man instantly hissed in pain and jerked back. Without hesitation, Miranda immediately inserted another four needles into several pressure points in his body. This helped to improve his blood circulation and clear any blood clots.

Since Preston had started the treatment with the aid of Tigarius, all she had to do was clear any blockage in his veins to let the old man recover faster.

After dozens of needles, the old man's legs began to tremble. He could even control the toes on one of his legs now.

"My legs don't hurt as much now. That's incredible!"

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Chapter 733

The old man pinched his thigh and was happy to feel a slight pain. His legs had been completely numb before this, but he was slowly regaining sensation in his legs. This was wonderful!

“There. All done.” Miranda grinned as she observed her work.

“You must be extremely talented to be able to treat his symptoms so quickly. No wonder you’re a genius in the medical field!” The invigilator was pleased.

“So I guess that means I passed?” Miranda raised an eyebrow.

“Of course. Both of you passed with flying colors,” the invigilator answered with a smile. His answer made Preston and Miranda very happy.

They had initially received full marks on the first two tests. But because of Dustin, their marks. dropped after the second round. Still, thanks to this round, they’ve managed to raise their points. back up again.

“Did you see that, bastard? That’s how good our medical skills are!” Preston taunted. “It only took us half an hour to let this patient regain feelings in his legs after being paralyzed for the past eight years. Can you do that?”

“Give up if you can’t, instead of making yourself look like a fool!” Miranda sneered.

Just because Dustin was good at alchemy, it didn’t mean he’d also be skilled in treating patients. After all, although both fields may have some similarities, there’s still a big difference between the two.

“Why are you bragging when you’ve only helped the patient recover partially? Others might think. that you’ve completely cured him.” Dustin rolled his eyes.

“With my skills, curing him is a piece of cake! Just give me a month, and I’ll have him walking again!” Miranda puffed her chest.

“A month? Flowers would have wilted when you’re done,” Dustin responded disdainfully.

“Shut up! At least I can treat him. What about you?” Miranda sneered.

“What’s so difficult about that? Just give me three minutes, I’ll get him to walk,” Dustin answered.

“Three minutes?” Surprised, Preston burst out laughing. “Have you gone crazy? You’re telling me that you can treat someone who has been paralyzed from the waist down for the past eight years in just three minutes? Do you think you’re a magician or something?”

“What a fool!” Miranda looked at Dustin in disgust.

After being unable to walk for eight years, the old man’s muscles would have wasted away by now. So there was no way he could walk in just three minutes.

“Young people nowadays are so arrogant Several Stoneray Order elders shook their heads in disappointment

Even they were not able to do much when treating the old man, so they were sure that Dustin would not be able to do much as well

“That proud idiot is only making a fool of himself!” The invigilator sneered. Even Linden wouldn’t be able to get that man to stand up again.

“Since none of you seem to believe me, I’ll just have to show you.” Dustin didn’t bother explaining further. He took out a silver needle and approached the old man. After checking for the spot he was aiming for, he fiercely pierced the needle into the old man’s body.

There was a hum as the needle began to vibrate. A burst of true energy surged from the top of the

man’s skull and spread throughout his body.

The old man shuddered, and his eyes flew open. He could feel the blast of energy flooding him from head to toe. His heartbeat picked up its pace, and his breathing quickened.

“Done.” Dustin stepped back and waited with his hand behind his back.

“That’s it? Is this a joke?” Miranda ridiculed him.

“Who the hell do you think you are? Did you think poking him with a single needle would be enough to cure him? If it works, I’ll kneel at your feet and call you ‘daddy’!” Preston mocked.

Almost immediately, the old man in the wheelchair reacted to Dustin’s treatment. His face flushed, and he looked uncomfortable as his body heated up and sweat built up on his skin.

“H-h-hot! It’s hot!” Seconds later, the old man jumped up like his butt was on fire, jumping off

the wheelchair.

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Chapter 734

“What?” Everyone was shocked to see the old man jump up, and their jaws dropped in disbelief.

None of them expected the paralyzed old man to stand up so suddenly. They also couldn't believe that it had only taken Dustin a single needle to cure the man's paralysis.

“I-Is this real? Did that old man just stand up?”

“What the hell is going on? Did he really cure that old man with a single needle?”

“Holy shit! That's amazing!”

After a silent pause, an uproar broke out. All the scornful looks Dustin had received earlier had

turned to shock.

“I-Impossible!”

“How can a patient like that stand up so soon?” Preston shook his head, not believing what he was. He refused to accept that Dustin could cure a patient in three minutes when he needed a month.

“How can this be? How did he do that?” Miranda was stunned.

As someone who claimed to be a genius in the medical field and was better than her peers, her confidence had been destroyed by Dustin. For a condition that she struggled to treat, he could quickly treat it while she hadn't been able to.

“Who the hell is he? How is he so good?” The invigilator was dumbfounded.

Although he had also looked down on Dustin earlier, he was now completely amazed by the other

man's skills. After all, people would start to worship Dustin if they found out that he was great at alchemy and medicine.

"H-he's a genius!"

"Stoneray Order will be strong again if we can convince him to join us!" The elders of the group were excited. They had yet to have someone as talented as Dustin join them in the past decade.

"He's so skilled despite his young age. He must be a monster." Linden looked at Dustin with

amazement.

What Dustin did earlier might have seemed simple, but it was much more than that.

For others, it may look like he only once inserted the needle into the old man's pressure point. But Dustin had already inserted and removed it repeatedly. However, his movements had been too fast

for everyone.

Even Linden had to admit he didn't have the skills to do that. In other words, Dustin was far more

skilled than he was in this field, yet Dustin was only in his twenties! What a monster!

"Thank you so much!" the old man cried happily. He immediately got to his knees and thanked Dustin for helping him to stand again after eight years.

"Don't mention it Dustin helped the old man up "You became paralyzed after a stroke, but now that the blockage in your bloodstream has been removed, you should be fine again Just make

sure to rest well after this"

To be honest, Dustin's plan only succeeded thanks to the Tigarius Preston had administered. Without it, the old man wouldn't have recovered so quickly.

"Who the hell are you?" Preston demanded. He couldn't accept that a nobody like Dustin was better than him.

“That’s not important. What’s important is that it’s time for you to kneel and call me ‘daddy’.” Dustin smiled.

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Chapter 735

“You- Preston cut off, his face red with anger. However, even Miranda was forced to stay silent.”

“Well, they do that say heroes come in all ages. Linden stood up and beamed.

He added, “Congratulations on beating everyone else. So, tell me your wish. As long as it’s within my power, I’ll try my best to get it done!”

Most people joined the competition to join Stoneray Order, but some would request and ask Linden for rare gems, ancient medical texts, panaceas, and more.

“You’re as generous as rumors say. Well, I’ll be straightforward. I’m actually here for your thousand-year green lotus,” Dustin answered frankly.

“Thousand-year green lotus? It’s a rare herb. I must say, you’re quite ambitious.” Linden raised an eyebrow.

“Why? You can’t give it to me?” Dustin wore a fake smile.

“It might be a valuable herb, but I don’t mind giving it to you.” Linden chuckled. “Bring me the herb!”

“Yes, sir!” The invigilator left quickly and returned, holding a wooden box.

The box opened to reveal a perfect, translucent green lotus with green leaves and a yellow pod.

Light shone on the herb, making it dazzle.

“That’s the green lotus!” Dustin was overjoyed.

Before this, he hadn’t bought it because it wasn’t mature enough. But thanks to Linden’s care, the green lotus had truly transformed into a rare, prime thousand-year green lotus.

“Wait!” Miranda suddenly called out. “Dr. Watkins, could you mind letting me have it? I’m willing to pay any amount!”

“If you had asked earlier, you might have had a chance. Unfortunately, it belongs to this young man now. It is his now, and he decides what to do with it,” Linden answered.

“What?” Miranda frowned. “Hey, you! I need that herb. Name your price!”

“Sorry, but I need it too so I won’t sell it,” Dustin refused.

“I’m one of the Killians. You better think twice before answering,” Miranda yelled threateningly.

The Killians of Oakvale were one of the strongest families in Millsburg, and everyone was aware of

this.

“So what? I said no. Leave!” Dustin snapped, unbothered.

“You!” Miranda gritted her teeth to suppress her anger.

“Fine! You better not regret this!” She turned around and left. If she couldn’t buy it, she’d have to

steal it.

“Hey, kid. You’ve angered Miranda, so you’d better be careful.” Preston sneered before following Miranda.

Although he recognized Dustin as a genius in the medical world, Dustin still lacked the skills to survive in the real world.

“Thank you for the herb, Dr. Watkins. I’ll be leaving now.” Dustin grabbed the herb and was about to leave when the invigilator stopped him.

“What’s the hurry? I don’t mind giving the herb to you, but on one condition- you have to join Stoneray Order Linden smiled.

“Dr. Watkins, I don’t like being held back. The rules and regulations at the Stoneray Order might not suit me,” Dustin declined politely.

“It’s fine. As long as you agree to join us, you can ignore all those rules,” Linden promised.

“Furthermore, after seeing your outstanding performance, I’ve decided to promote you to elder. You will have free access to most of our resources!

“What? He’ll promote that guy to an elder?” Linden’s words stunned everyone.

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Chapter 736

“This is a joke, right, sir? I-it isn’t proper to promote him to an elder when he just joined the group!

“He’s right, Dr. Watkins. This is the first time there’s been an exception like this. That’s not normal!

“Sir, we know you favor talented individuals, but I’m afraid others might be unhappy with your decision.”

The elders and many disciples of the Stoneray Order were upset when they heard that Linden would promote Dustin to elder, which was only one rank below the assistant leader.

Disciples usually started as junior disciples before becoming intermediate disciples. Then, they would be promoted to senior disciples. As senior disciples, if they made any major contributions, they would be promoted to upper disciples.

Upper disciples were then categorized into three classes-upper third, upper second, and upper first. Only upper first disciples had a chance of being promoted to elder.

Getting promoted to a higher rank took years, so for a junior disciple to climb the ranks and become an elder would take at least a few decades. However, Dustin was now offered to take the top spot for free, pissing many people off.

“You fools. His skills are more than worthy of becoming an elder!” Linden responded firmly.

Dustin had completed all three tests perfectly, which was something even Linden couldn’t be sure he could do. That was why Linden desperately tried to recruit Dustin into the Stoneray Order.

“Sir, he might be skilled, but he doesn’t have enough experience yet. It’s fine if you take him in as an upper disciple, but I think appointing him as an elder is going overboard,” a white-bearded elder advised.

Stoneray Order has existed for centuries; there has never been such a young elder.

“Shut up! I said that it’s fine!” Linden shouted angrily, scaring the others into silence. After all, he was the one with the ultimate power.

Linden turned his attention to Dustin and smiled. “So, what do you think? If you agree to join us, you can become an elder and get the thousand-year green lotus. I also swear never to stop you from doing what you want.”

“It’s an honor, sir. I accept your offer. Thank you.” Dustin smiled. At this point, only an idiot would turn down such an attractive offer.

However, Dustin was more attracted by Linden’s position than anything else. His position was very influential in the entire country. After all, no one would claim that they never fell sick.

No matter how powerful someone was, they would still look for Linden when they were sick. Therefore, it was easy to see why Stoneray Order ranked first in terms of connections and influence. It was a once in a life chance to receive an offer to become one of the Order’s elders.

“Great! We’ll start preparing a banquet to welcome our newest elder!” Linden ordered.

His disciple immediately got to work. Although they were unhappy with Linden’s decision, they didn’t dare to voice it.

At noon, Dustin finally left with Abigail and Roderick holding the thousand-year green lotus and a Stoneray Order Elder Emblem. With that badge, all of the Order’s disciples had no choice but to obey him.

“You were so cool today! You got the treasure and taught those two brats a lesson!” Abigail exclaimed excitedly in the car. She watched the whole competition and was glad when Dustin beat those arrogant “geniuses”.

“She’s right! They’re nothing compared to you!” Roderick praised.

“Enough with the praises. You guys should look behind us first,” Dustin answered coolly.

“Behind us?” Puzzled, Abigail and Roderick turned around. It turned out that several cars were following them from about 400 feet away.

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“Are we being followed?” Roderick frowned and ordered his driver, “Go faster, Gary!”

“Yes, sir!” The driver, Gary, immediately stepped on the accelerator, and the car shot forward.

Suddenly, a black van popped out from the fork in front and stopped on the road horizontally.

Gary paled and stomped on the brake, causing the tires to screech. Still, the momentum caused their car to collide with the van.

There was a loud bang as the impact caused the van to flip, and Roderick’s Rolls-Royce could no longer work. Thankfully, no one was hurt.

However, when Dustin and the others tried to run away, the cars that were following them had already caught up to them.

“Grab them!” The doors opened, and several burly men carrying expandable batons jumped out and surrounded them. They looked scary and threatening.

“Who are you? How dare you rob my car?” Roderick roared, pissed that someone would dare to harm him when even the Fabulous Five respected him.

Miranda and Preston got out of the car, a smirk on their faces. “How kind of you to show up now.”

“We meet again. Are you surprised?” Preston smirked.

Dustin narrowed his eyes. “So it’s you two. Do you plan to rob us or something?”

“And if we do? You better give us the thousand-year green lotus if you want to leave!” Preston sneered.

“Your medical skills were worse than mine, so now you’re doing something like this as revenge? Are all Asclepia people like this?” Dustin scoffed.

“Shut up!” Miranda snapped, annoyed.

Then, she added, “You only have two choices right now-give us the thousand-year green lotus, or we’ll beat you up!”

“As if you guys can do that.” Dustin smirked.

“I guess you’re going to be stubborn to the end, eh? Miranda, let’s teach him a lesson!” Preston urged.

"I guess nothing will change your mind. Beat them up, boys!" Miranda waved her hand, and the men in suits charged toward Dustin, Abigail, and Roderick. "Let me deal with them!" Before Dustin could do anything, Abigail pulled out her bat and

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rushed toward their opponents.

She was skilled with the bat, and the men were no match for her. Her attacks broke their limbs. Besides being very strong, she was also nimble and quick, so she was able to defeat them swiftly like a wolf.

"S-she's so strong!" Roderick was astonished. Abigail looked like a delicate girl, so he never expected her to be such a strong fighter.

Abigail continued running after the men, and soon, all of them were beaten up and laid on the floor unconscious.

Miranda and Preston lost their smug smiles and stared at the scene, confused.

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Chapter 738

"There! All done!" Abigail rested the bat on her shoulder like a thug and walked toward Dustin, smiling proudly. "How did I do?"

"Not bad. You've improved a lot in the last few days." Dustin nodded, pleased. Abigail was an extremely talented martial artist. Compared to regular martial artists, she only needed to practice for one day to achieve what others needed a year for. Furthermore, with Dustin's guidance, there has been huge growth in her skills.

She used to struggle against ten opponents, but now, she could take them on easily.

"Duh. Don't you know who I am?" Abigail lifted her chin smugly. For some reason, she woke up feeling extra strong this morning, as though she had endless bursts of energy.

"Are you two going to leave by yourself, or must I force you?" Dustin slowly turned toward Miranda and Preston.

"I underestimated you. I didn't expect you to have a female bodyguard," Preston got over his surprise and jeered. "But do you think a girl can stop us?"

How foolish!”

“Do you want to get beaten up too?” Abigail turned around and glared at Preston.

“A beating? Pfft!” Preston chuckled.

“Don’t tell me you thought Asclepia disciples were only good at medicine? Well, geniuses like us are more than just skilled at medicine.

“We’re also skilled martial artists! We just keep quiet about this. Of course, if you guys insist on being stubborn, I’ll have no choice but to teach you a lesson!” Preston took his jacket off and began to roll up his sleeves.

“Let’s see if you really are that strong!” Abigail jumped forward and swung her bat toward him.

“Great timing!” Preston grinned.

He stood his ground and flung out his hand instead. When his palm touched the bat, he pulled his hand back and struck the bat repeatedly. It created an air vortex that spun the bat around to hit Abigail.

“What?” Startled, Abigail stopped attacking and turned her face. However, she was too slow, and her bat slammed into her shoulder. She immediately winced in pain.

“That’s impossible!” Abigail gritted her teeth and swung her bat toward Preston again, her attack much faster and stronger this time.

“Foolish child.” Preston smirked and did the same thing, causing Abigail to be hit by her attack. She instinctively lifted her arm to block the bat.

There was a thud as the bat cracked under the force, and her arm was injured.

“That’s it! I’ll kill you!” Abigail cried furiously. Her stubborn personality caused her to attack again, but the results were the same.

All her attacks on Preston were reflected and hit her instead.

Right before the bat could bust her head apart, a stone shot out and shattered the bat, stopping the attack.

“You’re no match for him, kid. Go and take a break.” Dustin told her.

“I can still fight!” Abigail was upset.

“Don’t be stubborn. Just watch and learn.” Dustin gestured for her to step back.

Pouting, Abigail stood back reluctantly.

“Pfft! She’s no match for me, so what makes you think you’ll win?” Preston mocked. He had yet to use half of his strength earlier.

“Enough with the chit-chat and do your worst.” Dustin placed his left hand behind his back and extended his right to curl his finger, provoking Preston.

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Chapter 739

Preston’s face immediately darkened. He felt insulted by Dustin’s actions.

“Preston, don’t you go easy on him!” Miranda demanded.

“I’m going to beat the cr ap out of you!” Preston shot toward Dustin and struck him with both palms.

Shadow Dance was a move that could defend and attack simultaneously, allowing Preston to catch his opponents off guard. Although Dustin’s feet didn’t move an inch, he raised a hand and swung it down fiercely.

True energy burst forth and broke past Preston’s defense. Instantly, Dustin slammed his palm into Preston’s chest brutally.

Blood instantly splurged from Preston’s mouth as he flew backward and landed on the car. The car dented from the impact.

“Did you see that, kid? That’s how you’re supposed to deal with him.” Dustin turned his head and gave Abigail a small smile.

“Um...” Abigail forced a smile. There was no way she could learn that. He was on a completely different level!

“Preston!” Shocked, Miranda rushed over and pulled Preston out of the car.

Preston was as strong as a High-level martial artist, yet Dustin smacked him away so easily. It was shocking.

“Are you alright, Preston?” Miranda asked worriedly.

“I’m fi-

“Before he could finish speaking, Preston coughed up another mouthful of blood that splattered all over Miranda.

“Don’t act all tough when you’re so weak. This is just to teach you two a lesson. Don’t piss me off again, or you’ll regret it,” Dustin retorted icily and turned to get onto their car.

“Go to hell!” Just then, Preston sprung up. He fished out a bottle of potent poison and flung the powder toward Dustin.

“Hmm.” Dustin waved his hand without looking back. Instantly, a gust of wind blew all the poison back to Preston.

“Aargh!” Preston cried out, holding his face.

The poison was so corrosive that it immediately burned and destroyed his skin. Seconds later, his face had turned into an ugly mess as blood dripped from his wounds.

“Serves you right!” Abigail spat.

It was bad enough that Preston tried to sneak up on Dustin, but how dare he use such a dangerous poison! He deserved this!

“H-h-how dare you disfigure Preston’s face!” Miranda roared, goosebumps rising when she saw Preston’s disgusting new looks.

“What the hell did I do? He was the one who brought it upon himself.” Dustin shrugged.

“Shut up! I dare you to tell me your name!” Miranda snapped.

“Why? Are you going to seek revenge? Ha, as if I’m afraid of you.” Dustin smirk. Then, he said, “Listen up. My name is Julian Nicholson!”

Miranda gritted her teeth. “Julian Nicholson? I’ll remember you. This isn’t over! I’ll get my revenge someday!”

She got into her car and left, making sure to remember that name.

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Chapter 740

“Who’s Julian Nicholson?” Abigail asked, watching the car drive away.

“Just an ass hole. You don’t need to overthink it,” Dustin answered nonchalantly.

Abigail sighed helplessly. She couldn’t help but pity Julian, who was an innocent person.

Soon after the three of them reached Flame Dragon Dojo, Roderick bid them goodbye and left. Dustin safely stored the thousand-year green lotus and began teaching Abigail how to fight with a staff.

Abigail had finally built a solid foundation. She was also powerful, which made her a perfect fighter. However, her attacks were too simple, so anyone with some skills could easily beat her.

Fortunately, Abigail's choice of weapon was a baton, so Dustin decided to make good use of this and teach her a staff combat technique.

Dustin has been practicing all sorts of combat techniques since he was a child and has read various types of martial arts books of different levels. Dustin knew them all by heart, whether it was basic or advanced techniques or even forbidden, arcane texts. It wouldn't be an exaggeration to call him a martial arts encyclopedia.

Two days flew by. Within those two days, Dustin guided Abigail and conquered two other guilds with Flame Dragon Gang-Stonefur and Slythorn. By then, he managed to get Millburg's four dirtiest guilds under his control. In other words, Dustin had become the king of the underworld. He had over 4000 men and was more powerful than the Fabulous Five!

After unifying the four guilds, he renamed them the Kirin Gang. Flame Dragon Gang, Charging Tiger, Stonefur, and Slythorn each became the Kirin Gang's subsidiary guilds.

With that, the Kirin Gang was ready to conquer the world!

Dustin was dealing with guild matters on the third morning when he received a call.

Julie's anxious voice was heard as soon as he answered the phone. "Dustin, Dahlia was nearly assassinated just now!"

"What? What happened?" Dustin jumped up, alarmed.

"It's hard to explain over the phone. You should just come over."

"I'm on my way!" Dustin asked for the address and rushed over to the hospital. When he entered the ward, he saw Dahlia lying on the bed with a pale face and a bandaged arm. Florence, Julie, and Victoria stood around her.

"Are you okay, Dahlia? Are you hurt?" Dustin quickly walked over, worried.

"You're here. Oh, it's nothing. Just some scratches here and there." Dahlia forced a smile.

"What do you mean it's nothing? You nearly died! Why are you acting tough?" Florence snapped.

“She’s right. If you were not lucky, we might be dead by now!” Julie was scared too. Although she hadn’t been injured, she was still shaken by the incident.

Chapter 741

“Dahlia, what happened?” Dustin frowned.

“Yesterday, I went to Glenstead to visit the Nicholsons and check in on Grandpa Regulus. I was on my way home this morning when someone ambushed me. Fortunately, a general was passing by and saved us,” Dahlia explained.

“Why didn’t you tell me you were going to Glenstead? I would have sent someone to protect you.” Dustin demanded, displeased.

“I brought my own bodyguards. I just didn’t expect something like this to happen,” Dahlia replied helplessly.

If it had just been a regular fight, her bodyguards could have dealt with it easily. However, they were no match for someone who wanted her dead.

“Do you have any idea who’s planned the attack?” Dustin asked.

“Not yet.” Dahlia shook her head.

“You were attacked as soon as you visited Sir Regulus. It’s too much of a coincidence. If my guess is right, your family must have something to do with this.” Dustin narrowed his eyes.

“Our family? That can’t be right.” Dahlia’s brows furrowed.

“You’re the largest shareholder of Nicholson Corp. now. Sir Regulus even appointed you as the heir, so everyone’s aiming for your position. Considering all this, it’s not impossible for someone to resort to something like this,” analyzed Dustin.

Dahlia’s current position was bound to attract envy from some people who knew that if something were to happen to her, other family members would have a chance of taking over her position.

To rich families like theirs, nothing mattered more than money and power. Familial bonds were useless to them.

“He’s right. They must be behind this!” Julie exclaimed angrily. “Those assholes! How dare they hurt my daughter! I’ll get revenge on them!” Florence roared.

“We don’t have proof, so we shouldn’t make assumptions. Others might use this opportunity to cause trouble,” Dahlia stated thoughtfully.

Although she had her suspicions, that was all they were. Without solid evidence, nothing could be proven.

“I’ll start digging and get to the bottom of this as soon as possible,” Dustin promised.

“There’s no hurry for that. I have something more important to deal with.” Dahlia was serious.

Chapter 741

She explained, “I hired a doctor to check on Grandpa Regulus yesterday, and he said that we need to find a Panax root and use it to make a medicine that could wake Grandpa up again.”

“A Panax root? It’ll be difficult to find one.” Dustin thought about it.

“Dustin, you have one, don’t you? Can you-” Dustin cut her off before she could finish her

sentence. “No! ”

“What?” Dustin’s response shocked her. She had only seen Dustin try to fulfill all her requests, so she didn’t understand why he was acting like this now.

“What do you mean by that, Rhys? It’s just a Panax root. Why are you being so stingy?” Florence snapped.

“Dustin, if you give it to us and we manage to cure Sir Regulus, Dahlia will officially get promoted. You’ll get recognized too!” Julie tried to convince Dustin with words.

“I can agree to anything but this,” Dustin responded firmly.

That 500-year-old Panax root was an important ingredient for the nine-fold Longevitum. So there was no way he could give it away.

“It’s just a Panax root. What’s the problem?” Florence glared at him.

“Exactly! You’re not using it right now anyway, so you might as well give it to Dahlia and earn her favor.” Julie echoed.

“Dustin, the Panax root is incredibly important to me. Grandpa Regulus won’t wake up without it. I know this sounds demanding, but I hope you can give it to me,” Dahlia asked again.

“

I’m sorry, but it’s just as important to me, so I can’t give it to you.” Dustin refused once more.

Dahlia frowned. “If it’s a loss to you, I don’t mind buying it from you.”

“It has nothing to do with money.” Dustin shook his head. “I won’t sell it no matter how much you offer me.”

“Then, what do you want? Is a Panax root more important than me?” Dahlia’s face hardened as her temper rose.

She wasn’t angry because of the Panax root. Rather, it was because Dustin didn’t seem to care about her.

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Chapter 742

"Stop throwing a tantrum, Dahlia." Dustin frowned.

Dustin said, "I wouldn't mind giving you anything else, even if it costs millions. But I just can't give you my Panax root."

"You're right. I am throwing a tantrum! If you don't want to give it to me, I'll think of something else!" Dahlia turned her head away furiously.

In the past, Dustin would get it done no matter what request she made. Now, all she was asking for was a Panax root, yet he turned her down firmly.

He obviously didn't care about her anymore. It seemed like she wasn't that important to him anymore after he got a new girlfriend.

"Dahlia is giving you a chance to prove yourself, Rhys! You better not ignore her kindness!" Florence exclaimed.

"Exactly! With Dahlia's looks and influence, many other men would be clambering to gift her Panax roots! You better appreciate this chance!" Julie jeered.

"If you need a Panax root, I can use my connections to help you get one. However, I can't give you the one I have because I need to use it to save someone," Dustin answered thoughtfully.

"Fine! You said you're going to use it to save someone. So tell me, who's the person that's more important than Grandpa Regulus?" Dahlia demanded.

"You know this person. It's Gregory."

"Mr. Jones?" Dahlia frowned, her temper cooling slightly. Then, she asked, "What happened to him? Is he sick again?"

In her memories, Gregory was either drinking or sleeping. She rarely saw him sober. And because he was a heavy drinker, his health wasn't the best.

"He's fine for now, but that doesn't mean he'll stay that way. I need to gather more herbs to treat him," Dustin answered truthfully.

"Since he's fine right now, you can lend us the Panax root. Once Sir Regulus gets better, we'll return another one to you. How about that?" Florence persuaded.

"She's right. Time is running out. Sir Regulus' life is in danger right now, so you should prioritize us first!" Julie insisted.

To them, Regulus' life would directly impact Dahlia's future and her position, so it was far more important than Gregory's life.

"My Panax root is too rare. It'll be extremely difficult for you to find another as mature as mine. So I'm sorry. I can't risk Gregory's life." Dustin shook his head again.

A wild 500-year-old Panax root was incredibly rare, so Dustin couldn't afford to take any chances.

"Geez! Why do you have to be so stubborn? We're trying to talk to you nicely, but if you're still going to be so stubborn, don't think about meeting my daughter again!" Florence snapped.

"Do you even care about Dahlia? She's just trying to borrow your Panax root, and it isn't as though she won't return it. What's the issue?" Julie was pissed.

"Alright, alright. That's enough." Dahlia frowned.

"Dustin has plans of his own, so we shouldn't force him."

Though she understood his actions, she was still irritated. Dustin should know how to prioritize matters better.

Since Gregory didn't need to use it immediately, why couldn't he lend it to her temporarily so that she could treat her grandfather?

"Ms. Nicholson..." Just then, a tall, handsome young man in military uniform entered the room. It was easy to see that he was

not a regular commander.

"Mr. Killian? What are you doing here?" When she saw the man, Julie lit up and rushed over with a bright smile.

"Mr. Killian?" Florence and Victoria exchanged glances before leaping up to welcome the new arrival, full of smiles.

This was the first time they met a real general since they'd only ever seen them on television, so the two ladies were excited and nervous.

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Chapter 743

"I had just finished reporting back to the military base, so I decided to drop by." Gavin Killian smiled.

"Greetings, Mr. Killian." Dahlia tried to stand up.

"No need for formalities." Gavin placed a hand on her shoulder to keep her seated. "You need to rest, Ms. Nicholson. You're hurt."

"It's nothing." Dahlia smiled.

"And this is?" Dustin looked at Gavin, puzzled.

He could tell from the badge on Gavin's arm that he was a major general. For someone to be a general in his thirties, he must either be from an influential family or be incredibly talented.

"This is Mr. Killian. He was the one who saved me this morning," Dahlia introduced.

This morning's incident was still fresh in her mind. Without Gavin's help, she'd be dead by now.

"I see Thank you, Mr. Killian." Dustin thanked.

"It was nothing," Gavin answered with a smile. "And you are?"

"Oh, he's my friend, Dustin Rhys." Dahlia blurted.

"Friend?" Dustin frowned, unhappy with her answer. Still, he regained his composure after a few seconds.

"Nice to meet you, Mr. Rhys. I'm Gavin Killian." Gavin extended a hand. Although his expression looked kind, his eyes showed an arrogant glint.

"Nice to meet you." Dustin shook Gavin's hand knowingly.

Killian wasn't a common surname. He ran into Miranda Killian two days ago, and now, he was meeting another Killian, so he couldn't help but wonder if the two were related.

"Ms. Nicholson, I heard that you urgently need a Panax root. Is that true?" Gavin suddenly switched the topic.

Dahlia nodded. "That's right. My grandfather is sick, and we need a Panax root to make his medicine. Unfortunately, finding one is quite hard, so I doubt I'll get my hands on one soon."

"You don't have to search anymore, Ms. Nicholson. I happened to have a 300-year-old Panax root. If you'd like, you can have it."

Gavin's words shocked them.

"What? You're giving it to me?" Dahlia was taken aback. She didn't expect him to have a Panax root and for him to gift it to her so casually.

"Are you serious, Mr. Killian? Are you going to give us a Panax root?" Julie asked with disbelief in her eyes.

"Of course. I always keep my word." Gavin puffed out his chest.

"Gosh, thank you so much!" Julie was overjoyed.

"You're such a kind man, Mr. Killian!" Florence and Victoria were happy as well.

Just moments ago, they were thinking hard, trying to find a way to obtain a Panax root. They never thought they'd get one so soon.

Unlike Dustin, who was stubborn and stingy, Gavin seemed much more generous and honorable.

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Chapter 744

"Thank you for the offer, Mr. Killian, but I can't accept such a precious gift." Dahlia got over her surprise and became upset again. She hadn't even repaid Gavin for his earlier kindness, so how could she accept his Panax root?

"Ms. Nicholson, a Panax root is meant to cure sic kness anyway. I don't need it for now. So you might as well use it to save someone's life. Think of it as an act of kindness." Gavin smiled.

"But-"

Florence cut Dahlia off before she could refuse again. "Dahlia, you should accept it. You can always repay the favor later."

Florence kept/looking at Gavin eagerly.

"She's right, Dahlia. Saving a life is much more important. Without this Panax root, what are we going to do about Sir Regulus?" Julie advised.

"But..." Dahlia was at a loss for words. It would be difficult to repay the favor, but she had no choice but to accept the gift since Regulus' life was at stake.

"Ms. Nicholson, if you want to thank me, I do have a favor to ask," Gavin suddenly said.

"What is it?" Dahlia raised an eyebrow.

"I'll be hosting a banquet at Viridian Hotel tonight, so I'd like to invite you," Gavin answered with a small smile.

"A banquet?" Dahlia hesitated before nodding in agreement. "It'd be my pleasure."

Gavin had helped her a lot, so she couldn't refuse him.

"Great. See you tonight." Gavin smiled and left after chatting for a moment.

"What do you think of Mr. Killian, Dahlia?" Julie blurted out as soon as Gavin was gone.

"He's a general despite his young age, so he's definitely an excellent person," Dahlia responded casually.

"Not just that. I think he likes you." Julie grinned teasingly.

"Nonsense!" Dahlia glared at Julie. "We've just met. How can he like me?"

"Why would he give you a Panax root if he didn't like you? He even invited you to his banquet. Isn't it obvious enough?" Julie pressed.

"But..." Dahlia was speechless. She glanced at Dustin and let out a breath of relief when she realized he didn't seem bothered.

"Dahlia, Mr. Killian is young but accomplished. He's an excellent man that's hard to come by. Why don't you try and flirt with him a little? Who knows what might happen." Florence had an eager expression.

If Dahlia were to marry a general, they'd also gain fame. It would be more fame than what they'd get if she married an aristocratic family. After all, being powerful was more important than being wealthy.

"Mom, you're doing it again!" Dahlia grumbled.

"Haven't you gotten over Rhys yet?" Florence glared at Dustin

disdainfully. "He knows that you need a Panax root, but he won't give it to you. What's the point of keeping a man like him?"

"Exactly!" Julie nodded. "You saw how that guy refused despite how we begged him, yet Mr. Killian, whom we barely know, was willing to help us. Can't you see who's the better choice?"

Dahlia frowned when she heard this. After comparing the two men, she realized that Dustin seemed much more selfish than Gavin.

"Are you going to believe him when you've only met him once?" Dustin suddenly asked.

"Are we supposed to believe you, then? What makes you think you're trustworthy?" Florence snapped.

"She's right. Mr. Killian not only saved Dahlia, but he also helped us in times of need. What about you? What have you done?" Julie sneered.

"First, he saved you. Now, he's gifting you a Panax root. Don't you think this is too much of a coincidence?" Dustin asked.

"What do you mean?" Dahlia raised an eyebrow.

"You don't know who that man is or his intentions, so you shouldn't trust him so easily," Dustin warned.

"Hmph! I bet you're just jealous." Julie jeered. "You're jealous that he's better and more powerful than you!"

"It's bad enough that you're useless, but how dare you insult Mr. Killian! You're despicable!" Florence yelled

Chapter 745

"I'm just stating the truth. It's always better to be careful," Dustin replied calmly.

"Dustin, Mr. Killian isn't that kind of person," Dahlia retorted firmly, unhappy to hear Dustin talking bad about her savior.

"Do you really know him well enough? Besides his name, what else do you know about him?"

Dustin asked back.

"I-" Dahlia was taken aback.

When she came to her senses, she immediately declared.

"Anyway, Mr. Killian isn't a bad person. You better not judge him with a petty mindset!"

"Petty?" Dustin chuckled unhumorously.

"You're right. I am petty. And since you seem to believe him so much, this petty man will take his leave now. Goodbye." Dustin turned around.

"Dustin, stop right-" He left before Dahlia could stop him.

"Let him leave! What the hell is wrong with him? We just said a few words!" Florence scoffed.

"Yeah. Mr. Killian is a thousand times better than a petty man like him!" Julie snorted.

"That's enough! He's gone now, so stop talking about this!" Dahlia frowned, agitated.

Her relationship with Dustin had only begun to improve, and she didn't want problems to arise again.

Out of the hospital doors, Dustin sighed.

Although he didn't care about Florence and Julie's words, he was unhappy about Dahlia's distrust of him.

"Dustin Rhys..." A black sedan pulled over, and the windows were lowered, revealing Gavin's face.

"Mr. Killian, how may I help you?" Dustin replied.

Gavin had obviously been waiting for him.

"I will only say this once, so you better listen closely." Gavin's expression was cold as he said, "Dahlia Nicholson is mine, so you better stay away from her from now on."

"And why should I?" Dustin narrowed his eyes. He didn't expect Gavin to show his true colors so soon.

"Because I'm from the Killian family of Oakvale and a major general. And because I'm stronger than you. Is this answer good enough?" Gavin sneered arrogantly.

"Those labels mean nothing to me. Here's some advice. Don't piss me off," Dustin retorted, unfazed.

"Hmm... Interesting." Gavin grinned.

"A loser dares to challenge me? Fine. Let's see what you've got."

With a snap of his fingers, his car drove off and out of sight.

Right after that, several other cars pulled over in front of Dustin, and several law enforcers wearing distinctive uniforms stepped out, their faces stern.

"Are you Dustin Rhys?" The leader asked.

"I am." Dustin nodded. "How may I help you?"

"Someone reported you for killing Hank Hoffman, so you're under arrest!" The man yelled.

"Someone reported me? Who?" Dustin was shocked.

"Me!" Another person stepped out of the car. It was Julian!

"I witnessed you murdering my friend, so I reported you!" Julian cried out.

"So you're up to no good again." Dustin narrowed his eyes.
"You killed an innocent man, and plenty of evidence proves that.
Take him away!", The leading enforcer signaled his men to
handcuff Dustin and haul him into the car.
Julian watched the cars drive away, sneering, "You're dead meat
this time!"

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Chapter 746

Dustin didn't resist as he was dragged into the car. He was blindfolded, and a hood was placed over his head to ensure he couldn't see anything.

That was the start of a long, shaky drive.

Dustin could tell that they had driven out of the city, so these enforcers were definitely not from the investigation bureau. After some time, when Dustin began to feel sleepy, the car finally stopped. The doors opened, and the metallic stench of blood pierced his nose. He could also smell the disgusting scent of rotting flesh.

"Where are we, sir?" Dustin asked curiously.

"Shut your mouth and get in!" The man beside him snapped as he dragged Dustin forward.

They passed through several checkpoints and heavy iron gates before riding an elevator that kept going deeper underground. After a while, the elevator came to a halt with a clang. Different noises instantly surrounded Dustin—cries, wails, shouts, and laughter. There was also a nasty, damp stench.

The man took the hood off Dustin's head, and Dustin finally realized that they were in an underground prison.

In the center was a long, dark corridor that seemed to go on forever. Rows of prison cells lined both sides, each packed with dozens of people.

Some were cursing or glaring at him menacingly, while others were begging for mercy. There were even some who began to

cackle hysterically when they saw Dustin.

"Move it!"

The man pushed Dustin forward. They walked passed a few cells before stopping in front of the cell at the corner. When the metal gates opened, dozens of cold, ruthless glares shot toward him.

"Get in." Two officers pushed him into the cell and swiftly left after locking the doors.

"Hey, kid. What trouble did you get into to end up here?" A bald, muscular man suddenly asked.

"I killed someone," Dustin answered straightforwardly.

"How many?" The other man questioned again.

"One."

"Why did you kill that person?"

"And why do you need to know that?"

"Cut the crap and answer the goddamn question!"

"Fine. The guy I killed was a rapist. He killed my brother-in-law, so I threw him off a building," Dustin explained.

"Really?" The bald man stared intensely at Dustin before he burst out laughing. "Well done. You did the right thing!"

"What?" Dustin was taken aback by the bald man's response. He assumed that the bald man was going to beat him up.

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Chapter 747

The same went for everyone else. At first, their eyes had been filled with hostility. However, after hearing Dustin's answer, they

smiled welcomingly at him.

"If you had done an evil deed, you'd be dead by now. Fortunately, you were just avenging your wife, so you're a real man!"

"It seems like Shadow Gang will have a new member!"

Everyone in the cell studied Dustin carefully. Although they didn't seem happy to see him, they didn't seem as hostile anymore.

"What are you guys talking about?" Dustin was confused.

"Over here, there are all sorts of guilds and gangs. Ours is Shadow Gang. Our rule is simple: settle scores fairly. You can kill your enemies, but you can't hurt innocent people. If you're caught, you'll be heavily punished." The bald man grinned.

"He's right. We might not be good people, but at least we're honorable men who won't allow others to hurt innocent people!"

The other men agreed.

Dustin was surprised. It seemed like not everyone here was evil.

"You're one of us now, kid." The bald man threw his arm over Dustin's shoulder as if they had known each other for a long time.

"Come on. I'll introduce you. These guys here are Beardy, Limpy, and Scarface. And here we have--"

"Don't let my limp fool you, kid! I killed dozens of corrupt government officials before being sent here!"

"I'm no slouch either! I came across of bunch of dicks who were raping and killing women, so I castrated them and tore off their limbs!"

"That's nothing compared to what I did. There was a gang of bandits that wiped out a village, so I took all of them out myself. Unfortunately, the police were in conflict with the bandits, so they blamed me for the village's destruction."

The men stopped being hostile and began boasting about their achievements.

"Interesting." Dustin smiled. He didn't expect to find such honorable men in prison.

"What's going on? Is there a new kid?" a raspy voice asked from the corner of the cell.

Everyone immediately fell silent, respectfully. Dustin turned and saw a bony older man yawning as he sat upright on his mat. The older man's hair was unkept, and his face looked gaunt. His hands and feet were bounded with thick iron chains, and metal rods pierced into his shoulders. Metal rattled every time he moved.

"Hmm?" Dustin was surprised. He didn't expect to run into a fully developed divine-level martial artist here. After all, this would mean that the older man was only a step away from becoming a Grandmaster.

"Did we wake you up, Mr. Adler? We'll be sure to keep quiet, so you can keep sleeping." The bald man smiled apologetically.

"It's fine. There's nothing to do besides sleeping and eating anyway. It's been a while since we had a newcomer. As the gang leader, I should welcome him." The older man yawned.

"Hurry. Pay your respects to Mr. Adler." The bald man quickly tugged Dustin.

"No need for formalities." The old man waved them off before asking Dustin, "Did you offend some high-ranking official?"

"How did you know?" Dustin was surprised.

Although Julian said he was the one who made the report, Dustin was sure that Gavin had something to do with this.

"Everyone here is a criminal who has killed at least ten people, but you've only killed one. You've clearly offended someone powerful," the old man replied.

"May I know where this is?" Dustin was even more curious now. "This is a place you can enter but never leave." The older man sighed.

"It doesn't matter who you are or where you're from. Once you're in here, you'll never get out. It's just like the underworld. That's why it's called 'Azkaban'!"

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Chapter 748

"Azkaban?" Dustin was alert when he heard the name.

Azkaban was known throughout Balerno. Rumors had it that the inmates here were either extremely wicked or caused great harm to the country. And there were all sorts of criminals- assassins, despised martial artists, bloodthirsty maniacs, and more.

The prison had one rule: once you entered the place, there was no way out.

Unlike other prisons where inmates who performed well would be given chances to reduce their sentences, the inmates here only had two choices. They could either stay here for the rest of their lives or die.

Therefore, no one has ever left or escaped the place. This was also the place where Duane Welch had been sent to.

"Do you understand the seriousness of the situation now?" The older man asked, concerned.

"This place is a different world. Everything on the outside no longer has anything to do with you now."

"Is there no way to get out?" Dustin questioned.

"Get out? How?" The older man shook his head with a bitter smile.

"The cells are made of indestructible dark steel. Beyond this, many checkpoints and skilled martial artists guard the place. Nothing could get in here, not even a fly."

"Now that does sound worrying," Dustin muttered.

"Stop overthinking, kid." The older man patted Dustin's shoulder.

"You're lucky you met us instead of those wicked men or you'd be dead meat by now."

"You're one of us now, so you definitely won't starve!" The bald man patted his chest confidently.

"Thanks, guys." Dustin smiled politely. He could tell that these men weren't evil.

Suddenly, sounds of metals clanking resounded through the corridor. Instantly, everyone shrank away from the bars and huddled in the corners of the cell, terrified.

Dustin followed the sound and looked toward the dimly lit corridor. A plump man dressed in fine clothes was approaching them with several fierce-looking prison officers. He held a metal rod and kept striking it against the iron doors, causing sparks to fly.

"Hey, kid. Did your family members bribe the guards before you came?" the old man asked.

"No." Dustin shook his head.

"Then do you have any valuables with you?" the old man asked again.

"I'm completely penniless." Dustin spread his hands.

"Oh, dear." The older man sighed. "Those money-grubbers are here. You might have to endure some pain since you didn't bribe the guards and have no money."

"Don't worry, kid. It's just 50 canes. It'll be over in the blink of an eye. It might keep you in bed for

about a month, but it won't kill you!" The bald man promised.

"He's right. You just have to remember not to resist, and everything will be over soon," Others echoed, having gone through the same thing.

If someone had money, they could bribe the guards so that their punishment was milder. But if someone had no money, they'd have no choice but to suffer.

Those who were lucky would suffer from a bruised bottom, while those who weren't might end up disabled.

The well-dressed, portly man continued striking the cages before stopping in front of Dustin's cell.

"I heard a new guy arrived. Who is it?" The well-dressed, portly man scanned the cell with cold eyes. Those who met his eyes instinctively lowered their heads, scared of these men who controlled their lives.

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Chapter 749

"It's me." Dustin stepped forward.

The well-dressed, portly man gave him a look over and asked, "Do you understand the rules in here yet?"

"What rules?" Dustin asked.

"Everyone needs to get a beating when they first arrive. Naturally, I'm the one who determines how heavy the beating will be. Got it?" The well-dressed, portly man made a point to tap his baton.

"So, you want money?" Dustin raised an eyebrow.

"Smart boy!" The other man nodded, pleased.

"My men and I have to take care of trash like you every day. So we deserve that much, don't we?" He rubbed his fingers greedily.

"Sorry. I don't have any money." Dustin shook his head.

"You don't have any money?" The well-dressed, portly man frowned and snapped, "Then write a letter to your family to ask for money! Your punishment will be lighter the more you pay."

"I come from a poor family. We don't have any money." Dustin shrugged.

"F**k, you're just a hobo! What a waste of my time!" the well-dressed, portly man spat.

"Drag this f**ker out and give him 80 canes!"

"Hang on. Isn't it supposed to be 50?" Dustin asked.

"I'm in a bad mood, so I'm giving you another 30 lashes. Got something to say about it?" The well-dressed, portly man glared.

"Don't you think that you're taking things too far?" Dustin narrowed his eyes.

"Are you telling me what to do?" The well-dressed, portly man sneered.

"Fine, since 80 seems too little, make it 100! We won't stop until you're crippled."

"Have you thought of the consequences of your actions?" Dustin asked calmly,

"Pfft! Are you threatening me right now?" The well-dressed, portly man shot Dustin a scornful

glare.

"It seems like you haven't fully grasped the situation yet. I'm the king here, so I decide whether you get to live. If you piss me off, I'll make your life a living hell!"

He has seen countless people like Dustin, who arrived with arrogant attitudes. However, with a few canes, they immediately submitted and became obedient.

"You're just a prison officer. Where did you find the balls to make such bold claims?" Dustin sneered.

"Just a prison officer?" The portly man's face hardened, and his blood boiled. "You don't know when to give up, eh? Men, drag him out and beat him up till he's dead!"

"Wait!" Seeing the seriousness of the situation, the old man begged, "Sir, he's new here and doesn't know anything. Please spare him!"

He fished out a gold nugget from his pocket and offered it to the well-dressed, portly man.

"F**k off!" The well-dressed, portly man slapped the gold away and yelled, "That punk dared to challenge my authority. I must make an example out of him. If anyone tries to stop me, I'll take it as an act of opposition! Grab him now!"

"Yes, sir!" The prison officers immediately opened the door to grab Dustin.

"You were too reckless! We're no match for them!"

"He's right. Everything would have been fine if you didn't talk back to them. You'll be killed if you defy their orders!"

Others expressed their sympathy, but there wasn't much they could do.

Although the evillest of evils lived here, none of them dared to go against these guards. It wasn't because they were no match for them.

Instead, they were too afraid to make a move as they were worried about getting caught by the skilled guards. If that happened, their lives would be utterly miserable.

"I'll show you what life in hell looks like!" The well-dressed, portly man seethed.

As soon as those words were spoken, bangs and crashes broke out as the prison officers who had barged into the cell flew out, and Dustin slowly walked out.

He went up to the well-dressed, portly man and fisted his collar. Frigidly, he asked, "What were you saying again?"

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Chapter 750

Everyone was shocked by what just happened.

The prison officers in Azkaban were far from ordinary. They were all powerful and highly skilled. Otherwise, they couldn't stand up to the evil criminals inside.

No one would have expected that Dustin could have beaten these elite fighters up so quickly.

It was truly frightening. Of course, more than shock, they felt fear. There were all sorts of experts in Azkaban, even Grandmaster martial artists. Beating up the prison officer would catch the

mastermind's attention.

When that happened, the consequences would be unspeakable! After returning to his senses, the well-dressed, portly man began yelling, "Punk, you really have big balls! How dare you touch me?!"

It wasn't like nobody had challenged his authority before, but they had all ended up tortured to the brink of death.

"So what?" Dustin said with a calm expression.

"For beating me, your punishment is now doubled! If you don't stop right now, not even God can save you!" the man yelled.

"Young man, let go! Don't make things worse!"

"The prison officer is no ordinary guard. You can't afford to anger him. Hurry and beg for forgiveness!"

"All you suffered was some physical pain. You don't have to dig your own grave!"

The others began to panic, trying their hardest to talk sense into Dustin.

Dustin would be in trouble if something happened to the portly man, and the rest of them would get dragged down with him. Here, there was no such thing as law or justice. The warden had the final say.

Whether you lived or died was solely the warden's decision.

"You hear that? Let go now, or I'll kill you!" the portly man said with a glare.

"You're going to kill me, so why should I let you go? Since I'll die anyway, I should just kill you," Dustin said, smiling.

"Don't you dare!" the portly man roared fiercely.

"I'm warning you. I'm the warden's brother-in-law. If you harm a piece of hair on my head, not just you but all your friends, family, and everyone in this room will die!"

"Young man, you can't beat them. While things haven't completely reached the point of no return, you must stop before it's too late! Or else, there will be a horrible price to pay!" the older man, Cornelius, was beginning to worry.

"Even if I let him go, he won't let things go. We might as well die together," Dustin said plainly.

Dustin's unflinching attitude toward death frightened the well-dressed, portly man. For some reason, he began to feel nervous. What was his life worth?

Was it worth exchanging it for the life of a death row convict?

"Sir, what happened today was just a misunderstanding. Why don't we let bygones be bygones, for my sake?" Cornelius said.

"Hmph, since you spoke up, Mr. Adler, then I'll spare his life this once!" the portly man said, using this opportunity to dig his way out.

His biggest fear was running into hotheads like Dustin.

They would want to fight to the death whenever things didn't go their way. If he got killed, it would be a greater loss.

"Young man, the prison officer has chosen to forgive you. You can let go now," Cornelius said.

"Alright." Dustin nodded and relaxed his grip.

The portly man crashed to the ground.

At the exact moment Dustin turned his back, the portly man's expression twisted into a hateful look.

"Die!" He suddenly brandished a dagger and stabbed it into Dustin's back.

There was only one outcome for someone who dared to challenge his authority in public-death

The dagger was rammed into Dustin's back, but it didn't even break the skin.

On the contrary, it snapped into two pieces from the sheer momentum.

"What?" Looking at the broken blade in his hand, the man was shocked."

This was a treasured dagger that could slice through solid metal! It was one thing not to be able to pierce the skin, but it even f**king broke.

Just what kind of monster was he?!

"Stubborn as always!" Dustin's face turned icy, and he slapped the portly man.

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Chapter 751

There was a crisp clap.

The portly man's face became disfigured from the force. His big body instantly flew dozens of feet away, crashing heavily into the jail cell. He immediately lost consciousness.

His nose and mouth were off-center, his face was contorted, and he had even lost a few teeth. He looked like an absolute mess.

The others' expressions changed when they saw the well-dressed, portly man lying on the floor like a log. "Oh no!"

Although he wasn't powerful, he was the warden's actual brother-in-law.

Hitting him was equivalent to insulting the warden. At this point, death would be a better option.

"Young man, you're really in trouble this time!" Cornelius looked worried.

"You-you-you psycho! Get it in your head-we're the Shadow Gang, not the Loony Gang!" the bald, muscular man said in dismay.

"We're done for. Now that you've hit the prison officer, we're all going down with you!" Everyone was stricken with panic, They thought that they'd gotten an ordinary new member. They just didn't expect that he was a bad luck magnet.

Immediately after entering prison, he'd turned the whole place upside down.

What a mess!

"Don't panic, everyone. I'll take responsibility for my actions."

After that, Dustin dusted his hands. off and returned to his cell. "Young man, I'm afraid you won't be able to handle the consequences of what you've done today!" Cornelius shook his head.

"Do you know who the warden of Azkaban is? He's an extremely powerful Grandmaster martial artist and a sadist!

"Back then, he personally threw me into Azkaban and tortured me ruthlessly for seven days and nights!

"In the end, he even put a lock in my shoulder blade and sealed my cultivation. He made me endure excruciating pain every single day.

"You haven't experienced it before; you'll never know how terrifying this person is. If you fall into his hands, you'd wish you were dead!

"If this place is hell, then he is the fiercest, vilest demon!" After hearing this, everyone else couldn't help but shudder.

The warden had a terrifying reputation. To them, he was the dictator who decided whether they lived or died.

The deeply rooted fear was why they didn't even dare think about protesting.

It was because they all knew that if they did, they'd suffer a fate worse than death.

That evening, in the back garden of the Fallonge estate, Scarlet was playing chess with her assistant general. She was dressed in a red tracksuit, and her hair was streaked with gray.

After a long game, Scarlet only had her King and two pawns left on the white side of the chessboard.

She was only one step away from defeat.

"Madam, it's your turn." Across from her, Georgia was wearing a

smile, sure of her victory.

During training, Georgia usually got a good beating. It was time she finally got even on the chessboard.

She just needed one more move to win.

"Checkmate!" Scarlet picked up her white King and knocked over the black one. "You lose."

"What?" Georgia was confused. She cried, "Madam, the King can only move one square. That's the rule!"

"Other people's Kings can't, but mine can. Anyway, you lose," Scarlet said seriously.

"Madam, you're cheating!" Georgia was getting heated.

"There aren't that many rules on the battlefield. I'm just improvising," Scarlet insisted boldly.

"You..." Georgie wanted to cry, but there were no tears.

It was one thing to cheat, but Scarlet even justified her cheating.

"Madam..." At that moment, the other assistant general, Bridget, walked in and reported, "Madam,

I just received word that we found the whereabouts of the person you're looking for."

"He's been located? Where?" Scarlet jumped to her feet. Her normal cold expression was filled with surprise—a rare sight for all.

"In Azkaban!"

Chapter 752

In one of the studies in the Harmon estate, Natasha wrinkled her eyebrows in confusion. "Dad, are you really going to make Kate marry Tyler?"

Not too long ago, she suddenly heard the news that there would be a union between the Harmon family and the Grant family again..

And this time, the bride and groom of this marriage were Kate and Tyler.

"Although the Dark Lord is dead, the Grant family is still a huge thorn in our side. This time, they brought up marriage again and even selected Kate. I really couldn't reject." Hector shook his head.

"What did Uncle Trent say? Is he going to let his daughter jump into the fire pit?" Nathasha pressed further.

"That's exactly the problem." Hector let out a sigh.

"Your Uncle Trent and cousin readily agreed to the marriage. They also have the support of the family elders. I was not able to intervene."

"What? They agreed?" Natasha was a bit taken aback.

"Don't they know that the Grants have ulterior motives? They're after something else!"

"I've already explained the pros and cons to them too, but I still couldn't change their minds. If I attempt to stop them, the situation will blow up even bigger," Hector said helplessly.

When he initially heard about this, he naturally protested.

However, it was all in vain.

Trent and Kate wouldn't listen; they even insisted it was for the family's benefit.

In the end, the argument ended on a sour note.

"Hmph, Kate is such a gold-digger!" Natasha snorted.

"Does she think she'll rise to the top and become the general's lady once she marries Tyler? She's far too naive!"

"Forget it. The final decision has been made; it would do no one any good to speak more about it. Let's just begin preparations early." Hector shook his head.

"I just wish that the two of them won't become the Grant family's pawn," Natasha said, deep in thought.

For Tyler to swallow his pride and ask for marriage once again, it was clear that he wanted something.

It was better to have a real enemy than a fake ally. There would be trouble if they let the Grant family's influence seep into the Harmon family.

"Natasha, something bad has happened!" Ruth suddenly threw the door open and burst in.

"I just heard that Dustin has been arrested!"

"Arrested? What happened?" Natasha was stunned.

"Apparently, he killed a man named Hank Hoffman, and the Nicholsons reported him," Ruth said, gasping for breath.

"The Nicholsons reported him?" Natasha frowned. "What is Dahlia doing? She can't even protect a man!"

"Ruth, do you know where he's locked up?" Hector asked.

"In Azkaban," Ruth said truthfully.

"What? Azkaban?!" When Natasha heard this, color drained from her face.

Azkaban was where they locked up the most wicked felons. Not a single person who entered could walk out of there alive.

Just the name of the place was horrifying.

Hector quickly realized something was amiss. "That's odd. Why did he get sent to Azkaban over the murder of an ordinary

person? Could it be that someone planned this from the shadows?"

Even if someone committed a crime, there should have been an interrogation, a plea, and other procedures. Sending someone directly to Azkaban was obviously fishy.

"Azkaban is not a place for humans. I have to save him right away!" Natasha said, pacing back and forth anxiously.

"No one leaves Azkaban. There hasn't been an exception to the rule over the past few decades. It would be challenging to rescue him. Hector wrinkled his eyebrows.

The mastermind behind this must be extremely influential to have been able to send Dustin to Azkaban so easily.

"I have to try no matter what!" Natasha clenched her jaw. She seemed to have decided something and immediately walked out the front door.

"Natasha, where are you going?" Hector shouted.

"I'm going to ask Grandfather for help!"

In the warden's office in Azkaban, a middle-aged man with a potbelly was puffing on a cigar while reading the newspaper. He propped both his legs up on the desk. He seemed leisurely and carefree.

This man was none other than the warden of Azkaban-Caius Roswell!

"Knock, knock..."

A prison officer knocked on the door before entering. He said, "Mr. Roswell, Lord Xenos' adjutant, is here. He says he wants to see you."

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Chapter 753

"George's adjutant? What is he doing here?" Caius was taken by surprise.

"I don't know," the prison guard said, lowering his head.

"Alright, let him in," Caius said, gesturing.

"Yes," the prison guard answered before leaving quickly. After a moment, he brought a man in a gray shirt in

"Hello, Mr. Roswell," the man in the gray shirt greeted politely as soon as he entered.

He knew the man before him wasn't just an ordinary warden; he was extremely powerful and had a wide network. Even his viceroy listened to him.

"What's the matter?" Caius crossed his legs.

"On order of Lord Xenos, I'd like to ask you to release a person."

The man in the gray shirt bowed his head.

"Release a person? Who?" Caius asked.

A young man named Dustin Rhys," the man replied without beating around the bush.

"Dustin Rhys?" Caius narrowed his eyes.

"Sorry, but I can't give him to you. No one walks out of Azkaban. This is a rule!"

"Mr. Roswell, I hope you can make an exception. After the deal is done, Lord Xenos will reward you handsomely." The man smiled apologetically.

"Rules are rules. It's not that I don't want to, but I can't disregard the rules of Azkaban. Go back and tell Lord Xenos that I'm sorry I can't help," Caius said indifferently.

"Mr. Roswell, rules are inflexible, but people aren't..."

Before the man in gray could finish speaking, Caius interrupted him, "What, you're asking me to break the rules knowingly? If this reached Oakvale, would you take accountability?"

"Well..." The man was at a loss for words.

Within the borders of Millsburg, the viceroy indeed held the highest authority. However, Akzaban was governed by the Ministry of Penalties in Oakvale. Even the viceroy had no power. Not to mention, there was no need to challenge the Ministry of Penalties for an outsider brazenly.

At that moment, a prison officer suddenly ran in. He said urgently, "Sir, it's bad! Outsiders have broken in!"

"Broken in?" Caius' face darkened. "Who is brave enough to do a jailbreak here?!"

"It's a very powerful woman. Our men outside can't hold her off!" the prison guard-replied.

"How useless! A gang of men can't even defeat a woman. Send the eight aces out there!" Caius roared.

"Yes!" With that, the prison officer ran off.

Less than three minutes later, a series of bangs were heard. A few holes suddenly appeared in the office ceiling. At the same time, a few figures suddenly dropped in from above, crashing heavily on the floor.

Instantly, the desks and chairs broke into pieces. Dust and debris flew everywhere.

"What?" Caius stared intently at the figures that landed in front of him.

To his surprise, they were the eight aces from Azkaban!

He tipped his head back and yelled, "Who is it?! Who dares wreak

havoc on my territory?!"

Instantly, the terrifying aura of a Grandmaster radiated from his body.

Suddenly, a great gust howled, causing sand and pebbles to fly everywhere. The entire office began to shake.

"It's me!" a woman's crisp voice declared. A red silhouette fell from above and landed in front of Caius.

Two craters formed where her feet touched the floor.

"How dare you! I bet you're-"

Just as Caius was about to lose his temper, he was slapped in the face before he could even react.

Caius soared through the air like a cannon had launched his entire body. He crashed into the wall, leaving behind a human-shaped indent.

The prison officer and the man in the gray shirt gaped, speechless at what they'd seen.

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Chapter 754

"Well..." The man in the gray shirt and the prison officer were stunned by the sight of Caius plastered to the wall.

Never in a million dreams would they imagine that the almighty warden-a Grandmaster martial artist-would be sent flying with just a slap.

Not to mention, he was even stuck on the wall. He couldn't even

get on.

This was simply too shocking!

They turned their heads. The first thing that they saw was a beautiful woman.

She had silver hair and wore a red tracksuit. On her back, her three-foot viridescent sword was trembling slightly.

She looked bold and majestic, like a Goddess of War! Especially those cold and arrogant eyes that seemed to look down on everyone. They didn't dare look right into her gaze.

"How dare you hit me? Do you not know who I am?!" When Caius returned to his senses, he was furious from the humiliation he had suffered.

He had never been hit like that before, much less by a woman.

"Release Dustin," Scarlet spat coldly.

"You think I'll release him just because you said so? Who do you think you are? Let me tell you-

Scarlet didn't wait for Caius to finish speaking. She waved her hand and threw out a badge. With a "clang", it stuck to the wall.

"What?" When Caius turned to look, his expression instantly changed.

To his shock, that golden emblem was actually the Dark Panther Cavalry commander badge!

Wasn't the commander of the Dark Panther Cavalry none other than the famed Scarlet Warrior?!

No wonder she was so strong! It turned out the woman before him was one of the twin stars of the Spanner family, the unparalleled Goddess of War-Scarlet Spanner!

"My Lady, what are you doing here?" Caius forced an ugly smile and gulped.

"Release him," Scarlet was straight to the point.

"My Lady, this... this is against the rules!" Caius said, grimaced. The sharp blade of the three-foot viridescent sword was pressed to Caius' throat.

"Say that again?" Scarlet said coolly.

Caius swallowed. In the end, he choked back his words.

Scarlet had always been resolute and decisive. She never showed mercy.

Despite Caius' power and status, even if she killed him, she would merely get a slap on the wrist from the royal family.

It wouldn't hurt her much.

"My Lady, I can release him. But can I at least know why?" Caius asked. He had to settle for the next best option.

"Because you've captured Logan Rhys, the most important person to me," Scarlet responded icily.

"Logan Ryhs?" Caius' eyes widened. He was on the brink of tears.

"There's no way. Is he that guy from the Rhys family?"

"Who else could it be?" Scarlet deadpanned.

It was a simple response, but Caius felt like he had been struck by lightning. He almost crumpled to the floor.

F**k! He was in deep sh it!

The two demons of Dragonmarsh to never cross were both here...

Meanwhile, Dustin was leaning against the wall in the underground prison. He closed his eyes and tried to get some rest alone.

In the cell, Cornelius and the others paced back and forth anxiously.

The prison officers and correctional officer laid unconscious outside.

Despite this, they were getting more and more nervous.

It was almost time for the changing of guards. The people who

were beaten unconscious were about to be discovered. When that happened, there was going to be a disaster. "Mr. Adler, we can't just keep waiting. Why don't we try to break out of here?"

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Chapter 755

The bald, muscular man had spoken out after a long moment of contemplation.

Cornelius retorted impatiently, "Don't be foolish! There are formidable barriers and numerous expert fighters out there. We won't stand a chance of escaping!"

When he was still powerful, he knew there wasn't any possibility of them succeeding. Now that he was weakened, he knew it was just a far-fetched dream.

"Mr. Adler, we'll die anyway. Why not try our best to escape?" The bald, muscular man gritted his teeth and said, "I've thought about it. If we manage to take the correctional officer hostage, there might be hope for us to survive."

"That's right! We might stand a chance of escaping if we have a hostage." Everyone else nodded in agreement.

Of course, it was impossible if it were just a regular prison officer. But the correctional officer was the warden's brother-in-law. He would be their most powerful bargaining chip since he was important.

"No one has ever managed to escape from Azkaban, and the consequences for those who fail are something all of you should

be well aware of. It better you abandon the idea." Cornelius shook his head.

"Then what should we do? Are we just going to sit here and wait for our deaths?" the bald, muscular man said with a mournful expression.

"We still might be able to reverse the situation, but I'm worried about this young man. I don't know if he'll be able to survive." Cornelius looked at Dustin, leaning against the wall, and felt sorry for him.

"How can this madman remain so calm when he created chaos as soon as he came in? I guess he hasn't realized the gravity of the situation." The bald, muscular man sighed and threw a dagger at Dustin, which landed by his feet.

"Hey, man, I truly admire your courage. Consider this knife a gift from me."

"Thanks, but I don't need it." Dustin shook his head in response.

"Don't worry. You'll be needing it soon." With a serious expression, he continued, "Trust me, once you realize that you can't make it through, end your life with the knife. It'll save you from more suffering."

Dustin was speechless. He thought the man had given him a weapon for self-defense. But as it turned out, it was to kill himself. How sweet of him.

"Someone's coming!" Suddenly, a startled cry broke the silence. When they looked up, they noticed a group of men rushing toward them from the end of the corridor. To their surprise, the one leading the group was none other than the warden himself-

Caius Rosewell!

"S hit, the warden came personally. This is serious!" Cornelius' expression turned to one of worry.

The rest of the group were similarly flustered and panicked. Azkaban's warden was a prominent figure to them, and he controlled their fate.

"Hahahaha..." After seeing Caius, the well-dressed, portly guy suddenly sprung up, laughing devilishly.

"Brat, you're dead meat! My brother-in-law is here. Not even the Emperor can save you now!"

"What the heck? This guy has been pretending to be unconscious all this time?" Everyone was shocked

"You bunch of bastards, I'll report all of you for planning to escape!" With a cold smile, the well-dressed, portly man ran up to Caius and cried out, "Caius, these bastards have acted out of line and even beat me up. You must stand up for me!"

"Oh, crap, we're done for!" Everyone broke out in cold sweat, and their faces grew pale as they took in the scene before them.

"Quick! Everyone bow down and apologize to the warden!"

Cornelius yelled as he bowed. "Hurry!"

Everyone bowed in a neat row without hesitation, looking fearful. They had no other choice but to beg for mercy.

"Young man, what are you doing? Bow down!" Cornelius' eyes darted frantically as he tried to signal Dustin.

"That's right, surviving is all that matters now! If you admit your mistakes, you might still have a chance at living!"

"Stop trying to be brave! The warden controls our lives and holds absolute power here. If you don't bow, you'll be signing your death warrant!"

"Come on, bow down!"

Everyone began to persuade Dustin, trying to make a last-ditch attempt to save him.

"Caius, they beat me up. You-" The well-dressed, portly man had huffed and puffed as he rushed forward.

"Get lost!" But before he could complain, Caius kicked him to the ground and rushed up to Dustin. Amidst the prisoners' shocked, bewildered, and fearful gazes, Caius bowed and greeted Dustin in a loud and respectful tone, "Your Grace, it's an honor to meet you. I'm Caius Roswell, Azkaban's warden."

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Chapter 756

The moment Caius bowed, everyone was stunned and stood frozen in place.

They were all dumbfounded as their expressions filled with shock. Unbelievable!

The man before them was none other than Azkaban's warden, a formidable martial arts grandmaster! He was a terrifying figure who held absolute authority over the fate of the prisoners. It wasn't an exaggeration to say the warden was revered like a God within the prison walls. His very presence commanded respect.

The idea of such an authoritative and godlike figure kneeling before a prisoner seemed utterly impossible.

"C-Caius? Why are you bowing? Get up..." The well-dressed, portly man was the first to react. He quickly rushed to Caius' side, attempting to help him up.

"F**k off!" Caius slapped him and lashed out, "Don't drag me down into the grave you dug!"

"Huh?" The portly man slumped to the ground, his face ashen. Had he offended an incredibly influential figure? His brother-in-law disassociated himself from him without hesitation.

"Caius Roswell? Azkaban's warden?" The sudden turn of events left Dustin confused. "I don't think I know you."

"You may not know me, but your esteemed reputation precedes you. What happened today has been a mistake, and I hope you can find it in your heart to forgive us, Your Grace." Caius

maintained his bow.

He was anxious and broke out in cold sweat. If the Prince of Theswe found out they were holding the Rhys family's kirin in Azkaban, Caius knew he would face dire consequences. After all, the Prince of Theswe had a protective nature.

"You got the wrong person. I'm not someone of noble rank." Dustin responded stoically. He could tell Caius was fearful of the Rhys family's influence.

"Right, right. My mistake. It was a slip of the tongue. I should have addressed you as Sir Rhys." Caius nodded and smiled apologetically.

Caius' fearful and servile demeanor left Cornelius and the rest of the prisoners dumbstruck. The formidable and merciless warden of Azkaban now appeared like a mere servant.

"Oh my God! Who the hell is this young man? He actually made the warden bow before him."

"Who knows? But he's definitely someone with a formidable background!"

"I can't believe our Shadow Gang managed to recruit such a formidable figure. It's hard to tell if it's a blessing or a curse."

Everyone looked at Dustin differently. At first, they thought he was just another new prisoner. They taught him the rules, bragged, and even played the role of a boss.

Who would have thought this seemingly ordinary young man had such a formidable presence?

Even the warden of Azkaban had to show him deference.

"I misjudged him!" Cornelius swallowed. He recalled how he had wanted Dustin to bow before Caius. But their roles were remarkably reversed instead.

"Oh, Sir Rhys, by the way, someone is waiting for you outside."

Why don't I escort you out? It's dirty and smelly here. It certainly doesn't befit your status," Caius suddenly changed the subject. "Someone is waiting for me? Who?" Dustin was curious. It had to be someone extraordinary if they could help him out of Azkaban. Caius kept him in the dark instead of giving a direct answer. "You'll find out when you get out." "Let's go." Dustin nodded. He had just taken two steps forward before stopping abruptly. He looked back at Cornelius and the rest of the group. Then, he said, "These people are my friends. They're not exactly bad people. Can you release them?"

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Chapter 757

"Of course! Since they are your friends, they must be righteous people!" Caius flattered Dustin.

Then, he waved his hand and ordered, "Release them!"

One after the other, the chains made of darksteel were unshackled. It seemed like a dream. Everyone was in disbelief. They had thought they would spend their entire lives trapped in Azkaban. They never imagined that they would see the light of day again.

The prisoners felt extremely fortunate.

"Thank you very much, Mr. Roswell!" Cornelius and the rest of the group thanked him.

"You should be thanking Sir Rhys." Caius played smart.

"Thank you very much, Sir Rhys!"

They bowed down profoundly. Tears of happiness welled up in

their eyes. At that moment, Dustin was their savior.

"I'm a part of the Shadow Gang, after all. I can't just leave all of you here to suffer. Let's go out together." With a gentle smile, Dustin confidently strode out of Azkaban.

They had only spent a short time together, but Dustin could tell they were people with good hearts.

They only killed those who deserved it.

For that reason, he decided to help them.

The cells in Azkaban were situated underground, so Dustin followed Caius. They stepped into the elevator.

It was already evening when they reached the surface. With the sun setting slowly, the sky was covered in hues of fiery red.

Dustin squinted and took a deep breath before stepping out from behind the iron gates. He took only a few steps when a mesmerizing figure caught his eye.

The iconic silver hair, red attire, three-foot viridescent sword, and a naturally cold yet captivatingly beautiful face left Dustin stunned. Memories from his past flooded his mind.

"Who is that woman? She looks so charming!"

"Lower your voice. Can't you see the badge on her shoulder?"

"She's a general!"

"No, she's not a general. That's the God of War badge!"

"What? A female God of War? Does such a person exist in Dragonmarsh?"

"Oh my God! Could that be the famous Scarlet Warrior?"

As word spread, the scene erupted into a commotion. The prisoners who had just walked out of Azkaban almost fell to their knees.

As Dragonmarsh's only Goddess of War, her reputation had spread far and wide. She was an enemy of many on the battlefield

and stood at the pinnacle of the world!

She was a remarkable woman who had almost all men at her feet. With such excellence, it was difficult to find someone worthy of her in the entire world.

"Logan!" Scarlet's eyes lit up when she spotted Dustin.

In an instant, her previously cold and arrogant demeanor melted away. She eagerly rushed toward him.

To everyone's surprise and disbelief, she threw herself into Dustin's arm. She did it so strongly that Dustin took a few steps back.

"Logan, I finally found you!" Scarlet's eyes were reddish as she clung tightly to Dustin. She was afraid that he might disappear in the next second.

Ten years. She had been looking for him for ten years and had never thought of giving up. Today, by some stroke of luck, she finally met the person she had been yearning for all this time.

"Long time no see, kid." Dustin reached out and ruffled her hair. His expression was filled with gentle affection.

"What?" Cornelius and the rest of the group stood, utterly frozen, as they took in their close interaction.

Who on earth was this guy to make Azkaban's formidable warden bow down to him? He was also able to hold the esteemed Scarlet Warrior in a tight hug?

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Chapter 758

Their intimate behavior shocked everyone present.

It wasn't just the recently released prisoners who were taken aback. Even two of Scarlet's deputy generals, Georgia and Bridget, were left dumbfounded.

The Goddess of War they knew was decisive and ruthless. No matter who she was faced with, she always wore a cold and aloof expression. She was terrifying when angry. No one was able to stand in her way.

Usually, any man who dared to touch her would risk losing a few limbs. But, even though she was being patted on the head in public right now, she wasn't furious. Instead, she was smiling in genuine joy.

If they hadn't seen it with their own eyes, they would have never believed their general had a tender and gentle side to her. Was she still the fearsome and unapproachable Goddess of war they knew?

"Logan, have you been well these years?" Scarlet felt a multitude of emotions as she took in the familiar face before her.

They hadn't seen each other in ten years. The once magnificent and peerless kirin has had his edges smoothed away.

He had lost his youthful arrogance, sharp gaze, and distinctive temperament. He now appeared profound and mature.

But no matter how he changed, he would always be the same old Logan to her. The most important person in her heart.

"I'm doing great. I now live a relaxed life without burden nor politics." Dustin replied with a smile,

After ten years, the cry baby who once followed him everywhere had grown into a graceful and elegant woman. She had even become Dragonmarsh's Goddess of War. A person everyone

looked up to.

"Logan, why have you never contacted me? Even Adam knows about your whereabouts, but not me. You're too much!" Scarlet's gaze betrayed a hint of resentment.

"That can't be. I asked Adam to contact you a while back. Hasn't he said anything?"

When Dustin feigned surprise, Scarlet's expression darkened. Her brow furrowed deeply. An icy, murderous gaze flickered in her eyes.

Even the three-foot viridescent sword she carried behind her back seemed to vibrate. It sent a cold chill down the spines of those around them.

"That damned Adam! How dare he get in the way. When I return to Oakvale, I will definitely break three of his limbs!" Scarlet's expression was filled with fiery vengeance.

"He's still your brother. Don't go too harsh on him. Two limbs should be enough." Dustin grinned, playfully enjoying the situation.

"Alright!" Scarlet nodded seriously. Sparing one limb for him to keep the next generation going was already a kind act from her.

"Where are you living now, kid?" Dustin suddenly thought of something. He quickly changed the subject.

"I'm staying at Fallonge estate. Why?" Scarlet was surprised.

"Head back with your people first. I have something to deal with. I'll see you tomorrow after I'm done," Dustin said.

"Logan, you won't suddenly disappear again, will you?" Scarlet was reluctant to leave.

Ten years ago, he disappeared mysteriously and had been missing ever since. That incident had left her traumatized.

"Of course not," Dustin replied with a smile. "Don't worry. I'll make sure to visit you tomorrow."

"Okay then, I'll head back first. Don't forget your promise." Scarlet waved. She took a few steps away before turning back to look at Dustin. She repeated this a couple of times before finally leaving. As Dustin watched her ride away, the smile on his face slowly faded.

"Mr. Roswell, may I know who used Azkaban's authority to send me inside?" Dustin suddenly asked.

Caius trembled from the shock. He shook his head repeatedly. "Sir Rhys, this has nothing to do with me. I swear, I don't know anything about it!"

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Chapter 759

"There's no need to be nervous. I know it has nothing to do with you, but your men have a hand in it" Dustin emphasized.

"I understand. I'll investigate it immediately. Please hold on!" Caius took action right away.

Soon after, he dragged the well-dressed, portly man before Dustin. The man was covered in bruises

"Sir Rhys, he's behind this incident. You can kill him or torture him in any way you wish. If you don't wish to get your hands dirty, I'll do it for you.

"Sir Rhys, don't kill me. It has nothing to do with me. Someone offered me money to detain you. Please spare my life!" The portly

man panicked. He knelt on the floor, bowing down repeatedly. He bowed so hard that his head began to bleed from the impact.

"Who gave you the order?" Dustin questioned.

"The Killians... It was Gavin Killian!" the portly man confessed hastily.

"It really was him." Dustin narrowed his eyes. His suspicions had been confirmed.

"Mr. Roswell, please arrange a ride for me," Dustin requested.

"No problem. Where would you like to go, Sir Rhys?" Caius asked with his head lowered.

"Viridian Hotel," Dustin said.

"Right away!" Caius waved his hand as a signal, and a military jeep arrived immediately.

"By the way, Mr. Adler," Dustin suddenly looked back at the skinny old man. "If you have nowhere to go, seek out Nelson Horst from the Kirin Gang. He'll take care of your needs."

"Thank you, Sir Rhys!" Everyone bowed deeply upon hearing Dustin's words, expressing their respect for him.

Dustin nodded in acknowledgment. Without another word, he swiftly left in the car. Since Gavin had made a move against him, he naturally had to respond in kind.

Night fell quickly. A group of high-ranking officials was gathered inside the banquet hall of Viridian Hotel. They were immersed in the pleasures of drinking and conversation.

On the second floor, Gavin leaned against the railing with a wine glass in hand. He gazed down upon the guests passing by with an air of superiority.

A handsome and dignified man stood beside him. It was none other than Tyler Grant.

"Tyler, I've taken care of the task you entrusted to me. That Dustin

brat won't be seeing the light of day ever again," Gavin said with a sly smile.

"Thanks, Gavin." Tyler nodded slightly and raised his glass, clinking it with Gavin's. Having similar backgrounds and being of the same age, the two were considered colleagues. They developed a strong friendship over time.

"Tyler, dealing with that brat should have been a piece of cake, given your influence. Why bother going through so much trouble?" Gavin was perplexed.

"I could easily kill him if I wanted to. But that would be boring. Let's keep him alive for a while and have some fun." Tyler brought his glass to his lips and took a sip.

Although Dustin seemed insignificant, he could play a crucial role when needed. For example, he had a hold on Natasha.

"Forget about it. He's not worth mentioning." Gavin waved his hand dismissively and continued with a smirk, "Oh, by the way, I came across a remarkably beautiful lady recently. Once I get my hands on her, do you want in on the fun?"

"Oh? What kind of woman has caught your attention?" Tyler expressed his surprise.

"She's from the Glenstead Nicholsons'. I guess you could consider her a young lady from a wealthy background.

As Gavin spoke, his eyes suddenly shifted toward the entrance.

"There she is," he said as a wicked smile played on his lips.

Chapter 760

Dahlia was seen walking into the banquet hall slowly, dressed in a black evening gown. She stood out among the crowd, looking beautiful with her tall stature and poise.

The moment she entered, she captured the attention of most people. There were looks of astonishment, delight, envy, and admiration. Some looks were even filled with desire.

"Dahlia, I shouldn't have come with you. I put so much time and effort into my look, but everyone's attention is on you. It's like I don't exist." Julie looked upset. She expressed her frustration in a hushed tone.

Hoping to catch the attention of prominent officials at the party, she meticulously planned her makeover.

She also spent a fortune on her outfit. Her gown cost a hundred thousand dollars, while her jewelry was worth millions. Yet, she had become Dahlia's accessory as she stood beside her, going unnoticed.

Julie wasn't ugly, but Dahlia was just too pretty. Dahlia overshadowed all women. It seemed like only Natasha could rival her in the whole of Millsburg.

"Ms. Nicholson, you're here." Suddenly, the crowd dispersed. And Gavin, dressed in a white dapper suit, walked up to her with a smile.

"Mr. Killian." Dahlia nodded slightly.

"Ms. Nicholson, your beauty is incomparable today," Gavin flattered.

"Thank you, Mr. Killian." Dahlia smiled politely.

"What about me, Mr. Killian? Aren't I beautiful too?" Julie suddenly

asked, showing off her figure.

"Of course you are. Both of you are." Gavin smiled as he nodded.

Julie chuckled in response, acting shy. "Thank you, Mr. Killian."

While they continued their conversation, a prideful man and a flirtatious woman walked through the doors. It was Julian Nicholson and his date.

"Hey, Mr. Killian!" When Julian saw Gavin, he led his date toward him.

He was about to give Gavin a compliment when he noticed Dahlia and swallowed his words. He had thought of sending a girl to Gavin for his pleasure, but it seemed like it was not the right time.

"Why are you here?" Julie asked, looking slightly upset.

"I'm here to attend Mr. Killian's party, of course." He then turned his attention to Dahlia and said, Oh, right, I forgot to mention. I saw Dustin caught by law enforcers today at the hospital's entrance."

"Caught?" Dahlia frowned. "What happened?"

"I heard he was charged with murder. He's been sent to Azkaban," Julian said with a smile.

"Azkaban? That can't be!" Dahlia's expression shifted upon hearing him. It was a well-known fact

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that Azkaban was no ordinary prison. It was the scariest prison with the tightest security in the whole of Balerno, holding the most sinister criminals. Once someone was sent in, they could never

come out.

"You must have been mistaken. Why would Dustin be sent to Azkaban?" Julie was perplexed.

"I saw it with my own eyes. How could I have been mistaken?"

Julian smiled ambiguously. "That brat has done so much wrong and has no respect for anyone. He finally got what he deserved."
"Could it be related to Hank's death?"

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Chapter 761

Dahlia frowned deeply, her face full of worry.

"That won't do. I need to save him!"

She turned around as if ready to leave the party immediately.

"Dahlia!" Julie grabbed her arm and tried to reason with her, "Just how are you going to help? Azkaban has the tightest security there is. No one is able to leave after getting in. If you try anything recklessly, you might get into trouble yourself!"

"What should I do then? I can't just let him face those charges."

Dahlia was anxious. She was aware that Azkaban was a dangerous place. The longer someone stayed there, the more they would suffer.

"Don't worry just yet. Isn't Mr. Killian here?" Julie turned her attention toward Gavin and said, "Mr. Killian has wide connections and is a prominent figure. It should be easy for him to get someone released from Azkaban."

"Mr. Killian?" Dahlia's gaze landed on Gavin, full of hope.

"Azkaban is considered a no man's land. Even the military doesn't have a say in that area." Gavin rubbed his chin, looking troubled.

"Mr. Killian, I'll do anything as long as you can help!" Dahlia said seriously.

"Since you put it that way, I suppose I should try something,"

Gavin replied, putting on a hesitating front.

He then nodded. "Alright, I'll give it a shot, but I can't promise he'll be released. You know very well that Azkaban is no ordinary prison. Getting someone out is immensely challenging."

"I'll be forever thankful for your help, regardless of the outcome!" Dahlia was extremely grateful.

"No need to thank me. Just consider it a favor among friends." Gavin smiled and called for one of his men. He whispered something into the man's ear, and after a brief acknowledgement, the man swiftly departed.

"My men will talk to the warden. Even if he's not released, your friend will likely face less suffering with me backing him." Gavin appeared confident. Even though he knew he couldn't save Dustin, he wanted to gain some leverage to ask for a favor.

"Thank you so much, Mr. Killian!" Dahlia thanked him. She was very grateful.

"Don't mention it." Gavin quickly helped her up and smiled. "Ms. Nicholson, this song is beautiful. May I have the pleasure of this dance with you?"

"I..." Dahlia froze. She wasn't in the mood for a dance when Dustin was in danger. However, she found it hard to refuse when faced with his extended arm.

Since she had just asked for a favor, she was left with no choice and nodded reluctantly.

As the music swelled, more couples joined the dance floor. But all eyes were on Dahlia and Gavin.

They looked like a pair perfectly matched, their presence charming. Although many women in the room felt jealous, they had to admit that Dahlia's beauty perfectly complemented Gavin's handsome features.

Just as the atmosphere was getting livelier, the door was kicked open with a loud bang. Dustin strode in formidably. Although he didn't give off a domineering air, the crowd naturally made way

for him as he walked past.

"Huh?" Dahlia looked over. Her joy was evident upon seeing Dustin.

She suddenly felt conscious and let go of Gavin's hand, putting some distance between them. Dustin noticed her guilty movements and furrowed his brow.

Their gazes met. One radiated warmth, while the other emanated a cold intensity.

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Chapter 762

Julian was surprised when he saw Dustin walking through the doors. "No way, they released him that early?"

Julian had thought Gavin was just joking. He didn't expect him to actually send someone to get

Dustin out.

The problem was Gavin had used his connections to send Dustin to prison. And now Dustin was somehow released. It seemed like some kind of joke.

Even if he wanted to impress the ladies, he didn't have to make it that complicated.

"That's weird. How did he get out?" Gavin frowned slightly, equally astonished. He knew very well that he never instructed his men to contact Azkaban's warden.

The timing didn't add up, either. Dustin must have been released much earlier. The most puzzling aspect was that Azkaban was notorious for being a one-way journey.

How could someone so insignificant manage to escape? Did a powerful figure help him out?

"Mr Killian, you're incredible! You got Dustin released with just a simple call." Julie gave him a thumbs up, her expression filled with respect. She realized she had underestimated his influence if he could get someone released that easily from Azkaban.

Dahlia was overjoyed. "Thank you, Mr. Killian!"

"I-It's nothing. It took no effort." Gavin forced a smile. Even though he was confused, he wasn't about to contradict himself.

"Dustin, I heard you were sent to Azkaban. How are you? You aren't hurt, are you?" After thanking Gavin, Dahlia rushed up to Dustin.

"Seems like you got word." Dustin looked stoic.

"I just found out too. Thankfully, Mr. Killian helped out and had you released. Otherwise, you would still have been inside," Dahlia said, looking happy.

"Mr. Killian helped out?" Dustin laughed. Gavin was the one who sent him inside, yet he had turned into his savior? It was absolutely laughable.

"Dustin, hurry up and come with me. We need to go and thank Mr. Killian." Dahlia quickly walked up to Gavin. She pulled Dustin behind her.

Dustin raised his head slightly, giving off an air of arrogance.

"Dustin, congratulations on your release. Feel free to eat your fill here tonight. Take it as my congratulatory meal for you." Gavin said with a smirk.

"What are you doing still standing there?" Dahlia signaled Dustin, trying to get him to

acknowledge Gavin's efforts.

"Dustin, it wasn't easy for Gavin to get you released. You're so rude for staying silent." Julie was upset.

"That's right. You would have died in there if it wasn't for Mr. Killian. You should at least show

some gratitude." Julian gave him a look of disdain.

"You want me to show some gratitude? Sure..." Dustin nodded and raised his hand. He delivered a sharp, resounding slap across Gavin's face.

Gavin wasn't the only person stunned. Dahlia, Julie, and Julian were all stunned. Even the guests present were stunned.

Nobody expected Dustin to resort to violence. The incident happened without provocation, and the sudden slap left everyone dumbfounded.

"Dustin! Have you gone mad? Why did you hit him?" It took Dahlia a while to register shock. She intended for Dustin to thank Gavin, but who would have thought he would slap Gavin instead? He was too much!

"Fuck! Is there something wrong with this guy? How dare he hit Mr. Killian?" Julian widened his eyes in disbelief.

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Chapter 763

Gavin Killian was the young master of the Killians from Oakvale. He was also a military general who had an enormous influence in Millsburg. Dustin could lose his life for raising a hand against such a prominent figure.

"Dustin, you ungrateful brat! Mr. Killian should have just let you rot in Azkaban!" Julie was furious at Dustin for repaying Gavin's kindness with enmity.

"How bold. Do you know the consequences of hitting me?" Gavin rubbed his burning cheek as his expression grew dark. He had never been slapped in public, ever.

"So what if I hit you? You imprisoned me. That was a well-deserved slap," Dustin spat out coldly. Dahlia frowned. "Nonsense. It was clearly Mr. Killian who saved you!"

"He saved me? Hah!" Dustin scoffed. "He was the one who put me in there. I wouldn't have ended up inside if it wasn't for his scheming."

"I don't understand what you mean." Gavin narrowed his eyes.

"Do you not understand, or are you pretending not to?" Dustin sneered. "Did you think your plan would succeed just by sending me to Azkaban? Well, sorry to disappoint, but I'm out now. And I'm going to make you pay for it."

"Are you even worthy of that?" Gavin's expression was frosty. "Out of courtesy toward Ms. Nicholson, I won't make a big deal out of this. Apologize right now. And I might just let you go."

Dahlia was moved by his speech. It was rare for someone to be benevolent after being slapped for

no reason.

"Dustin, stop it. Hurry up and apologize!" Dahlia said sternly.

"You want me to apologize to him for sending me to Azkaban? Dream on," Dustin said with a frosty tone.

"I don't know where you heard those rumors. But I believe Mr. Killian is not that type of person!" Dahlia was serious.

"He's not that kind of person?" Dustin snorted. "You just met him. Do you really know him? How would you know what he's really thinking?"

"Stop being unreasonable!" Dahlia was getting upset. She saw how Gavin had instructed his men to help with Dustin's release from Azkaban. However, instead of being grateful, Dustin bit the hand that fed him. He was absolutely clueless!

"I'm being unreasonable?" Dustin's expression grew colder by the second. "Dahlia, I'm saying this again. Gavin was the one who sent me to Azkaban. He's a total hypocrite!"

"Nonsense!" Dahlia was simmering in anger as she yelled, "It's fine if you won't be grateful. But why accuse him of something he's not?"

Dustin's brows furrowed slightly. "I'm accusing him? You think I'm lying? You'd rather believe him and not me?"

They went through so much together. He couldn't understand how their three-year relationship

was reduced to nothing before an outsider.

"I only believe what I see!" Dahlia retorted.

"And what you see is the absolute truth?"

"Of course!"

"Fine, then answer me. What were you doing being so chummy with Gavin?"

"We were just dancing."

"Dancing? Hah! You only met him today, yet you're already that close to him? I guess you'll be in his bed in a few more days of getting to know him!" Dustin mocked.

"You-" Dahlia was exasperated. She only agreed to the dance because Gavin agreed to save him. Why else would she subject herself to such a situation?.

"Enough. I'm not going to argue with you. We'll discuss this another time. But today, I'm going to beat him up!" Dustin took two steps forward before landing a forceful kick to Gavin's stomach.

Gavin groaned as he crumpled to the ground.

"Stop it!" Dahlia's expression shifted. She quickly stood in front of Gavin. "Dustin! Are you crazy? Do you know what you just did?"

"Move!" Dustin pushed Dahlia away before aiming another kick at Gavin.

"I told you to stop!" Dahlia turned anxious and slapped Dustin hard on the face. It left him stunned in place.

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Chapter 764

"What?" Dustin touched his burning cheek. He looked at Dahlia in disbelief. He never imagined she would slap him in public for the sake of someone she had just met. It felt like a stab to his heart.

"I ..." Dahlia was at a loss for words as she looked at her hand. Regret had filled her immediately after the act.

The situation was urgent, and she had acted on impulse. Gavin was a powerful general in the army, and Dustin would have faced dire consequences if he had hurt him.

"You actually hit me?" Dustin furrowed his brow. "You hit me for a stranger?"

"Dustin, calm down. I did it for your own good," Dahlia tried to explain.

"Calm down?" Dustin's lips formed into a wry smile. His disappointment was evident in his eyes.

"Dahlia Nicholson, how am I supposed to calm down? I made myself very clear. Gavin set me up and is playing the good guy in front of you. Can you please open up your eyes and look clearly?" Dahlia's frown deepened. "Enough! Mr. Killian is a righteous person. He couldn't possibly do such a thing!"

Gavin saved her when she was ambushed this morning. He also gifted her a precious Panax root when he found out Regulus was sick. He even ordered his men to get Dustin released after he was sent to Azkaban.

With such a warm and caring nature, how could he possibly be a bad person?

"So, you still don't believe me." Dustin chuckled. "It has always been like this. You've never fully trusted me. I thought you changed, but I realize now that I was too naive."

"Dustin, we'll discuss this when we get back. But don't do anything foolish today!" Dahlia's expression was solemn.

"We aren't going back." Dustin shook his head, and his gaze grew frosty. "Dahlia, I don't think we are meant for each other. You've climbed up the social ladder anyway, and you don't need to bother with someone like me anymore. Let's part ways amicably. I wish you happiness."

With that, he turned around and left. His heart had been torn apart too many times now.

Gavin's lips curled up into an amusing smile. He didn't retaliate earlier just to watch the unfolding drama. It was far more entertaining than getting into a fight with Dustin.

"Dustin, let me explain..." Dahlia panicked after she returned to her senses. She was about to go after him when Julie held her back.

"Dahlia, why bother with him? He's clearly an ungrateful brat. He even resorted to violence. We shouldn't indulge him!"

"But..." Dahlia hesitated, feeling distressed and confused. She was at a loss for a moment.

She never expected things to escalate to this point. Dustin's gaze as he left sent a chill down her spine. It was as if the distance between them was growing wider.

1/2

"Stop right there! Do you think you can just walk away after hitting someone?" Just before Dustin stepped out the door, a few security guards blocked his way. They glared at him fiercely.

Naturally, they couldn't ignore the situation after they witnessed Gavin being attacked.

"Get lost," Dustin spat out.

"How dare you!"

"Take him down!" The security guards got angry and brandished their batons, ready to strike. "I said, get lost!" Dustin raised a palm and delivered a series of slaps, sending the security personnel sprawling on the ground. They bled from their mouths and noses, unable to get up. "Just look at that, Dahlia! This guy is a violent maniac, resorting to violence without a second thought. He's gone too far!" Julie added fuel to the fire.

"Hmph! He's nothing but a mad dog that bites anyone he sees." Julian sneered.

Dahlia furrowed her brows deeply, her heart in turmoil.

"You insolent bastard!"

"Arrest him!"

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Chapter 765

At that moment, a group of heavily armed soldiers stormed into the hall. They carried loaded guns and exuded a menacing posture.

They had Dustin surrounded as soon as they entered, pointing their barrels directly at him. Ready to shoot on command.

"Mr. Killian, don't hurt him!" Dahlia cried out.

"Since Ms. Nicholson has spoken, naturally, I'd have to give in." Gavin smiled as he wiped the blood off the corners of his lips. He waved dismissively. "Back off, let him go."

"Yes, sir!" The soldiers answered and dispersed into two teams. Their movements were organized, and they were clearly well-trained.

Dustin turned around and glanced coldly at them before walking straight out the door. When he left the hotel, a light drizzle started to fall. The cold wind brought a chill, mirroring his current emotions.

At that moment, a silver Bentley screeched to a stop at the entrance. Natasha got out of the car, her expression evident with joy.

"Dear, are you all right? I was so scared when I heard you were sent to Azkaban. I contacted all my connections to get you out. I even asked my grandpa for help. When he called the warden, he was told you were already released."

"Why didn't you tell me you were out already? You left me worried for so long. How are you? Are you injured? Should we go to the hospital?" As soon as they met, Natasha released a torrent of words filled with worry and concern.

"I'm fine. I just went in for a walk." Dustin forced a smile.

"That's a relief..." Natasha smiled back. She was about to relax when she noticed the

unmistakable red handprint on Dustin's cheek.

"Who did this?" Natasha's expression darkened instantly.

"Dustin-" Suddenly, Dahlia was seen rushing out after Dustin. She was about to explain when she noticed Natasha beside him and swallowed back her words.

"Why did you come out? Go back to Mr. Killian," Dustin spat out coldly.

"Dustin, can we sit down and talk?" Dahlia had a troubled expression.

"I don't think there's anything for us to talk about. I've already said my piece. Since you don't

believe me, then forget it." Dustin said no more and got in the car.

"Dustin!" Dahlia instinctively tried to follow after him but was stopped by Natasha.

She questioned her coldly, "Were you the one who gave him the red mark?"

"The situation was complicated..." Dahlia tried to explain, but Natasha cut her off coldly.

She yelled, "Cut the crap. Did you hit him or not?"

"Yes." Dahlia nodded.

1/2

Without another word, Natasha slapped Dahlia hard on the cheek. Even Dustin was taken aback as Dahlia staggered back from the force.

“Dahlia Nicholson! I’m warning you, this is the last time! You don’t have to like him, but you can’t hurt him! You know deep down how well he’s treated you all these years. Isn’t it enough? He just hasn’t ripped his heart out for you.

“If you won’t cherish him, I will! If you won’t like him, I will! From now on, Dustin is my man! I don’t care how stubborn you are normally, but if you hit my man again, I won’t let you get away

with it!” Natasha had an imposing presence, and her words were aggressive. She appeared like a domineering queen.

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Chapter 766

Natasha was seething with rage. She knew how sincere Dustin's feelings were for Dahlia. It even made her envious.

But Dahlia not only took it for granted, she also resorted to violence. How could she be so foolish? Natasha had reached her limit today. Dahlia could raise her hand against anyone but her man. "Forget it, Natasha. Let's go. I have nothing else to say," Dustin said impassively.

"Hmph! Reflect on your actions!" Natasha sneered and got in the car before speeding away.

"How did it come to this? How?" Dahlia muttered to herself as she watched the tail lights disappear. She was lost and disoriented.

Although she acted impulsively earlier, she was just preventing Dustin from making another big mistake. Why did nobody understand her? What exactly did she do wrong?

"Dahlia, what are you doing out here? It's cold. Let's go back in." Julie had rushed out after her. She wrapped a coat around her to keep her warm.

"Julie, do you think I was wrong?" Dahlia asked, still looking lost.

"Of course not! It's all Dustin's fault!" Julie said with righteous indignation, "Gavin clearly saved him. He's not only ungrateful, but he even resorted to violence. He doesn't have a heart!" "Dustin isn't usually like that. Why was he so different today?" Dahlia couldn't understand. "Why else? He was jealous, of course!" Julie explained seriously, "Gavin comes from a wealthy family in Oakvale. He has power and authority. Plus, he's good-looking. Dustin clearly envies him and feels hatred for him. Not to mention he saw you dancing with him. He must have been furious. That's why he hit him."

Dahlia fell silent after hearing Julie's explanation. She didn't know who to trust anymore. Her mind was a mess, and her heart felt empty. It was as if she lost something precious.

Even though she hated to admit it, she had inadvertently pushed Dustin toward Natasha. While she and Dustin grew more distant in the process.

Meanwhile, in the car, Natasha couldn't contain her curiosity any longer. "What happened between you and Dahlia? Why did she hit you?"

"It's almost comical to discuss." Dustin chuckled and briefly explained the situation to Natasha. As Natasha listened, her expression turned cold. She cried out in fury, "She's too much! How can she hit you because of someone she just met? What a wench!"

She had always thought of Dahlia as a candid person. It turned out that she was just foolish. How could she not see Dustin's true character after all this time? She'd rather believe a stranger than him.

To Natasha, Dahlia was the most foolish woman ever.

"Forget it. It's all in the past now. Let's not bring it up anymore." Dustin shook his head.

Their conflict started from Dahlia's lack of trust and Gavin's scheming. Gavin portrayed himself as the hero, saving the damsel in distress. He offered his timely help and appeared righteous. It made his act quite convincing.

But if Dahlia had fully trusted Dustin, this situation wouldn't have happened either. In the end, a rift still existed between them.

"Does it still hurt?" Natasha asked tenderly.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 767

Chapter 767

The red handprint on Dustin's cheek hadn't faded away.

Dustin smiled as he replied, "No."

"Your cheek might not be hurting, but your heart is hurting, right?" Natasha raised an eyebrow. "Since it's come to this, you should just let her go. Why torture yourself like that? I'll take care of you instead. Wouldn't that be great?"

"I'm a grown man. I can't just rely on a woman for a living, don't you think?" Dustin scratched his head.

"So what if you rely on a woman for a living? That takes skill too!" Natasha extended a slender finger and raised Dustin's chin.

She smirked and teased, "Besides, with your looks, it'd be a waste not to rely on a woman. You're just my type. Why don't you clean yourself up tonight and warm up my bed?"

The corners of Dustin's lips twitched. Why did it feel like a pervert was flirting with him?

"How about it? Have you made up your mind? Are we going to your place or mine?" Natasha smiled at him seductively. Dustin wanted so badly to taste her rosy lips.

"Are you for real?" Dustin's expression betrayed his surprise.

"Did you think I was joking? Do you dare take me up on it?" Natasha maintained her enchanting smile and lifted the corner of her dress slightly, revealing her black pantyhose covering her thigh. "Look, I'm all ready. As soon as you agree, I promise to make you feel special tonight."

Dustin swallowed nervously. Natasha possessed a gorgeous face and a seductive figure. Her slim waist, curvaceous hips, slender legs, and the tantalizing black pantyhose made her simply irresistible. Her every smile and gesture drew Dustin in, making her the epitome of an enchantress.

Who could resist such temptation?

“Of course! I-” Dustin gritted his teeth and was about to agree when Natasha rolled her eyes at him and preempted.

“Forget it. Since you won’t agree to it, I won’t force you.”

“I didn’t say no!” Dustin felt distressed.

“Your chance flew by. It’s too late.” Natasha shook her head in regret.

“Huh?” Dustin froze. He had already pulled his pants down. Seeing Natasha’s mischievous smile brought him back to his senses. He realized this vixen had been toying with him this whole time. He was already burning with desire. How was he supposed to quell the flames from the sudden rejection?

“You vixen, you played me on purpose. Just see what I’ll do to you!” Dustin’s expression turned stern as he tickled Natasha around her waist and underarms.

Natasha giggled, her body twisting in all directions “Stop it, I’m driving!”

“I don’t care. I’m going to teach you a lesson today!” Dustin ignored her pleas and continued with great vigor. He was determined to make her pay for teasing him.

“I’m sorry, I was wrong. Stop tickling me. I surrender.” Natasha giggled.

“Please let me off the hook. I won’t do it again. Not there. I’m sensitive there. Stop it!”

Amidst their laughter, banter, pleas, and cries, the Bentley drove further away. The car sped up and slowed down erratically, resembling a drunk driver, and the surrounding cars avoided them like the plague.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 768

Chapter 768

The next morning at Fallonge estate, Scarlet was dressed in a sexy silver one-piece dress. As she looked at herself in the mirror, she felt uncomfortable.

Normally, she would be seen in her martial arts outfit, general's outfit, or casual clothes. It was her first time wearing such a tight-fitting dress.

"Madam Scarlet, you look beautiful today. Just look at that beautiful face and figure. Who wouldn't fall for you?" Georgia stood beside Scarlet, her eyes filled with awe.

She had always been aware of Scarlet's beauty, but seeing her dressed up made her look even more stunning! Coupled with Scarlet's heroic spirit, she looked beautiful and brave, appealing to both men and women alike.

"Are you sure this looks good on me? It doesn't seem quite right." Scarlet pursed her lips.

Georgia nodded solemnly. "Of course, it looks good! A tight-fitting, one-piece dress is supposed to look elegant. They show off your figure. It's a style beautiful women like. Just look at your slim waist, curvaceous hips, and slender legs. You're absolutely stunning!"

"Really?" Scarlet made a few moves, punching and kicking the air. She felt restricted. "This doesn't feel right. It's too tight. How am I supposed to fight in this? I can't even raise a kick. It's so uncomfortable."

"Madam, this is a dress, not your uniform. Why would you fight in it?" Georgia said helplessly.

After spending so much time on the front lines, Scarlet had stopped thinking like an ordinary woman. While women wore beautiful clothes to showcase their beauty, Scarlet thought about the practicality of her attire on the battlefield instead.

"I should change into something else. It looks awkward." Scarlet frowned, disliking her dress more by the second.

“Madam, this outfit is perfect for the occasion. I promise Sir Rhys will love it!” Georgia swore by her words.

“Really?” Scarlet looked at herself in the mirror again. She felt doubtful.

“Really! As soon as he arrives, he’ll be charmed by your beauty!” Georgia felt confident.

“Alright then. I’ll trust you with this once.” Scarlet nodded. Although she felt uncomfortable, as long as Dustin liked it, it didn’t matter.

“Madam, the dress is beautiful. But you’d need to work on your posture to appear more charming,” Georgia added.

“How do I do that?” Scarlet asked curiously.

“Follow my lead. Sway your hips like this to make yourself look more alluring and feminine,” Georgia demonstrated as she spoke.

Attempting to sway her hips, Scarlet felt awkward and eventually gave up.
“Nope, I can’t do it.”

“Madam, it’s simple. You’ll get the hang of it after a few more tries. Men like it,” Georgia encouraged her.

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Scarlet took a deep breath and endured the discomfort. She practiced a few more times

“Madam” Bridget suddenly walked in and reported, “Sir Rhys has arrived. He’s at the door.”

“Hurry Invite him in!” Scarlet took a final glance in the mirror and rushed out.

“Madam, remember to pay attention to your posture and sway your hips,” Georgia said.

Scarlet immediately adjusted her steps. She walked in small, quick strides. She swayed her hips, but her movements looked awkward and forced.

The gates to the estate opened, and Dustin walked in with Bridget leading the way. He was

dressed casually.

“Logan!” Scarlet’s expression brightened with joy. But she tried to maintain her practiced posture. “Kid, what are you doing?” Dustin took in Scarlet’s awkward movements in confusion.

Chapter 769

"What, do I not look good?" Scarlet looked down at her outfit, looking slightly distressed.

"Not really, it just seems awkward. I prefer the way you usually dress," Dustin replied bluntly.

Scarlet was a fearless female general, and her heroic spirit was her most attractive aspect. She looked beautiful and brave in her general outfit, exuding irresistible charm.

She looked just as gorgeous in a dress. However, it didn't suit her.

"Huh?" Scarlet's questioning gaze landed on Georgia upon hearing him.

"I'm going to get some drinks!" Georgia was scared. She escaped as soon as she could.

"Logan, can you wait a while? I'm going to change." Scarlet rushed back to her room without another thought.

Soon after, she came out dressed in a red martial arts outfit. Dustin's eyes lit up immediately.

"Not bad, this outfit looks so much better." He nodded in satisfaction.

Scarlet smiled sweetly, feeling warm inside. As expected, Dustin liked her true self better.

"Kid, I heard the situation up north is unstable. Won't coming all the way here affect the situation there?" Dustin suddenly asked,

Scarlet was the Goddess of War. She protected the northern gates. Thus, her presence was immensely important.

"Oh, don't worry about it. They're like a bunch of ants. Giving them a few days' advantage won't

make much of a difference." Scarlet was unconcerned.

"I'm just worried. There might be rebels within Dragonmarsh who are unhappy with you," Dustin

warned.

Scarlet was in charge of 300 thousand military personnel under the Dark Panther Calvary. They were a powerful force capable of turning the tides of the battlefield.

Under normal circumstances, someone would always try to act individually without a leader.

"Don't worry, Logan. Nobody dares dictate my actions. I will also destroy anyone who dares to betray me," Scarlet replied impassively.

She had earned her position as the leader of the Dark Panther Calvary and Dragonmarsh's Goddess of War based on her pure talent and skills. It wasn't because of her family background at all.

She also earned her military merit through countless battles. A trail of bloodshed followed her on the battlefield. It was built upon the number of bodies she had slain.

Anyone who wasn't happy with her would be killed mercilessly.

"It's been ten years. Seems like you can take everything head-on now. You won't need my protection anymore." Dustin smiled in relief.

"Logan, I'll protect you from now on."

She added seriously, "I'll beat up anyone who bullies you. I'll also beat up anyone you want to bully."

Dustin chuckled. This kid hadn't changed one bit.

She was stubborn and unyielding yet fiercely protective of the people around her. Adam was the only exception to that rule.

"Alright, let's not talk about that anymore. I'll take you around town since you finally have time to rest." Dustin changed the subject.

He added, "Buy anything you like. Don't be shy."

"Yay! Thanks, Logan!" Scarlet jumped for joy like a little girl.

Her reaction left her deputy generals dumbfounded. Who would have imagined that the strict and fearless Scarlet had that side to her?

"Kid, I don't go by Logan anymore. Next time in public, call me Dustin," he reminded her.

"Okay, Dustin," Scarlet adjusted immediately. What she cared about wasn't his name but the person behind the name.

He used to protect her from the world and helped her through hardships, even if it meant risking his life.

He protected her in the past. Now, it was her turn to protect him.

Chapter 770

Dustin, Scarlet, and her two deputy generals left Fallonge estate. They walked around the popular tourist spots in Millsburg, taking photos. They also bought souvenirs.

Afterward, they went to Food Street downtown. They tried all the local food.

They ended their day watching a movie called "Wandering Planet" at the theater. When they came

out, it was dark.

"Dustin, where are we going next?" Scarlet was still full of energy. This was the happiest and most relaxed she had been in ten years.

"Madam Scarlet, we've been out all day. Why don't we return home now?" Bridget suggested.

She and Georgia had been on high alert since morning. They were protecting Scarlet from any potential ambush.

As Dragonmarsh's Goddess of War, Scarlet was highly respected. However, she was also a thorn in the eyes of many other countries.

Every year, she faced countless assassination attempts. It was especially dangerous in crowded places like this.

They had to guard Scarlet against all kinds of threats, including snipers, suicide bombers, and the

like,

"It's still early. Why the rush?" Evidently, Scarlet still hadn't had enough.

"That's right! It's not every day you get some free time. You should enjoy yourself," Georgia

chimed in.

She'd never seen Scarlet this happy. Her smile today was worth ten years combined.

In the past, Scarlet was always cold and distant. It was as if she were a divine being, watching over everyone from above.

She was finally a regular person today, enjoying herself happily. This was how life should be in

her twenties.

Other women enjoyed their time with their parents and boyfriends. But Scarlet carried a heavy responsibility. She could only fight on the battlefield.

Every day, she saw blood and corpses. She heard only gunfire and cries of pain.

Behind her glamorous appearance, she endured pain and torment. It could only be understood by those who had experienced them.

The people of Dragonmarsh could live in peace because of those fighting on the front lines.

"Why don't we get something to eat? I know a place that serves amazing local food. Let's try it out," Dustin suggested with a smile.

"Okay, anything you say." Scarlet nodded.

Bridget felt helpless. But she could only give in.

20 minutes later, their car stopped at a restaurant called Full Moon.

Dustin and the group sat near the window. They ordered some local food,

Full Moon had a great atmosphere. It was considered a high-end retro restaurant.

It was one of the businesses owned by Kirin Gang. After merging the four biggest dark gangs, the Kirin Gang's influence spread throughout Millsburg

They couldn't quite rival the Tremendous Three. Yet, they were on par with the Fabulous Five.

Dustin and the rest were enjoying their meal.

Suddenly, an unpleasant voice rang out. "Hey, who is that lady over there? She's gorgeous."

They turned to see a skinny man' approaching them. He was smiling happily. Behind him were several burly men wearing martial arts attire.

The man seemed frail and unsteady. He appeared somewhat intoxicated.

The burly men, however, were different. They were clearly powerful low-level martial artists,

"Stop right there!" Bridget suddenly stood up. She blocked the man's path.

She said firmly, "Madam Scarlet is having her meal. No one is allowed to approach her!"

“Don’t be nervous. I’m not a bad person. I just want to be friends with this beautiful lady.”

The man smiled. He sized Scarlet up as he shamelessly revealed his desires.

Ranked third on the Beauty Ranking, Scarlet’s appearance and temperament were enough to make anyone feel inferior.

Chapter 771

She was simply irresistible to some perverts.

Bridget yelled, "You're not worthy of being friends with Madam Scarlet, Get lost!"

"Hey, are you looking down on me?"

Bridget had made the man upset.

"Do you know who I am? Do you know who my father is? I'm Daniel Grint, son of Zen Order's guildmaster!"

The expressions of the people in the restaurant changed after he said that.

"The Zen Order? Isn't that one of the eight major sects in Glenstead?"

"I heard they have thousands of disciples, and they have a huge influence. As a leader in the martial arts world, not many dare provoke them."

"That's weird. What's the Zen Order doing in Balerno?"

"They must be here for the Knighthood Society tournament. It's held in Balerno this time, at Shinefield Lake. That's not far from Millsburg. Many martial artists are visiting for the same

reason."

As they spoke, they inexplicably distanced themselves. They were afraid of being caught up in the commotion.

"I've never heard of any Zen Order. Now, get lost before I lose my cool!"
Bridget responded bluntly.

"You fucking rude bitch!" Daniel was furious and made a move to punch her.

Bridget's expression was frosty as she grabbed onto his incoming fist. Then, she twisted it slightly.

With a crisp crack, his wrist broke.

"Ah!"

Daniel was stunned. Then, he screamed horribly. The pain left him writhing on the floor as his expression crumpled.

"How dare you harm Mr. Grint! Do you want to die?"

The group of martial artists behind Daniel erupted in fury. They all attacked Bridget at the same

time.

Their attacks were laced with strong internal energy. It made them stand out among low-level

martial artists.

"Hmph!" With a sneer, Bridget met their incoming attacks head-on. She wasn't scared.

Her moves were faster and more powerful. In only a few minutes, the low-level martial artists had

been knocked to the ground.

To become Scarlet's deputy general, naturally, she had to have skills. Coming from a distinguished family, she was a genius trained from a young age.

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She wasn't only talented in military affairs, but her combat skills were also well ahead of her peers. She had reached divinity at a young age, so fighting against low-level martial artists was

easy.

"Y-You... How dare you harm us? You're dead meat! I'm going to make you pay!" Daniel gritted his teeth and prepared to make his escape.

At that moment, a table knife shot out with a sharp whistle. It pierced Daniel's knee.

"Ah!"

With an anguished shriek, Daniel fell to the floor. He held his knee and moaned in pain.

"Did you think I'd let you escape that easily?" Georgia stood up slowly.

She was smiling, but it didn't reach her eyes. Instead, they were filled with a slight murderous

intent.

On the battlefield, being kind to the enemy was no different than being cruel to themselves. That was why it wasn't in her nature to leave anyone alive.

"W-What are you trying to do?" Daniel's tone betrayed his fear. He dragged himself backward on the floor.

"Why don't you guess?" Georgia picked up another table knife. She spun it around her fingers.

"I'm warning you not to try anything! I'm the guildmaster's son! If you dare harm me, I—" Before Daniel could finish his empty threat, Georgia had aimed the table knife at his other knee.

Chapter 772

"Ah!"

Daniel let out another terrifying scream.

Both of his legs were now broken. His expression twisted in agony.

He just wanted a woman to sleep with. He didn't expect to meet a bunch of lunatics instead.

They showed zero respect for the Zen Order, daring to harm others without hesitation or warning.

"Shit! Who are these people? How dare they harm disciples from the Zen Order?"

"She's pretty, but her methods are absolutely ruthless."

The onlookers were stunned as they watched Daniel squirmed in pain.

"That's enough. You're disturbing our meal. Just drag him out." Scarlet waved dismissively,

Even as Scarlet gestured for Georgia and Bridget to drag Daniel out, she never looked up throughout the entire situation.

Insignificant gangsters like them were not worth her time.

"Madam Scarlet is in a good mood today, so I'll let you go. Reflect on your actions when you get back," Georgia said.

She then kicked Daniel stomach, sending him flying. He landed heavily by the door.

"Who dares harm my junior?"

At that moment, a group of disciples from the Zen Order walked in fiercely.

A tall man dressed in white led the group. He had a sharp gaze and looked intimidating, walking in large strides.

"Joel, you're finally here!" Daniel looked like he saw his savior and sobbed, "Catch them! They hurt

me!"

"Huh?" Joel's expression darkened when he saw Daniel's bleeding knees. His cold gaze swept toward Georgia and Bridget.

"Did you do this?" he asked.

Georgia replied calmly, "So what if we did? He's a pervert who harassed Madam Scarlet. We were nice enough to let him leave alive."

Bridget, on the other hand, only told him to get lost.

"How dare you be so brazen after you hurt our men? You need to be taught a lesson!"

Joel was furious. Without another word, he shot toward Georgia like a ghostly shadow.

"Huh?" Georgia's pupils constricted. She immediately raised her arm in preparation of the attack.

Joel's attacks were quick and powerful. Each strike was laced with strong internal energy. After a few rounds, Georgia was pushed back. She was clearly struggling to keep up.

Chapter 772

"Let me help!" Bridget jumped in when she noticed the situation going bad. They fought Joel together.

As the deputy generals of the Dark Panther Calvary, their martial arts skills were exceptional among their peers. However, Joel was evidently stronger.

He was able to hold his own even against the both of them. Each of his strike was more powerful than the last.

Bridget and Georgia had a hard time defending themselves. They didn't expect Joel to be a strong fighter.

When their fists collided, Bridget and Georgia staggered a few steps back. Their arms were numb as their internal energy surged chaotically.

On the other hand, Joel looked proud and energetic as ever.

"Good job, Joel! You sure showed them!" Daniel grinned devilishly. He momentarily forgot about his pain.

Revenge was sweet.

"Hmph! Joel is ranked on the Heavenly Immortals. How dare you challenge him? You think too highly of yourselves!"

"You women should just stay home and take care of children! Why bother learning martial arts? It's a waste!"

"That's right! Those breasts and hips are perfect for giving birth and feeding. Why don't you come home with me and be my wife?"

"Hahaha ..."

The disciples of the Zen Order laughed mockingly. They looked at the two women with their perverted gazes.

"The audacity!"

Chapter 773

Georgia and Bridget were furious. They were about to launch another attack when Scarlet raised a hand to stop them.

"You're no match for him. Let me handle it." Scarlet stood up slowly. She swept a cold gaze across the room.

A chill was sent down the laughing crowd's spine, and they turned silent. For some reason, they felt like death was staring them in the eye.

"Oh, I didn't expect to see such a gorgeous woman here. I'm in luck."

Joel's eyes lit up in delight upon seeing Scarlet. His lips curled up into a sly smile.

"It seems like you people look down on women." Scarlet said impassively, "I'll give you a chance. If you can defend against three moves of mine, I'll let you go alive."

"You'll let us go alive?"

The group was momentarily stunned. Then, they howled in laughter.

"Hey, girl, I think you haven't realized the situation yet. You're at our mercy, not the other way around!"

"You're pretty but pretty dumb."

"Hey, beautiful. If I manage to defend against three of your moves, marry me, alright?" Joel smiled mockingly. He didn't take her seriously.

"Alright." Scarlet nodded. With a wave of her arm, a teacup on the table zoomed toward Joel.

"That's all?" Joel chuckled. He extended his palm toward the glass.

With a resounding bang, the teacup exploded. Tea splattered everywhere.

However, the moment Joel's palm touched the teacup, he was sent flying thirty feet away. It was as if he'd been hit by a train.

He crashed into the wall with a loud thud and coughed out a mouthful of blood.

"What?"

The unexpected scene stunned the other disciples. They couldn't believe their powerful senior had been sent flying by a mere teacup.

"How is that possible?" Daniel cried out in fear. He was frozen with shock.

Joel was his father's most beloved disciple, a senior of the Zen Order, and a strong fighter ranked among the Heavenly Immortals!

How could one move make him cough blood? It was unbelievable!

"What trick did you use?" Joel asked, panting heavily. He looked shocked.

He couldn't accept the fact that a mere teacup defeated him. There had to be something strange going on.

"Two more moves." Scarlet remained impassive.

Her frosty gaze was terrifying. It was as if she was looking at a corpse.

"Attack!" Joel shouted, sensing that the situation was turning against him.

"Capture her!"

After a momentary daze, the disciples from the Zen Order attacked all at once. They tried to overwhelm Scarlet with their numbers.

Scarlet moved among them like a ghostly red blur, inflicting pain and groans wherever she went. In just a few minutes, the Zen Order disciples were left squirming on the floor, moaning in pain. Daniel, who had been hiding behind them, was rendered speechless. He stood there in shock.

"You men are nothing," Scarlet said as she looked down on them condescendingly.

"Stop right there!"

Suddenly, they heard a booming voice behind them. The moment Scarlet turned around, her gaze turned murderous.

At some point, Joel had stood beside Dustin. He had three fingers wrapped around Dustin's throat, looking ready to kill.

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Chapter 774

"Let him go, or die!"

Seeing Dustin held hostage made Scarlet see red. The temperature seemed to drop a few degrees. Even the lights started flickering.

The Zen Order disciples who were on the ground shivered in fear.

Scarlet had only intended to teach them a lesson, but she was now filled with murderous intent.

Dustin was her boundary, and anyone who dared to cross that line would face her wrath, no matter where they might try to hide in the world.

"I'm warning you! Don't make any sudden movements, or I'll kill him!" Joel threatened.

He never expected Scarlet to be so strong. He knew he wasn't a match for her.

His only chance was to use the hostage in front of him to turn the situation around.

"If you release him now, I won't kill you. But if you lay a finger on him, I'll destroy your entire guild!" Scarlet threatened coldly.

"Cut the crap! We're in control now!" Joel glared at her. "I order you to step back!"

Scarlet took a deep breath, trying to suppress her anger, before taking a few steps back.

"More!" Joel demanded.

Scarlet didn't want to risk it and continue stepping backward, her eyes locked on Joel the entire time.

"Hmph! I admit that you are strong. But, so what? You still have to follow my orders." Joel smirked, looking triumphant.

"Joel, you're the best!"

Daniel and the rest of the disciples were encouraged by the situation. They finally saw hope to turn things around.

Everyone had their weaknesses. As long as they exploited those weaknesses, what could their opponents do?

"Daniel, retreat. I'll hold them back." Joel signaled to Daniel.

"Hold on. I'll get back up immediately!"

As soon as he said that, Daniel retreated with the rest of the group, stumbling and staggering on their way out.

"You, get up and come with me!" Joel grabbed Dustin by his shoulder and hid behind him. He kept a watchful eye on Scarlet in case of an ambush.

"I'm not done with my meal. Can you wait a while?" Dustin said.

As he spoke, he took another bite of his food, chewing slowly.

Joel's eyes twitched, feeling humiliated by Dustin's actions.

"How can you still eat? You motherfucker!" Joel simmered in anger, and he kicked the table over." Stand up this fucking instant before I kill you!"

"Didn't your mom teach you not to waste food?" Dustin's expression grew cold as he looked at the wasted food.

"Cut the crap! Say one more word, and I'll kill you with a strike of my palm!" Joel cried out.

Was this guy mentally challenged? How could he be in the mood to eat in this situation?

"I don't believe you. Go ahead and try," Dustin said calmly.

"You fucking-" Joel gritted his teeth, almost losing his cool.

"Hey! Are you crazy? Why are you provoking him?" Georgia was shocked. If Dustin died, Scarlet would definitely go crazy.

"Dustin, don't be reckless!" Scarlet was anxious as well.

"Kid, don't worry. This childish brat has nothing on me." Dustin smiled.

"Childish brat?" Joel's anger flared. "I'm a high-level martial artist ranked on the Heavenly Immortals!"

"So what? Weren't you defeated by a flying teacup?" Dustin said, insulting him.

Chapter 775

"Y-You... How dare you humiliate me?" Joel erupted in fury. "I might not be stronger than her, but I'm surely stronger than you!"

He shouted, "I'm going to show you the Heavenly Immortals' terrifying power! Die!"

Joel aimed his palm at Dustin's back.

"No!"

The three women's expressions shifted, but they couldn't stop Joel in time. They could only watch helplessly as the forceful strike hit Dustin's back.

A resounding explosion echoed through the room. However, Dustin remained seated, completely unaffected.

Instead, Joel was sent flying backward like a rocket. He crashed through the windows and plummeted from the second floor, landing right by Daniel's feet.

"Joel?" The group was shocked to see him fall and quickly helped him to his feet.

Didn't he say he was going to hold them off? Why did he end up sprawled at their feet?

"Are you okay?" Daniel asked.

Joel spat out a mouthful of blood on Daniel's face, as if mocking him for even asking.

He then pointed a trembling finger at the window above, looking horrified.

“Run! There’s a monster up there!” He fainted as soon as he said that.

“A monster?” The group looked up at the second floor and met Dustin’s demonic gaze. It sent chills down their spine.

“Run!” Daniel didn’t hesitate. He ordered Joel to be lifted into the car before stepping on the accelerator.

Under Daniel’s urging, the car sped away, never slowing down.

Half an hour later, the car stopped in front of a Victorian–style mansion. It was enclosed by high walls made of sturdy bricks.

The mansion occupied a vast area and had four courtyards, giving off an ancient vibe.

“Dad!”

“Mr. Grint!”

A group of people carried Joel inside the house in a rush. Their actions were accompanied by loud cries, creating quite a scene.

“What happened?” A strong, middle–aged man who looked weary walked out of the living room.

He was none other than Brutus Grint, the guildmaster of the Zen Order.

“Dan, what happened to you?” Brutus frowned, noticing Daniel’s injury.

“Dad, I’m in much better shape than Joel. Look at him. He’s dying.” Daniel looked concerned.

1/2

"What?" Brutus took a closer look, and his expression hardened.

"Who did this? Who injured my disciple like this?" he asked in anger.

"Dad, it's a long story. Let's treat his injuries first." Daniel felt guilty.

Brutus stopped pursuing the matter and took out a healing tablet, feeding it to Joel. He then channeled internal energy into him to help with his injuries.

After around 30 minutes, Joel coughed and finally opened his eyes. However, the fear in his eyes

never subsided. That attack had traumatized him.

He couldn't believe that his full-on attack didn't hurt Dustin. Instead, it ended up hurting him

badly.

Joel's dignity as a martial artist ranked on the Heavenly Immortals had been trampled on.

"Joel, who did this to you?" Brutus asked darkly. Joel was his most talented student and his future

successor.

"Mr. Grint ..." Joel looked up at Brutus and started crying.

"Mr. Grint ... let's go back to Glenstead tonight. I don't want to take part in any Knighthood Society

tournament anymore," he said between sobs.

"Why are you crying like this? You're a grown man. What exactly happened?" Brutus asked,

frowning.

Joel continued sobbing. "Mr. Grint, I'm scared. I forfeit. Let's go back. It's scary here ..."

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 776

Chapter 776

Meanwhile, back at Full Moon, Joel flying away had everyone looking dumbstruck.

Joel was a senior in the Zen Order. He was also a strong fighter on the Heavenly Immortals. Someone like him could split rocks open with just a palm of his hand.

Under normal circumstances, Dustin would have been seriously injured or even killed by his attack. However, the situation was reversed instead.

What exactly happened?

“Dustin, are you alright?” Scarlet rushed forward after a momentary daze. She took a good look at him.

“I told you, that childish brat can’t hurt me. There was no need to worry.” Dustin smiled.

“You scared me. I thought...” Scarlet didn’t continue. She seemed afraid of offending him.

Georgia stared at him in disbelief. “How are you so strong?”

She was aware of Joel’s skills. She and Bridget weren’t his match. If Scarlet didn’t get involved, they wouldn’t have been able to take him down.

They were certain that Dustin was as good as dead earlier. They didn’t expect such a reversal. “Nonsense! Of course, Dustin is amazing. He used to be the genius of Oakvale!”

Scarlet was proud. Ten years ago, Logan was unbeatable among his peers.

“Madam Scarlet, you said so yourself. That was ten years ago. Things have changed since then, Georgia said thoughtfully.

Logan was indeed the Chosen One back then. However, that was when he had access to the Rhys family’s power and resources.

After ten years, the top talents from Oakvale have become influential leaders. They've grown into strong and respected figures.

Logan, on the other hand, had disappeared and lost the shelter of the Rhys family.

In the eyes of many, Logan had faded into insignificance, turning him into an ordinary citizen.

"I don't care what other people think of him. In my eyes, Dustin will forever be a genius," Scarlet said seriously.

"If you really thought that way, you wouldn't have been so anxious earlier," Georgia said quietly.

"What did you say?" Scarlet stared at her coldly. "You're so full of energy. I'm giving you extra training tomorrow."

"What?" Georgia froze, mournful about her situation.

On the other hand, Bridget stifled a laugh, playfully happy about Georgia's trouble.

At that moment, Dustin's phone rang.

"Dustin, I'm not interrupting anything, am I?" Paul was on the other end of the line.

"Of course not. Is there a problem, Sir Paul?" Dustin asked.

"Do you remember the Knighthood Society tournament I told you about last time? Tomorrow is the official registration day," Paul went straight to the point.

"Already?" Dustin was surprised.

"After registration, you need to go through a series of assessments. They will choose the final five representatives from the assessment. With your skills, you'll do great for sure. Just be a little serious about it," Paul said, smiling.

"Where will the assessment be held?" Dustin asked.

"There's a branch of the martial arts alliance in Millsburg. It's held there. I'll arrange for Patrick to assist you."

“Alright, I’ll be there on time.” After another short exchange, Dustin hung up.

They had an agreement. If Dustin won the top spot in the Knighthood Society tournament, he’d get information on Cherusia. Not to mention the generous reward.

He had all the herbs required to concoct Longevitium ready. All he needed left was the Cherusia.

As long as he got his hands on it, Gregory could be saved.

“Dustin, where are you going tomorrow?” Scarlet asked.

“Oh, for some reason, I need to join the Knighthood Society tournament. It’s organized by the Glenstead and Balerno martial arts alliance,” Dustin said. He didn’t hide anything.

He added, “Tomorrow is the registration and assessment day.”

Scarlet’s eyes lit up after hearing him. “Dustin, can I come with you?”

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 777

Chapter 777

“As long as you have time, you can join.” Dustin smiled and nodded.

“That’s great!” Scarlet’s face lit up with joy.

Obviously, she wanted to join, not to watch the tournament, but to spend more time with Dustin. She didn’t know how much longer she could stay with him.

The following day, Dustin met up with Scarlet and the others. Together, they went to the martial arts alliance branch.

It was located on the edge of the city. A single large building was its base, boasting modernized facilities.

The martial arts alliance had two major sources of income.

One was charging new students high tuition fees: The other was to put up commissions and take a percentage of the rewards.

In this world, wealthy and high-ranking officials frequently needed protection from martial artists. The alliance became the top place to seek protection. They had a lot of expert fighters available.

The rewards were also generous. So, plenty of martial artists were eager to accept the tasks. After completion, the alliance would take a certain percentage of the rewards. It created a win- win situation for both parties.

Previously, when the Harmon family encountered a crisis, even Hector got help from the alliance. He had recruited a large number of martial artists to be their guards.

In fact, many ordinary martial artists relied on commissions to survive. Once they completed a major commission, they could enjoy a carefree life for several years.

Naturally, with so many martial artists, the alliance also had some problems with administrative issues.

Dustin and the others finally arrived at the base of the martial arts alliance branch. It took an hour by car.

“Dustin, you’re here.”

Patrick had been waiting for them. He greeted them with a smile as soon as they got out of the car. “Have you had breakfast?” he asked. “Would you like me to arrange something for you?”

“Thanks, Patrick. We’ve already eaten,” Dustin replied with a smile.

“Alright. Then, let’s head in.” Patrick gestured with his arm, leading them with ease.

They stepped into the open-air martial arts arena. Immediately, a wave of intense heat enveloped

them.

The arena was packed with people. It created an atmosphere far more vibrant than a bustling

marketplace.

“Dustin, today’s registration has five assessments. As long as you can pass them all, there shouldn’t be any problem,” Patrick said.

“Five assessments? Which five?” Dustin asked curiously.

“The first assessment is strength. After that is speed, internal energy, pressure, and lastly, physical combat,” Patrick explained.

“Why make it so complicated? Can’t it be done with just two rounds of fighting?” Georgia asked.

“There are a lot of martial artists in the alliance. Their strengths are different from each other.

“The first four assessments are basically a screening process to eliminate the weak. It will leave only the strong ones behind.

“We save more time this way,” Patrick explained again.

“Alright. Let’s follow the process, then. Where’s the first assessment at?” Dustin asked.

“Dustin, this way, please.” Patrick nodded and led them to the venue for the first assessment. The first assessment was the strength test.

In the middle of the venue was a massive strength tester machine. The machine was made specially by the alliance. It was constructed entirely of metal.

It looked almost like a tank and could take up to 100 thousand pounds of force!

Based on the standard criteria, hitting over one thousand pounds of force was barely a pass. Hitting two thousand pounds was considered good. Going beyond five thousand pounds was considered exceptionally excellent.

Many people were being evaluated. So, Dustin could only patiently join the queue.

After a long wait, his turn was finally approaching. However, a group of martial artists dressed in yellow suddenly walked, looking confident.

“Move. Everyone, get out of my way!”

The group was extremely arrogant. Their loud shouts filled the air as they shoved their way through the others waiting in line.

As they cut the queue and stood at the front, their actions caused a big commotion.

Chapter 778

"Hey! Where are your manners? How can you all just cut in line like that?"

A young martial artist who was pushed aside immediately expressed his dissatisfaction.

He had waited in line for a long time. Naturally, he was unhappy to be just cut in line like that.

"Why not?" With a cold smirk, a chubby woman slapped the young martial artist.

She declared, "I can because I'm capable!" Her arrogant and overbearing attitude would make anyone furious.

"You ... How dare you slap me?"

The young martial artist was stunned. Then, his anger flared. "You bitch! Take this!"

He raised a fist, ready to attack. But before he could hit the woman, a muscular man quickly stood

in front of her. He blocked his attack.

With a loud thud, the forceful punch from the young martial artist landed solidly on the muscular

man's chest.

The muscular man remained completely unfazed. However, the force of that punch sent the

young martial artist stumbling back.

His arm hurt from the impact. He felt as if he had punched a piece of darksteel.

"You dared lay a hand on Gianna with those skills? You're overestimating yourself." The muscular

man crossed his arms and smirked. It appeared like he was looking at an ant.

"I'm going to show you what I'm capable of!"

The young martial artist gritted his teeth and charged forward once more. He delivered a powerful

kick to the muscular man's head.

However, the muscular man simply moved his head slightly before straightening it back.

The young martial artist stumbled back, almost falling to the ground. His anger turned into fear.

He had put all his strength into that kick. Yet he didn't harm that muscular man at all. Instead, he broke his own leg.

The muscular man has impressive defensive skills

"Hmph! You should have realized the might of my senior, Devon Bradley, by now. You're

humiliating yourself by challenging us!"

The chubby woman, Gianna Richards, lifted her chin arrogantly.

"You... you guys are too much!" The young martial artist said bitterly.

"This is ridiculous! Just because you're good doesn't mean you can act entitled. Remember, this is the alliance, not somewhere for you to act like thugs!"

"That's right! Get out of here, or don't blame us for being rude!"

The crowd of martial artists raised their voices in protest, their expressions filled with righteous

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anger.

The group had not only cut in line, but they also got violent. Their behavior was just too much.

"Oh, look! They still dare go against us?"

Gianna looked around and yelled, "You bunch of losers, do you have any idea who we are? Listen carefully. We are the personal disciples of Noel Yancy, one of the four branch masters of Boulderthorn!"

"What? Mr. Yancy's disciples?" Everyone was shocked.

Boulderthorn was one of the top major sects in Balerno. It had eight guildmasters, four branch masters, and one leader of the branch masters.

The leader of the branch masters seldom showed himself in public. So, the four branch masters largely governed the affairs of Boulderthorn.

Mr. Yancy was skillful and powerful. He was also a respected elder within the alliance. His words held absolute authority within this martial arts alliance branch.

In fact, just one word from him could get them expelled from the alliance. They could even end up with a price on their head.

Anyone who offended Mr. Yancy would never survive in the martial arts scene in Balerno.

So when the furious martial artists found out who Gianna was, they immediately fell silent. They all looked away, not daring to make a sound.

"Hmph! Frightened now, huh? Let me ask one more time, who else dares challenge us?"

Gianna swept a gaze across the crowd. Those who met her eyes quickly averted their gazes and lowered their heads.

After all, Boulderthorn branch master's personal disciples were not ordinary martial artists. They shouldn't be messed with.

"Is Boulderthorn that great? You think you can break the rules and attack people just because you're from Boulderthorn?" The young martial artist didn't back down.

Chapter 779

"Hah! Guess you won't cry till you see death in the eyes!" Gianna glared at the young martial artist.

She said haughtily, "Devon, since this guy won't respect us, let's teach him a lesson!"

"Alright!" With a smirk, Devon stepped forward. He lifted the young martial artist off the ground and above his head.

"Let me go!" The young martial artist struggled wildly, but it was in vain.

Compared to the muscular Devon, he seemed like a weak chick. He was absolutely powerless.

"Don't want to give in? Well, I'll make sure you will with my fists!"

Devon held the young martial artist tightly with both hands. He spun him around a few times before moving to slam him down forcefully.

If the young martial artist was lucky, he would only sustain serious injuries the moment he hit the ground.

"He's done for!" Many in the crowd looked on sympathetically.

Just as the young martial artist was about to meet his end, a hand appeared and caught him gently. It skillfully neutralized the force of the impact.

It was none other than Dustin.

"Huh?"

The crowd was stunned. They couldn't believe someone had the guts to step in and save the young martial artist.

"You brat! You've got some nerve to step into my business!" Devon's gaze was hostile.

"Clearly, you're the ones at fault. Yet, you dare hurt others here. Are all of you from Boulderthorn that overbearing and arrogant?" Dustin said calmly.

"Who do you think you are to criticize us?" Gianna shouted, glaring at Dustin.

"I stepped in because I just can't stand it. In fact, I've always disliked you people from Boulderthorn." Dustin was blunt.

"You brat! Do you know what you just said?" Devon cracked his knuckles. He spoke with a threatening tone.

"I said, I despise you idiots from Boulderthorn."

"How dare you!"

"The audacity!"

"Devon, teach this arrogant brat a hard lesson!"

The group of formidable fighters from Boulderthorn was in an uproar. No one had ever publicly humiliated them like that.

"Damn! Who is this guy? How does he have the guts to challenge Boulderthorn like that?"

"I'm not sure where this brat came from, but it looks like he's in trouble."

Dustin's words created chaos among the crowd.

"You bastard! You have a death wish!" Devon couldn't take it anymore. He threw a fast punch straight at Dustin's face.

Before Dustin could react, Scarlet suddenly grabbed Devon's wrist and threw him forward.

Devon's large figure was thrown into the air. Then, it crashed heavily onto the ground.

An explosion could be heard as the ground shook from the impact. Devon's figure had left an indent on the ground, shocking everyone.

However, the situation was far from over.

While Devon was still disoriented, Scarlet drew her three-foot viridescent blade and aimed for his throat.

Her eyes were merciless like the devil. It was absolutely terrifying.

To her, anyone who dared to hurt Logan must die..

Chapter 780

"Ahh!"

Devon screamed in despair, seeing the sword coming at him. He never could have expected the charming woman to act so ruthlessly out of nowhere.

It was evident she held absolutely no regard for Boulderthorn.

"Stop!"

"No!"

The unexpected turn of events shocked the Boulderthorn disciples. However, it was too late for them to stop her.

"Don't kill him, kid," Dustin said just in time.

There was a sharp whistle as Scarlet's blade stopped mere inches from Devon's throat. A thin line of blood formed as it grazed his skin.

Had Dustin spoken out a second later, Devon would have been lying in a pool of his own blood. Devon gulped. His face turned pale. Cold sweat trickled down his forehead.

The terror in his eyes never went away. He had very nearly met his end.

Just where did this crazy bitch with such hatred come from?

They weren't even enemies. It was scary.

"Do that again, and I will send you to hell," Scarlet said icily.

Devon shivered involuntarily. A wave of unease washed over him. He had no doubt that Scarlet genuinely intended to kill him just now.

"How dare you ambush Devon? You've got the nerves!"

The Boulderthorn disciples recovered from their shock, Then, they began to make noise. They believed that Scarlet would never have defeated Devon if it hadn't been an ambush.

"Desmond, Thomas, Dominic ... Don't waste your breath on them. Catch them all as a warning to the rest!" Gianna yelled.

The four major branches of Boulderthorn were named after the Four Symbols. Noel led the branch known as Steeljaws Fellowship.

Today, most of Steeljaws Fellowship's disciples were present. That was why Gianna was so arrogant.

"Get them!"

Following Desmond's order, the disciples closed in on Dustin and Scarlet.

"Hold it right there!" Just then, Patrick stepped forward.

He declared loudly, "I'm Patrick Hill of the Hill family. These are our esteemed guests. Don't you dare act recklessly!"

As he spoke, he revealed an emblem signifying his identity.

"The Hill family?" Upon hearing him, the Steeljaws Fellowship disciples frowned.

They scrutinized the emblem. They made sure it was authentic before softening their stance.

As one of the Tremendous Three, the Hill family held great influence and power. Boulderthorn could never make enemies of them.

It was mostly due to their respect and even fear of Paul.

Paul was a former leader of Balerno martial arts. He was also a formidable martial arts grandmaster.

His status was comparable to the leader of the Boulderthorn branch masters. Even the present leader of Balerno martial arts was his student.

These were more than enough to show his influence within the martial world.

"Hmph, we'll let you go this time on behalf of Sir Paul. But you won't be so lucky next time!" Desmond sneered.

"You guys got lucky!" Gianna seethed. Although upset, she couldn't make a scene with the Hill family backing them.

"Dustin, just focus on the main task. Don't bother with them," Patrick advised in a lowered tone.

They came here to be assessed. Things would get complicated if a deadly incident involving Noel's disciples were to occur.

Even if Dustin remained unharmed, he would be disqualified from the tournament.

"I understand." Dustin nodded.

Then, he looked at Scarlet. "Kid, put your sword away. We can't kill anyone here."

"Alright." Scarlet nodded obediently.

Her cold and aggressive demeanor disappeared completely. Her attitude toward Dustin and the rest was really different.

"

'Alright, let's not waste time. Get ready for the strength test.'

Seeing that the fight was over, the staff from the martial arts alliance began giving instructions. "The rules are simple. No one is allowed to use internal energy. Only physical strength is allowed.

"Hitting one thousand pounds is considered a pass. Two thousand pounds and above is considered good. Five thousand pounds and above is considered excellent. Those who hit ten thousand pounds and above can advance immediately."

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 781

Chapter 781

“Now, who is going first?”

“Me!” Gianna approached the strength tester machine confidently.

The strength tester machine was made from metal. It had a flexible punching pad right in the middle designed to absorb and measure the force of the strike.

Upon delivering a punch, the display screen would present the amount of strength.

“Guys, I’ll try it out for you first.” Gianna took a deep breath before delivering a powerful punch, smashing the punching pad.

With a heavy thud, the punching pad slammed into the tester machine. At the same time, the red digits on the display screen fluctuated rapidly and settled at 1250.

“No way! A woman punched 1250 pounds of force? That’s stronger than me!”

“She’s impressive to hit those numbers without internal energy.”

Whispers and murmurs spread among the crowd, expressing their surprise. It was impressive to achieve those numbers as a young lady not older than 18.

“See that? This is what I am capable of!” Gianna chuckled proudly. She even waved a fist at Dustin and his group in arrogance and contempt.

“She dares show off with such measly strength? How shameless of her!” Georgia remarked coldly “What did you just say?” Gianna was annoyed and challenged, “If you’re not satisfied, let’s compete!

Georgia crossed her arms and said disdainfully, “I’m not interested in competing with a weakling like you.”

“You-!” Gianna was infuriated. Georgia’s arrogance made her feel humiliated.

“You think Gianna lacks strength? Well... Let me show you real strength!” Just then, Desmond stepped forward.

He warmed up his muscles and positioned himself before the tester machine. With a slow lift of his fist, he gathered his strength to its peak before delivering a powerful punch.

The punching pad slammed down forcefully. The red digits on the display screen fluctuated rapidly before finally stopping at 5267.

The crowd erupted in chaos at the scene.

“What the hell? Five thousand pounds? Am I seeing it right?”

“Damn it! I exhausted myself to barely reach 800. This guy just came and hit five thousand? That’s terrifying!”

“So these are Boulderthorn’s formidable fighters? They truly live up to their name!”

Staring at that striking red number, the crowd was stunned and speechless.

It was already impressive for an ordinary martial artist to generate a force of a thousand pounds. A

force of five thousand pounds was something they wouldn’t even dare to imagine!

“All hail, Desmond!” Unlike the crowd, the Steeljaws Fellowship disciples were cheering and proud of the achievement.

“Hey! Did you see that? That’s a punch with five thousand pounds of force. That’s what true strength looks like!” Gianna lifted her head arrogantly and taunted, “You guys were so arrogant just now, so why the silence now? Go ahead and brag some more, you cowards!”

“Is five thousand pounds supposed to be impressive? That’s normal,” Dustin remarked causally.

“Normal?” Gianna was initially taken aback, but then she burst into laughter. “Hey! Are you out of your mind? You’re saying five thousand pounds of force is normal? How could you shamelessly boast like that?”

“You have a sharp tongue. If you’re capable, why don’t you show us a five thousand–pound punch yourself?”

“That’s right! You’re good at exaggerating when your skills don’t seem that impressive. If you can punch five thousand pounds of force without using internal energy, I’ll pull down my pants in public!”

The crowd snorted and looked at him as if he were a fool.

Despite their best efforts, they could only manage a few hundred or a couple thousand at most. Therefore, striking a punch of five thousand pounds was rare.

“Young man, I advise you to not be arrogant. Five thousand pounds of force relying on only raw strength are your limits,” the martial arts alliance staff said.

He had seen many who had high ambitions but no skills. They only knew how difficult it was to achieve that number once they tried it themselves.

“How many pounds did you say one has to hit to be able to advance immediately?” Dustin asked, “Over ten thousand pounds, but-” Dustin had already punched the target Before the staff could finish his sentence.

An explosion rang out, causing the strength tester machine to wobble. The red numbers on the display screen began to fluctuate rapidly.

One thousand, two thousand, three thousand, four thousand. The numbers climbed up rapidly.

In a blink of an eye, it was over five thousand. But it kept on increasing with no show of stopping. A few seconds later, the numbers finally stopped at 10001!

That was over ten thousand pounds!

For a moment, the crowd was left dumbfounded.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori

Chapter 782

Chapter 782

The crowd was silent as they stared at the red number. Looks of astonishment replaced the smiles on their faces.

No one expected Dustin to have such terrifying strength. His punch was over ten thousand pounds of force! It was incredible!

"Fuck! Who is this guy? How can he be so strong?"

"And I thought five thousand pounds was the limit. This guy broke through ten thousand!"

"Damn it! He's a freaking monster!"

The martial artists present began discussing among themselves and expressed their surprise. The Steeljaws Fellowship disciples were in shock, unable to believe it.

Desmond had exerted his full strength only to achieve five thousand pounds of force. While Dustin easily surpassed ten thousand pounds of force.

Dustin completely crushed them with that display of strength. It was humiliating!

"How was that possible? How could this skinny guy have such incredible strength? Did he use internal energy?" Gianna questioned.

"If he used internal energy, the machine would have shown an invalid result. So that punch he threw was raw strength," someone explained

Although they didn't want to admit it, Dustin was strong. He had far surpassed their expectations. "Ten thousand and one pounds. That number should get me qualified for the next round, right?" In comparison to the crowd's reaction, Dustin appeared calm. It was as if he had done something ordinary.

"Huh? Oh, right! You have advanced directly to the next round!" After a momentary daze, the staff nodded.

He had looked at Dustin in contempt, but it was now replaced with awe.

If Dustin's punch was ten thousand pounds of force, he couldn't imagine if it was with internal energy.

"Hey, chubbs, did you see that? Now that's strength. What you both did was child's play." Georgia crossed her arms with a smirk in contempt.

Gianna was infuriated at the jab but could only stay silent. Although strength didn't represent their ability, they still won this round.

"Hey! Don't get arrogant. I haven't even made my move yet!" At that moment, Devon stepped forward. He was burly and looked strong with muscles that resembled rocks.

"That's right! We can still win with Devon around!" Gianna's eyes lit up immediately.

She was excited. Devon had much stronger raw strength than Desmond.

"Devon is naturally strong. Not being able to use internal energy will show you how strong his raw

strength is!" Desmond was confident.

"That's right! Devon is the true underdog!" The others nodded in agreement.

Each of them had their own strengths and talents.

They were either fast, strong, with great defense, immense internal energy, or good at swordsmanship.

Among them, Devon undoubtedly possessed the greatest strength.

"You think hitting ten thousand pounds of strength is impressive, brat? Let me tell you the truth. I achieved that three years ago!"

With a cold gaze, Devon turned to Dustin and laughed at him. "Today, I'll show you what strength truly is. Keep your eyes wide open!"

As he spoke, he approached the strength tester machine and deeply breathed. He then positioned his fist and began to gather his strength slowly.

When he stretched his arm as far as he could, he used his foot to push off and delivered a strong punch onto the punching pad hard.

A resounding explosion shook the entire tester machine. The red digits on the display screen started to fluctuate and ascend.

The numbers surpassed the ten-thousand mark without any signs of slowing down.

Finally, the number settled at an impressive 14387! That was over four thousand pounds higher than Dustin's results earlier.

"What the fuck? Is he for real? 14 thousand?"

"He's a fucking monster!"

"Damn it! This guy broke the record! That's ridiculous!"

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori

Chapter 783

Chapter 783

After a short silence, the room erupted in cheers.

Everyone looked at the numbers displayed on the screen with wide eyes. They were in disbelief.

Dustin's ten thousand pound record was already terrifying. He could get promoted to the next level with that.

Who would've thought that another more frightening monster would show up?

Fourteen thousand pounds completely replaced the previous record!

It was simply horrifying!

"Hahaha. Devon is just impressive!" Gianna burst out laughing and jumped around in joy.

"That's God-given talent!" The other disciples were also overjoyed. They could also share some of this glory thanks to Devon's achievement.

"You're insane! You broke the record with just one punch!" The martial arts alliance staff's wide eyes were filled with admiration.

"Hmph, that was nothing. I was just warming up. Now I'm getting serious!" Devon clenched his fists, stretching his neck from side to side. Then, he gestured for the crowd to make way for him. He exhaled. Then, he pulled his fist back before launching it directly on the target.

There was a loud thud. The machine trembled. At the same time, the red numbers on the screen began to surge again.

Finally, it stopped at 15464!

Over 15 thousand pounds!

"Fuck, he broke the record again! It shot up another one thousand pounds!"

"Fifteen thousand pounds with just one punch. Who can even top that?"

"They're both human, so how can the gap be so wide?"

Devon's second punch shocked everyone once more

He'd broken his own record. No one else could've done that.

"Well, punk, do you admit defeat?" Devon turned to look at Dustin with a scornful smile.

What was ten thousand pounds? He'd managed to reach 15 thousand pounds!

"Hey, you. Now you know how awesome Devon is, don't you? He broke the record with just a casual punch. What about you?" Gianna taunted arrogantly

"Hey, say something! Why are you staying silent? Don't back down now! If you have the guts, try again!"

"Punk, if you don't have what it takes, tuck your tail between your legs and walk away. Next time you see me, turn the other way, got it?!" Devon said gloatingly. He was confident that he had defeated Dustin.

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Dustin didn't reply to their taunts. He walked over to the strength tester machine and raised his fist again.

"Hey, it seems like you haven't given up. Do you want to go again? Do you think you can break my record? How funny!" Devon said with a disdainful expression.

"Everyone, look! This stupid fool is going to embarrass himself!" Gianna laughed mockingly.

"Heh, he's just asking to be humiliated!" The other disciples chuckled along.

The martial artists in the area also shook their heads, looking at Dustin like a fool.

Can anyone even top the record of 15 thousand pounds in strength?

Under everyone's watchful gaze, Dustin raised his fist and threw a forceful punch toward the target.

There was a loud noise. The strength tester machine, made of solid metal, was punched over 30 feet away. It swayed as though there was an earthquake.

Even the reinforced concrete base beneath it was yanked straight from the ground, leaving a deep crater in its original spot.

The machine wreaked destruction along its path, breaking many pieces of equipment along the way. Finally, it hit a thick wall at the back and stopped.

The red number on the display screen was increasing rapidly.

It went from ten thousand to 20 thousand, 30 thousand, 40 thousand... 80, 90, and finally, it stopped at 100 thousand

When it hit the limit of 100 thousand, the numbers were still blinking like crazy. Finally, there was a "boom", and the screen exploded.

Sparks flew, and black smoke filled the air.

In an instant, the entire room fell deathly silent.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori

Chapter 784

Chapter 784

Everyone was stunned as they watched the strength tester machine fly over 30 feet away.

They were rooted to the spot and didn't react for half a minute.

Their eyes were as wide as saucers. Their mouths opened wide in disbelief that an egg could fit in there.

They never expected that something like this could even happen. The entire strength tester machine broke down from just a punch.

Was he even fucking human?!

"My eyes aren't playing tricks on me, right? He sent the strength tester machine flying?"

"What the fuck? Where did the monster come from?!"

"This is completely out of this world! Nothing like this has ever happened before!"

After a short silence, the crowd whispered among themselves.

They all looked at Dustin like they had seen a ghost. Their shock was written all over their faces. It wouldn't have been such a big deal if Dustin had scored higher. Devon would just grit his teeth and accept it.

But now, Dustin destroyed the machine with his fist. How could he accept that?

"That's impossible! That's completely impossible! How can he be stronger than Devon?"
Gianna shook her head frantically. She couldn't believe her eyes.

Even with his God-given talent, Devon had only scored 15 thousand.

Dustin was so skinny. How was he this strong?

"Was his score... too much for the machine to calculate?!" The other disciples looked at each other dumbfounded.

If they weren't wrong, after Dustin's punch sent the machine a distance away, the number on display had jumped to 100 thousand!

Then, it began to blink wildly. Finally, it blew up when it couldn't handle it anymore!

If the display wasn't wrong, that meant that the force of Dustin's punch earlier had reached 100 thousand pounds'

At the thought of that, chills ran down their spines.

That result was out of this world!

Dustin paid no mind to everyone else's surprise. Instead, he turned to the staff of the martial arts alliance. "I guess my punch broke the record, right?"

"Huh? Oh! Y-yes, of course!" The staff paused for a moment before nodding frantically.

He couldn't imagine what would happen if that punch had hit him instead.

"Do I need to pay for breaking the machine?" Dustin asked.

"N-no need!" The staff shook his head.

"That's a relief. Thanks." Dustin let out a sigh. Just now, he didn't control his strength and had gone overboard.

If he had known this would happen, he would have gone easier,

"That's impossible! It must be fake!" Devon could not accept what had happened.

He said, "How can someone have such strong physical strength? You must have used internal energy!"

"Exactly! How can an ordinary person have so much physical strength? You must have cheated. earlier!" Gianna added.

"Cheated?" The others looked at each other.

Suddenly, they felt doubtful. Everything had happened so quickly that they couldn't see what had happened clearly.

"Everyone, think about it. One would need at least 100 thousand pounds of force to break the machine. That's not possible to achieve with just physical strength alone. I'm sure he used internal energy!" Devon said matter-of-factly.

At this, a few people nodded.

"That's right! It's impossible to have so much strength without using internal energy. This bastard could have cheated!"

"Fuck, no wonder he was so impressive! He'd secretly used internal energy. How pathetic!"

"Just to show off, he even threw away his dignity. Screw you!"

As they sneered, they began to switch sides.

Compared to Dustin's behavior, Devon's explanation was more believable.

After all, they knew that nobody had ever broken the machine.

So, they would choose to doubt Dustin instead.

Thus, the surprise and admiration from earlier quickly turned into scorn and contempt.

"Punk, you don't have anything to say for yourself? I've exposed the truth, haven't I? Hmph, you've bitten off more than you can chew for trying to challenge me!" Devon said with a smirk.

He acted arrogant as if he'd gotten something to hold over Dustin's head.

"Moron," Dustin uttered indifferently.

"Sir, this person cheated and falsified results. If it were up to me, I'd invalidate his assessment results!" Devon demanded righteously.

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“Well...” The staff was in a dilemma.

Since the machine was already broken, they couldn't verify whether he had cheated. Of course, they could not just invalidate the results.

Not to mention, Dustin's first punch had reached ten thousand pounds. He could already get promoted with that. Thus, whether he cheated during the second punch was unimportant.

After thinking for a moment, the martial arts alliance staff finally decided. “I'll investigate this thoroughly, but there will be no changes to the promotion target. Please proceed with the next

test.”

“Hmph, you got lucky!” Although Devon was unhappy, he knew he couldn't do anything to Dustin without evidence.

“You cheated in the first test. Let's see how you pass the second one,” Gianna said unkindly.

“Let's move on to the second test. We'll find out whether he cheated or not.” Desmond gestured for the others to follow him to the next test venue.

The second test was called the agility test.

The candidates had to cross a row of stilts of uneven heights to get to the other side. Some stilts were solid and could be stepped on, while others were fake. Some of them would retract when touched.

If one wasn't careful, they could fall.

But, the difficult part was that hidden weapons such as arrows, boomerangs, and needles would shoot out as they made their way across.

If they get hit by these hidden weapons, they would be eliminated. So, this truly tested the participants' agility and reaction.

Not only did they have to be careful of their footing, but they also had to avoid getting hit by hidden weapons.

Since the test began in the morning, no one had passed yet. That was how difficult it was.

“Disciples, allow me to be the first to try!” Gianna stepped forward and walked to the starting line. She took a deep breath and jumped onto the first stilt.

“Ring!” The bell rang, and the test officially began.

Gianna’s footsteps were as light as feathers as she began to hop from stilt to stilt.

However, a few steps later, she was shot by an arrow and fell onto the ground.

Everyone burst out laughing.

Fortunately, the arrowhead had been removed, so she wasn’t hurt.

“What are you laughing at? Shut up!” Gianna was furious from shame. She shot a menacing gaze

at them, and they were so frightened that they stopped laughing, except for Dustin.

“Gianna, allow us to try.”

Several other disciples of the Steeljaws Fellowship jumped onto the stilts.

Unfortunately, it didn’t end well for them either. Not even halfway through, they all fell. Some were shot by hidden weapons; others fell when the stilt they stepped on retracted.

Over half the Steeljaws Fellowship disciples were eliminated in just half an hour.

“Hmph, these are the elites of Boulderthon? They can’t even make it across a row of stilts. How embarrassing!” Georgia said out of the blue.

As soon as she said that, the faces of all the disciples from the Steeljaws Fellowship turned dark. “Shut your mouth! Do you know how hard this is? It’s

always the one who's standing by and doing nothing that has the most to say!" Gianna shouted.

"If you don't have what it takes, you simply don't. You don't need to come up with excuses," Georgia said with a snort.

"You..." Gianna gritted her teeth angrily.

"Thomas, people are looking down on Boulderthon. It's time for you to step in." Desmond narrowed his eyes.

"Thomas, you're the most agile among us. You must show them everything you've got and prove them wrong!" Devon said seriously.

"No problem! Now, watch me show you how it's done!" Thomas laughed with confidence.

He jumped lightly on his feet as he got ready. Then, he leaped into the air. After making a grand somersault in the air, he landed stably on the stilts.

"Nice!" Everyone perked up at that. Finally, it was the real expert's turn.

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After Thomas stood on the stilts, he suddenly turned his head to look at Dustin.

"Punk, your biggest mistake is looking down on Boulderthon. I know you're powerful, but you are nothing compared to me when it comes to agility. Open your eyes and watch. I'll show you what being as agile as a hare means!" Thomas raised his head proudly.

When it came to strength, he was nowhere near Devon. However, no one could compete with him when it came to agility.

"Ready, set, go!"

The bell rang, and Thomas immediately moved.

Like a dragonfly skimming the water's surface, he hopped on the stilts lightly.

Not to mention, he was swift. They could barely see his silhouette as he moved like a shadow. They couldn't follow his movements.

"Whoosh!" Suddenly, hidden weapons shot out at him, one after another.

Some came from the side, while others sneaked up on him from behind.

Yet, as if he had eyes on the back of his head, Thomas dodged all the weapons. He switched between moving slowly and quickly, jumping high, and bending down low.

The first wave of concealed weapons all missed Thomas.

"Nice one, Thomas!" Gianna cried, clapping.

It was amazing that he could make it through the first wave. After all, everyone else failed at that point.

"As expected of Thomas. His agility is the best of the best!" Not only was everyone shocked, but they were also filled with admiration.

A martial artist's power was determined by strength, speed, agility, internal energy, technique, battle experience, and more.

Among them, agility was the most important because it could increase combat power.

For example, although Devon had great physical strength, it would be useless if Thomas was too quick for him to land a hit. He would just end up tiring himself from chasing after Thomas.

It was not an exaggeration to say that if someone had great agility, they could do well in the martial arts world, even if they lacked power.

On the stilts, Thomas was still hopping from left to right. His figure looked as light as a feather.

Even if the stilt beneath his feet shortened, he could readjust his posture and regain his balance.

"Whoosh!" Suddenly, the second wave of hidden weapons shot out.

This time, the hidden weapons had increased and were even faster. It would be difficult to dodge.

all of it.

Nonetheless, Thomas managed to avoid all the attacks thanks to his incredible agility.

After the second wave, the third wave quickly followed. The hidden weapons had increased twofold and had gotten even quicker.

Chills ran down everyone's spines as they saw numerous hidden weapons drop from above. All of the Steeljaw Fellowship disciples were nervous.

"Whoosh, whoosh, whoosh!" The weapons fell from above.

Thomas' movements increased in speed. He leaped and hopped to avoid the glinting hidden weapons. People were getting dizzy watching him

After much hardship and difficulty, he managed to dodge all hidden weapons. Finally, he successfully made it to the end.

When his foot reached the ground, applause broke out.

"Amazing agility!"

"Thomas, you did a great job. You were awesome!"

"What a show! I couldn't take my eyes off him!"

Everyone praised him non-stop.

All the martial artists before him couldn't even handle the first wave. Some of them lost their footing and fell as soon as they started.

So, everyone was in awe of Thomas' amazing agility. He had cleared all the obstacles and easily avoided all hidden weapons.

"Congratulations, you passed. Your time was 58 seconds," the martial arts alliance staff said.

"Thomas is as amazing as we thought. He completed the test in under a minute!"

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Everyone gave him a thumbs up, acknowledging his achievement.

“How was that? Do you acknowledge my skills now?” Thomas turned around and taunted Dustin. Now, do you know what agility is? You’d better learn a thing or two from me!”

H

“Punk, are you scared now? Who else can finish the test in less than a minute?” Devon said pridefully.

“That’s right! When it comes to agility, no one here would dare claim to be better than Thomas!” Gianna boasted.

The two of them chimed in one after another, using Thomas’ glory to act like bullies.

Dustin was speechless. “He took such a long time to cross these stilts. What’s there to be proud of?”

All he did was dodge a few waves of hidden weapons. How arrogant.

“From your tone, it seems you won’t acknowledge Thomas’ success. Come on then, if you have what it takes, why don’t you try? I want to see what you can do!” Devon mocked.

“Hmph, you sure know how to talk big Then get up there! Why are you hiding at the back? You’re just like a turtle hiding in its shell!” Gianna said sarcastically.

She simply didn’t believe that anyone was more agile than Thomas.

“What a bunch of ignorant idiots.” Dustin shook his head. He was too lazy to respond to them. Instead, he went up on the stilts.

“Punk, if you can even make it past the first wave, that’s already impressive in my books!” Devon looked like he was anticipating an exciting show.

“Devon, aren’t you overestimating him? If he can even hold out for three seconds, I-”

Before Giana could finish speaking, the bell rang. Immediately, Dustin moved.

A silhouette suddenly flashed past. Dustin was so quick that the crowd didn’t even have time to react. When the silhouette disappeared, everyone was stunned to see Dustin standing at the finishing line!

Throughout the entire round, not a single hidden weapon shot out. Dustin was just so quick that the machine didn’t detect him.

To make things worse, the chime of the bell still echoed in the air.

“What

Everyone was dumbfounded. The crowd couldn’t believe their eyes.

How the hell did he just fly over?

Was he human?

Was that even possible?

Can a human be that quick?

They must have seen wrong!

Several people were rubbing their eyes. They were beginning to suspect that their eyes were playing tricks on them.

However, the outcome remained the same regardless of how much they rubbed their eyes. Dustin had indeed made it across the stilts.

He had completed the second test at a speed that exceeded most humans’ and in a shocking

manner.

“How was that? I passed, right?” Dustin asked indifferently.

The martial arts alliance staff swallowed. He even stuttered as he said, “You-you passed... Your time was two seconds.”

“Two seconds?”

The result caused an uproar.

Even with his exceptional agility, Thomas of the Steeljaws Fellowship took 58 seconds to complete the test.

Yet, this bastard in front of him had only used two seconds.

It was ridiculous!

It was one thing to be strong, but he was also terrifyingly fast. Was he even fucking human?! “How-how could he be so quick? What level of agility is this? Did he travel at the speed of light?”

“This is scary! I’ve never seen a monster like him before!”

Everyone was stunned and frightened.

Even Devon, who had boasted arrogantly before, didn’t dare say another word. Thomas had just suffered a blow to his pride. He stood there, rooted to the spot.

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“T-that’s impossible! How on earth did you do that?” Gianna stuttered, utterly shocked. She didn’t have time to process everything since it happened too quickly.

“Are you going to accuse me of cheating again?” Dustin retorted.

“I-” Gianna didn’t know what to say.

Earlier, Dustin might have cheated by using internal energy. But, using internal energy was allowed in the agility test. Anyone who safely got through the row of stilts naturally passed. There was no way she could accuse him of cheating anymore. Still, she couldn’t accept it. “Hmph! So what if he’s fast? He only passed because he used underhanded tricks!” Desmond grumbled dismissively. “The internal energy test is up next. I doubt you’ll pass!”

“He’s right! Internal energy determines a martial artist’s strength. No matter how fast you are, you’re useless if your internal energy is weak!” Gianna echoed stubbornly.

“Hey, kid! I dare you to compete with Desmond and see who has stronger internal energy!” The winner gets to call the shots!” Devon taunted.

They were all betting on Desmond now. After all, as a strong Divine-level martial artist, he was the strongest among them. They were sure that he would win when it came to internal energy.

“I guess I’ll entertain you guys” Dustin smiled. If it was an internal energy test, he might as well enjoy himself.

“Fine! Follow me.” Desmond shouted and led everyone to the location of the third test.

The setup was simple. A stone platform in the center held a huge beautiful, pure white crystal ball.

“How do we use this, sir?” Gianna asked after studying the crystal ball.

“The rules are simple. Place your hand on the crystal ball and channel your internal energy into it. The crystal’s color will gradually change.

“The passing color is black. Silver color means distinction. Those who turn golden will advance to the next level,” the alliance staff explained.

“Alright! I’ll give it a shot!” Gianna exclaimed excitedly.

She put one hand on the crystal ball and channeled her internal energy. Soon, the milky crystal began to turn black.

However, the ball stopped changing colors when it was only half black. Gianna had nearly used up her internal energy, and sweat collected on her forehead.

No matter how much she tried, the crystal ball refused to turn black completely. In other words, she didn’t have enough internal energy to pass the test.

“Let me try!” Others tried their luck after her.

However, most were also unable to turn the crystal ball black. Only a few talented individuals managed to turn the ball black and some into silver,

“You’re up, Desmond “-Everyone’s attention was now on Desmond. He was the only one who could restore Boulderthorn to its former glory.

“Move out of my way!” Desmond gestured for them to move aside and went forward.

He placed his hand on the ball. Immediately, Divine Aura began flowing into the crystal ball.

There was a hum as the ball began to vibrate, and the crystal quickly turned black before turning silver. After the crystal ball turned fully silver, streaks of gold began appearing.

The Steeljaws Fellowship disciples were excited at the sight, and their eyes twinkled eagerly. Desmond was already incredible since he could turn the crystal ball silver. But if he managed to turn it golden, he’d outshine everyone else and could advance to the next level!

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"Come on! You can do it!" Many people began to cheer for Desmond.

Nearly half of the crystal ball had turned golden. He needed to hold out a little longer, and the crystal would turn fully golden.

"Aargh!" Desmond gritted his teeth and continued channeling his internal energy into the crystal ball. His strength was draining fast. His face beaded with sweat.

Seconds later, the crystal ball hummed as it turned fully golden.

Desmond collapsed onto the ground. He was relieved and exhausted.

"Hooray! He did it!"

"Good job, Desmond!"

Everyone cheered excitedly.

"You sure are strong. Well, congratulations! You get to advance to the next level!" The alliance staff praised with a smile..

Few people could turn the crystal ball gold in one shot.

"What now, punk? Do you accept the outcome yet?" Devon sneered.

"Did you see that? That's how powerful Desmond is. He easily surpassed the limit and advanced to the next level. Can someone like you do that?" Gianna gloated.

"What's the point of being fast when internal energy is more important for a martial artist? You should understand how different we are now, right?" Desmond clasped his hands behind his back haughtily and snorted.

Although he was drained, he still needed to put on a front.

"Different?" Dustin was amused. "I haven't even started yet. What are you bragging about?"

Desmond scoffed. "Turning the crystal ball golden is the best someone can do. Do you still think you can beat me?"

"We won't know unless we try." Dustin placed his hand on the crystal ball.

"What a fool!"

"Why does he even bother acting? He'll just embarrass himself!"

The rest of the people smirked. But their smug smiles quickly disappeared.

A low hum rang out as Dustin channeled his internal energy into the crystal ball. Instantly, the entire ball turned black. Soon, it turned silver, then gold.

It only took him a few seconds to change the crystal ball from white to gold. The crowd was even more shocked to see how relaxed Dustin seemed.

It was a stark comparison to Desmond, who had been sweating buckets by the time the crystal ball turned gold.

Just then, the crystal ball began to vibrate again. A red streak began to appear amidst the gold. Like blood, it quickly spread throughout the ball, turning the entire thing red.

It was obvious that Dustin was much stronger than average!

"I-it turned red? How is this possible?" The alliance staff was astonished.

Others might not understand this, but he did. Only a semi-Grandmaster and beyond could turn the crystal ball red.

Dustin must be insanely talented to reach the level of a semi-Grandmaster despite being in his twenties.

The red crystal ball exploded before the worker could get over the shock. It seemed to have reached its limit. The worker was dumbfounded by the sight.

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Everyone was stunned when the crystal ball shattered into pieces. Their smiles disappeared and were replaced by looks of dismay and astonishment.

Everyone had assumed Desmond would win since he had turned the crystal ball golden. They never imagined that beyond turning golden; it could turn red.

What shocked them more was that Dustin had channeled so much excess internal energy after turning the crystal ball red that it exploded.

Just how much internal energy did he have to do that?

Everyone was speechless.

Desmond, who had been full of confidence, was also shaken. He didn't expect his internal energy, which he had been so proud of, to be so weak compared to Dustin.

"Is this considered cheating?" Dustin smiled mockingly.

"Uh..." The crowd was at a loss for words

They weren't blind. They had all seen how Dustin had easily passed all three tests.

It was one thing to excel in one category, but Dustin had performed outstandingly in all three tests, which meant that he was powerful.

In fact, he was far stronger than all of them. So they had no choice but to submit to him.

"I guess Boulderthorn fighters aren't that impressive, are they? They sure know how to boast, but look at how badly they lost!" Georgia chirped, dishing back the taunts they received earlier.

"You-" Gianna was pissed but couldn't say anything back. She didn't want to admit it, but they had lost terribly after the last three tests.

"Don't get ahead of yourself. It's not over yet!" Desmond spat.

"Not over yet? Really?" Georgia was amused.

"The fourth test is the pressure test. It measures one's ability to withstand pressure. We'll let this round's results determine the winner!" Desmond retorted.

"Haven't you embarrassed yourself enough?" Georgia smirked.

"Cut the crap! Do you have the balls to accept my challenge?" Desmond shouted.

Instead of replying, Georgia turned to look at Dustin since he was the one who should decide. She could only help him retort insults.

"Why wouldn't I? I'll beat you guys fair and square," Dustin replied calmly.

"Fine. Follow me, then!" Desmond yelled, leading everyone to where the fourth test was held.

The setup was a closed space that resembled an escalator. But, a window in the front allowed others to see what was happening inside.

Once a person entered the space, they would feel pressure pushing down on them. They would.

have to form a defense against the pressure

"Desmond, this guy is quite strong. Do you think we'll win? Gianna whispered. She had lost confidence after losing the last three tests

"She's right. Why don't we surrender now? Well embarrass ourselves if we lose again. Devon supported Gianna. He still had not gotten over Dustin & performance earlier

"What are you guys so afraid of? There's no way this guy has no weakness"

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Desmond lowered his voice. "I admit that he's powerful, and his speed, strength, agility, and internal energy are on the next level. Still, no one in the world is perfect.

"He must have a weakness. Just think about it. Why is he so quick and agile? It's simple-he's trying to make up for his weakness!"

He continued, "If my guess is correct, defense must be his weak point! I'm sure he's quick and agile since his defense isn't as strong.

"The fourth test will test his defense. Among us, Dominic's defense is the strongest. He's already reached the seventh level of Adamantine Body Arts, and nothing can penetrate his body.

"I'm sure that with Dominic around, we'll be able to target that guy's weakness and take him down!

Everyone's spirits began to perk up after hearing Desmond's words. Just because Dustin was quick and strong didn't mean his defense was good.

They'd win if they used the Adamantine Body Arts in this test.

"Desmond's right. No one is perfect. I'm sure that guy's weakness is his defense!" Gianna's eyes twinkled in excitement.

"Right. If Dominic uses the Adamantine Body Arts, we can take him down!" Devon nodded.

They seemed to have found hope again.

There was no way they could ruin Boulderthorn's reputation, so they had to win the next round at all costs.

"What do you think, Dominic?" Desmond asked.

"I'm not confident about the other categories, but defense is my forte!" Dominic replied, confident in the skills he had been building for the past decade.

"Good! We're counting on you, Dominic," Devon looked serious.

"Leave it to me." Dominic patted his chest confidently.

"Let me explain the rules of the pressure test." the alliance staff began.

"You pass if you're able to withstand level-three pressure. Those who can withstand level-five pressure will be considered excellent.

"Those who withstand level-ten pressure will be promoted to the next level. You must endure each new pressure for 30 seconds for the results to be accepted. Understood?"

"Yes, sir." Everyone nodded.

"Alright. You may begin. Who will go first?" The staff glanced around.

"Hey, kid! To stop you from cheating, we'll let you go first!" Dominic pointed at the pressure machine disdainfully.

"Alright." Dustin smiled softly and walked toward the machine. As the metal door slammed close,

the space immediately became air-tight.

In front of Dustin was a metal lever that indicated the different levels of pressure. The lowest pressure level was 1, and it went up to 100

Dustin could adjust the level he wanted.

"Dominic, how many levels do you think you can withstand? Gianna asked curiously.

"With my current abilities, I should be able to handle level 10 easily," Dominic replied after thinking about it

"That's great! It's just enough for you to advance to the next level. I'm sure that guy can't stand that level of pressure!" Gianna was pleased.

"Well, if he can handle up to level ten, 111 keep one-upping him!" Dominic smirked smugly

"You're so smart! That's a perfect plan." Gianna grinned.

Just then, the sirens of the pressure machine began blaring, and its red emergency light began to flash.

When everyone turned to the machine, they were shocked to see that Dustin turned the lever to 100!

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After one minute, the metal doors of the pressure machine opened, and Dustin walked out calmly.

He seemed so relaxed no one could have guessed that he had withstood such high pressure.

"Sir, I get to advance to the next level, right?" Dustin asked.

"O-of course!" Getting over his shock, the staff nodded frantically.

He couldn't believe that Dustin could withstand level-100 pressure for a minute. Was Dustin made of darksteel? This was unbelievable!

"Damn, he's a monster." Georgia was in awe as well.

Dustin excelled in all four tests-strength, speed, internal energy, and defense. It was like he was perfect.

Usually, people would struggle to pass even a single test. Yet, Dustin managed to pass them with flying colors.

Was he a monster?

"I knew Dustin was strong." A rare smile appeared on Scarlet's face, who was proud of Dustin's achievements.

"I

guess Terry Doyle lost for a reason," Patrick mumbled. He had known that Dustin was strong, but he never expected Dustin to be so terrifyingly perfect!

Fortunately, they were currently on the same team.

"I've finished my turn. You're up next. Go ahead." Dustin looked at the Boulderthorn members and gestured toward the pressure machine.

"But..." His opponents shared unsure glances, at a loss for words.

There was no way they'd withstand level-100 pressure. They might even be squashed into a pancake!

"Dominic, w-why don't you try it?" Gianna asked

Dominic stiffened as he stopped himself from swearing. What on earth was Gianna saying? What's the use of him competing when Dustin pulled the lever to the max?

With Dominic's current level, no matter how hard he tried, he'd only be able to handle up to level 10.

There was no way they'd withstand level-100 pressure. The pressure would squash them into a pancake!

"Is no one going to compete? I guess that means I won?" Dustin held out his hands.

"I thought Boulderthorn disciples were incredible, but I guess I was wrong."

The others bit their tongue with dark faces, unable to deny their loss with the proof in front of them. They were utterly humiliated after losing four times in a row.

"Dustin, there's a physical combat test left." Patrick reminded.

"Alright, then. Let's get it done with." Dustin nodded and led everyone to where the fifth test was being held.

The final test was physical combat. Contestants had to pass the previous four tests to reach the fifth test.

The rules of the fifth test were simple. Each contestant needed to have hand-to-hand combat with two powerful invigilators. Then, the invigilators would rate the contestant based on their performance.

"I'm here for the test, please," Dustin walked up to the battle ring and polite

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"Um..." The invigilators shared a look and shook their heads.

"You can advance to the next level without taking the test."

"I can?" Dustin was surprised.

"We saw your earlier performance. Honestly, we're no match for you. You can just continue to the next level." One of the invigilators grimaced.

"You have potential. I'm sure you'll become a dark horse in the Knighthood Society Tournament." The other invigilator praised Dustin.

Dustin had broken the records for the first four tests. They were ashamed to admit they were far weaker than him.

"Thank you for going easy on me," Dustin thanked them with a smile and walked off the platform.

It was good that the invigilators avoided confronting him, or they'd have been beaten into a pulp by now.

"What the hell? It's unfair that he can advance to the next level without taking the test!"

"What else can they do? He's so strong even the invigilators are afraid of him."

"If it were me, I wouldn't fight him either. There's no way I can take a punch that's over 100 thousand pounds."

"He isn't just strong. His speed, defense, and internal energy are impeccable. We should respect how powerful he is."

The martial artists present gossiped about Dustin, their eyes filled with respect. After all, the martial world always respected the strong. A person's background didn't matter as long as they were powerful enough.

"The test is over. Let's go eat." Dustin ruffled Scarlet's hair and led the others out. He did not spare those from Boulderthorn a glance.

"Fuck! That bastard ruined our reputation!" Davon snarled.

"I wish Jared was here. He'd beat that brat up easily!" Gianna humphed.

Because of Jared's reputation, he proceeded to the final test without going through the first five tests. That was why he wasn't there with them. There was no way Dustin would be talking to them so arrogantly otherwise.

"I'm not happy with you, Dominic. Why didn't you give it a go earlier?" Desmond suddenly snapped.

"What?" Dominic was taken aback.

"Are you joking? That guy pushed the lever to 100! Why would I go in?"

"Yeah, right. A 100-level pressure? Well, you were all tricked!" Desmond overconfidently explained, "If my guess is right, he must have done something to the machine. I'm sure the machine didn't even put any force on him. He must have lied!"

"That can't be." Devon was skeptical.

"Think about it. Which sane person would put the pressure to the max? They'd explode if anything went wrong.

"Besides, didn't you guys realize that he didn't even break a sweat during the test? How is that possible?" Desmond continued.

"You're right! It's suspicious how unfazed he was!" Gianna was convinced.

"You're right. He must have cheated!" Devon nodded.

They still couldn't accept how strong Dustin was.

"No one is perfect. Everyone has a weakness, but that guy was too perfect, making him seem more suspicious," Desmond said confidently.

“Dominic, if you don’t believe me, you can give it a go. We’ll know the truth then.”

“Alright! Let’s see what tricks that guy used.” Dominic paused before gritting his teeth and entering the pressure machine.

Obviously, he planned to try bit-by-bit instead of pushing the lever to the max in one shot.

“Huh?” Dominic paled when he realized that Dustin hadn’t returned the lever to its original position after the test. It was still pointing at 100.

“Fuck!”

Terrified, Dominic reached for the lever. But before he could touch it, the metal door slammed close. Instantly, immense pressure pressed down on him.

“You asshole! You fucking lied-” Dominic snarled at Desmond.

But before Dominic could finish his sentence, there was a bang as he exploded, turning into a bloody mist.

Chapter 794

Dustin and the others left the martial arts alliance branch after the test. Scarlet suddenly received a call that darkened her face on their

way back.

“Got it. I’ll return as soon as possible.” Scarlet hung up after the brief conversation.

“What’s wrong, kid?” Dustin was curious.

“The call was from Oakvale. Someone accused me of gathering troops and planning a rebellion. They are demanding an explanation,” Scarlet replied calmly.

“A rebellion? What a load of crap!” Georgia was pissed.

“Madam, you suffered so much to protect our country at the borders while those trash at Oakvale did nothing. How dare they accuse you!”

"Those little shits! They deserve to die!" Even the usually quiet Bridget couldn't help cursing.

Being accused of rebelling was a major crime. Even if they were innocent, others would still make assumptions.

"Given your status, many eyes will be on you, and everything you do will be watched. Others will distort and exaggerate the truth if you make sudden moves." Dustin shook his head.

He knew something like this would happen sooner or later. After all, great power came with great drawbacks.

As Dragonmarsh's Goddess of War, Scarlet commanded an army of over 300 thousand men. She was a queen without a crown. It was unavoidable for someone with such military authority and an influential background to incur others' envy.

"I have to head back first, Logan. I need to eliminate some flies, or things will worsen," Scarlet told Dustin.

"Sure." Dustin nodded.

A slight misstep now could quickly escalate the issue.

They arrived at Flame Dragon Dojo ten minutes later.

Scarlet sadly watched Dustin leave the car and said, "Give me a few days, and I'll be back."

"Got it." Dustin smiled. He waved and watched them leave.

With the Spanner family's current influence, he was sure Scarlet could quickly take care of any issue.

"Hey!" Someone suddenly patted Dustin on the shoulder, so he turned around.

It turned out that Abigail and Nelson had stood behind him some time ago.

"Who's that chick? I've never seen her before. Don't tell me she's your new girl?" Abigail teased with a grin.

"Stop spouting nonsense. That's my sister." Dustin shot her a glare.

"Are you serious?" Abigail gave him a doubtful look.

"You seem to have a lot of spare time on your hands. How's your staff combat technique coming along?" Dustin asked.

"I've already reached the third level!" Abigail announced proudly.

"The third level? Pfft! That's barely anything. You should spend more time practicing. Keep practicing another 1000 times," Dustin instructed.

"What?" Abigail's smile froze.

1000 times? There's no way she'd finish before sundown.

Ugh, why did she have to have such a horrible mentor?

"Nelson, how's the group from Azkaban holding up?" Dustin turned his attention to Nelson.

"As you instructed, I've provided them with food, shelter, and money. But they refuse to leave and insist on joining the Kirin Gang to help you," Nelson replied.

Those from Azkaban were talented fighters who were hard to come by, especially Cornelius.

There was much more to the older man than meets the eye, and he could easily take on the strongest fighters in Kirin Gang.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 795

Chapter 795

"We're short on talented individuals, so let them stay if they want to. Establish a subsidiary guild named Darklaws and let Mr. Adler be the leader." Dustin decided.

"Got it." Nelson nodded.

“Oh, right. It isn’t good that our guild is expanding so quickly. We need to slow things down and cut down on the recruitment. We need to move our headquarters to accommodate our growing numbers. I’ll leave this to you,” Dustin instructed.

“I’ve already considered the issue about our headquarters and picked out a location, but I’m not sure if it’s to your liking,” Nelson replied.

“Really? Where did you pick?” Dustin raised an eyebrow.

“It’s called Zephyr Lodge. It’s located on the city’s outskirts.”

Seeing Dustin’s confusion, Nelson elaborated. “It used to be the estate of a count, so it’s spacious and has good scenery. Transportation there is smooth as well. I searched high and low. This place seemed like the best option.”

“Not bad. You must have put in a lot of thought for this. Well, let’s go with your idea. Kirin Gang’s new headquarters will be there.” Dustin decided.

“Thank you, Sir!” Nelson was overjoyed.

He didn’t expect Dustin to agree to his idea so readily. He couldn’t help feeling touched by how much Dustin trusted him.

“While we’re on the topic of managing the gang, I just thought of the friend I recently made who’s clever and talented. She should be able to help you,” Abigail suddenly said.

“Really? Who?” Dustin was curious.

“She happens to be the sparring partner here. Follow me!” Abigail pulled Dustin into the dojo.

Several of Flame Dragon Gang’s skilled fighters surrounded a gorgeous woman in the battle ring.

The woman wore skin-tight clothes that showed off her curves and perfect legs, tempting the men. Still, despite her looks, she could take on all the men easily.

Using her legs like whips, she swept anyone who approached her off their feet so none of the men could get close to her.

“Damn it! They’re useless!” Nelson swore under his breath, his expression uncomfortable. He was embarrassed to show Dustin a bunch of men being beaten up by a woman.

There were thuds as all the Flame Dragon Gang disciples fell, allowing the woman to win.

“What do you think? She’s awesome, isn’t she?” Abigail asked proudly.

Dustin didn’t reply. His eyes were glued to the woman on the platform. He looked like he didn’t trust her.

“Hey, come here for a second. Let me introduce you to someone.” Abigail waved the lady over.

“Okay.” With a small smile, the lady brushed off the sweat on her forehead and walked off the battle ring.

“Let me introduce you to—

Dustin cut Abigail off. “No need for introductions. I know her.”

“You do?” Abigail was surprised.

“Are you trying to flirt with me?” The woman smiled.

“Quit acting. You might have changed your looks, but your scent didn’t change. Aren’t I right, Azalea Larson?”

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Chapter 796

Chapter 796

"Azalea Larson?" Abigail was puzzled.

Abigail knew the woman's surname was Larson, but her name was Mandy Larson.

"Are you going to deny it? Do I have to tear off your mask?" Dustin asked.

"Your eyes are getting better. I spent so much time dressing up, but it wasn't enough to fool you." Azalea giggled flirtatiously.

"Is your name really Azalea?" Abigail frowned. She felt like she was tricked.

"I'm Azalea, but I'm also Mandy. I never lied to you," Azalea explained with a smile.

"What are you doing here?" Dustin demanded.

He was always on high alert whenever he was near this crazy woman.

After all, it was difficult to believe someone who murdered their mentor and offered their mentor's head to the Harmon family..

"Aww, aren't we friends by now? Can't you treat me more warmly?" Azalea circled Dustin like a snake eyeing a mouse.

"What happened between us can only be considered a business partnership, definitely not friendship." Dustin was unfazed.

"That makes me sad. I should've known that all men are cheaters!" Azalea grumbled pitifully.

"Ahem, I'm still here, you know? Do you mind toning down the flirting?" Abigail looked at them oddly.

"Abigail, go and train. I have something to talk to her about." Dustin glanced at Abigail.

"Alright, then. I'll stop bothering you two." Abigail stuck out her tongue and headed to the training grounds to practice her staff combat technique.

Ugh, the smell of love!

"Spit it. What are you up to?" Dustin demanded once more.

"Nothing. I'm just here to protect Abigail." Azalea smiled.

"She's the future Grand Sorceress of the Mystic Arts Order, so she'll need bodyguards. I think I'm a good fit for the job."

"What?" Dustin frowned. "How did you know that?"

He was the only one Micheal told this secret to, and even Abigail had no idea. How did Azalea

know this?

"The Dark Lord used to be from the Mystic Arts Order. He happened to share this secret with me." Azalea smirked.

"Abigail isn't ready. Besides, there is no way her father will allow her to join the Mystic Arts Order,

Dustin replied coolly.

H

The Mystic Arts Order was the evillest faction in the world, and the same could be said about its people.

Abigail was too kind, so she would be eaten alive if she got caught up in the mess with the Order.

"Never say never. As long as the blood of the Grand Sorceress flows in her veins, the organization will find her sooner or later." Azalea reminded him.

"I don't know what will happen in the future, but Abigail is my disciple right now. I'll protect her with my life as long as I'm alive. You better not try anything funny!" Dustin warned.

"Don't worry. My future depends on her, so I'll protect her with everything I've got." Azalea smiled.

Abigail was the granddaughter of the leader of the Mystic Arts Order, so Azalea had to make sure to get close to her.

If Abigail became the Grand Sorceress, Azalea could ride on Abigail's coattails and become stronger than anyone else.

"You better keep your word." Dustin stared at Azalea. Once he was sure she wasn't lying, he sighed with relief.

"I can't beat you anyway, so you can always kill me if I do anything bad. Still, I wonder if you can do it."

Azalea smirked and placed a palm on Dustin's chest before dragging it downward.

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Chapter 797

Dustin frowned and stepped back to put some space between their bodies. "I won't expose your identity, but you better behave yourself. I'll be watching you.

"You'll be watching me?" Azalea bit her bottom lip invitingly. "I'll be showering later. Will you also watch me?"

"You're crazy!"

Dustin ignored her and walked past her to go upstairs. He was certain she wasn't up to anything for now, but he was still wary of witches like her.

The night passed uneventfully.

The next morning, Dustin was out with Abigail for their morning practice when a black sedan pulled up at their entrance.

The car door opened, and Patrick stepped out with a smile.

“Congratulations, Dustin.” Patrick congratulated Dustin.

“The results for yesterday’s tests are out. You passed the test and have been chosen to lead four other martial artists to represent the Glenstead martial arts alliance!”

“Really? That’s great.” Dustin smiled softly, not surprised by the news.

It would be more surprising if someone managed to get a higher score than him, who got full marks for all five tests.

“Are you joining the Knighthood Society Tournament? Can I tag along?” Abigail asked eagerly.

“Only if you don’t cause any trouble,” Dustin warned.

“I promise!” Abigail promised.

“Me too. I want to go, too,” Azalea chimed in.

There was no way she’d miss out on such an exciting show.

Dustin glanced at her but didn’t answer. Instead, he stepped into the car.

Abigail and Azalea followed too. Azalea plopped herself into the seat next to Dustin’s, her breasts jiggling from the movement.

The car began to move, starting their journey to the tournament.

The tournament was being held at Shinefield Lake, which was located at the foot of Mount Shinefield. The beautiful scenery there made it the perfect location to host the tournament.

When they arrived, the lake was full of martial artists from different places.

The grand tournament between the Balerno and Glenstead martial arts alliance took place every three years. Today’s battle was more about honor than interest. Each participant must do their best to make their alliance proud.

“Dustin, the others who will be representing Balerno are over there. Follow me.” Patrick glanced around to ensure he was in the right direction before leading Dustin and the others over.

“Stop right there!”

Suddenly, a group of people blocked their way. When Dustin saw who they were, he had a smirk on his face.

They turned out to be the same people from Steeljaws Fellowship yesterday.

“You killed Dominic yesterday, and we demand justice!” One of them accused before Dustin could say anything.

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Chapter 798

“What?” The sudden accusation took Dustin aback. “Dominic is dead?”

“That’s right. It’s all your fault, you murderer!” Gianna shouted angrily.

“Don’t be stupid. What does his death have to do with me? Don’t pin the blame on me,” Dustin

replied.

“Stop lying! Dominic wouldn’t have died if it weren’t for your tricks!” Gianna shouted.

“Did you think we won’t discover that you intentionally kept the lever at the max so you could trick Dominic into entering the pressure machine. The moment the door closed, Dominic exploded!” Devon growled.

Dustin was speechless by their stupid accusations. He had merely forgotten to return the lever to its initial position. 1

How could he have known that someone would be stupid enough to start the machine without looking at the lever?

He had never met such a dumb bunch. It was ridiculous that he was blamed for such an ignorant incident.

“First of all, I didn’t plan anything, so I had nothing to do with Dominic’s death. He died because of his actions alone.” Dustin held his hand open.

“Yeah, right! I know you did it on purpose!” Gianna didn’t believe a word he said.

“I’ve already explained myself. You can decide whether to believe me.” Dustin couldn’t be bothered to continue talking to those idiots.

“You’ve got guts, kid. How dare you walk away like nothing happened after killing someone?” Just then, a man in black emerged from the crowd.

Although the man looked ordinary, the sword he was holding gave off an imposing air. This man was the first disciple of Steeljaws Fellowship, Jared Yancy.

“And where did you come from?” Dustin raised an eyebrow.

“How rude! This is Jared. He’s one of the five martial artists competing today!” Devon shouted.

“So what?” Dustin shrugged.

“You might have some skills, kid, but that’s far from enough if you want to challenge me. Dominic’s death can’t be in vain, so you’ll have to pay up!” Jared retorted icily.

“What kind of payment do you want?” Dustin put on a fake smile.

“If you break both arms, I’ll let you live,” Jared demanded.

“Are all Boulderthorn people crazy or something? First, you randomly accuse me of something I didn’t do. Then demand I break my hands. Did you think I’ll do it?” Dustin shot them a disdainful look.

“I’m giving you a chance right now. You won’t just be breaking two arms if I have to do it myself.”

Jared threatened.

He drew his sword lightly, exposing the razor-sharp blade as a warning.

“You better not cross the line!” Abigail snapped, unable to control her anger. She stepped forward and put herself in front of Dustin.

“Shut up! You have no right to talk!” Gianna slapped Abigail hard, leaving a visible palm print.

Dustin’s face darkened, and his blood boiled. But before he could do anything, there was a shadow as something flew toward Gianna’s arm.

It was a black venomous snake!

“Aargh!” Startled, Gianna flung the snake to the ground and crushed it to death.

The spot where the snake had bitten her had already turned black. It was easy to tell that the snake was incredibly venomous.

“Who was it? Who snuck up on us?”

The Steeljaws Fellowship disciples looked around furiously. They couldn’t believe someone had used such a dirty move!

“I did it.” Azalea stepped out from behind Dustin, a cold smile on her face. “She should pay the price for slapping my sister.”

“Give us the antidote!” Jared ordered.

The venom had already spread to the rest of Gianna’s arm. It would spread to the rest of her organs in another three minutes.

“There is no antidote. The only way to save her is to slice off her arm to stop the venom from spreading.” Azalea grinned.

An eye for an eye, a slap for an arm. It was a good deal.

“You’re dead meat!” Furious, Jared drew his blade, about to attack.

“Stop!”

Patrick stepped forward and took out the Hill family emblem. "Today's the Knighthood Society Tournament! Participants are not allowed to engage in personal fights!"

Jared gritted his teeth but eventually lowered his sword. He didn't have a choice since this was the Knighthood Society Tournament, and he was afraid of Patrick.

"Save me, Jared! I don't want to die!"

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Chapter 799

Gianna burst into tears as she watched the venom spread further, terrified. Her arrogant attitude from earlier disappeared.

Without a word, Jared swung his sword and sliced Gianna's arm off.

Flustered, Gianna stared at her arm lying on the floor and looked at her shoulder. After she

realized what had happened, she cried before passing out.

"Once the tournament ends, I'll make you pay for your actions!" Jared spat before leading his men.

away.

"Dustin, Jared isn't someone you want as your enemy. You should be careful." Patrick warned.

"He should be the one who's careful," Dustin replied.

If it weren't for Patrick, he would have killed Jared!

"It's almost time. Let's go and find Grandpa." Patrick gestured and led them into a luxurious lakeside villa.

The spacious villa had a rustic charm and a huge courtyard where everyone was resting.

Meanwhile, Paul was chatting comfortably in the villa's living room with a middle-aged man. It was none other than the leader of Balerno martial arts, Ronald Reeds.

Paul was Ronald's mentor, so they could chat comfortably.

"Sir, I've heard you recently found someone with great potential. The person managed to defeat Terry Doyle and performed well in yesterday's tests," Ronald said with a smile.

"He's incredibly special. As long as I train him properly, he might become your successor," Paul said thoughtfully.

"I'm curious to know the person you got your eye on." Ronald was excited.

His mentor had always been picky, and regular geniuses meant nothing to him.

"Dustin is here, Grandpa." Patrick suddenly entered.

"Right on time." Paul smiled. "Tell him to come in."

"Alright." Patrick went out again to lead Dustin in.

"Greetings, Sir Paul." Dustin greeted Paul.

"You came at the right time, Dustin. Let me introduce you to someone." Paul gestured to the man next to him. "This is the current leader of Balerno martial arts, Ronald Reeds."

"Ronald Reeds?" Dustin raised an eyebrow.

He recalled Micheal mentioning that Ronald was his good friend. He just didn't expect that friend

to be the leader of Balerno martial arts.

"Do you know each other?" Paul was surprised.

"Of course, I've heard of Sir Reeds' accomplishments. Nice to meet you, Sir Reeds." Dustin greeted

once more.

“A talented individual indeed.” Ronald nodded with a smile. “The alliance is fortunate to have young, talented individuals like you as its future leaders.”

“You flatter me, Sir Reeds.” Dustin lowered his head politely.

“I don’t have anything to gift you besides this knife. It’s sharp enough to cut through metal. I hope you accept this token to commemorate our first meeting.” Ronald pulled out the knife he carried and handed it to Dustin with a smile.

“But...” Dustin was taken aback.

“Ronald likes talented individuals very much. Since he wants to offer you a gift, you might as well accept it.” Paul smiled.

“Alright. Thank you, Sir Reeds.” Dustin accepted the knife humbly.

“I hope you do your best to make the Balerno martial arts alliance proud,” Ronald encouraged.

“I will,” Dustin promised.

“It’s almost time, Ronald. Why don’t you tell the other participants to come in so we can discuss strategies,” Paul said to Ronald.

“Sure. I’ll go get them.” Just as Ronald was about to stand up, one of the alliance workers walked in nervously.

“I have bad news, sir! We received a report that three participants-Chase Newman, Andy Cannon, and Shawn Mcgee-have been poisoned. They are currently all unconscious!”

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 800 -

Chapter 800

“What? Poisoned?” Everyone paled.

It was no coincidence that three participants were poisoned on the day of the tournament.

“How could this happen? Who did it?” Ronald growled.

“We don’t know yet. We’re still investigating.” The worker shook his head.

“Bring me to them!” Ronald headed out hurriedly.

Workers had closed all the exits at the temporary training grounds to stop everyone from leaving.

When Ronald and the others arrived, they saw three strong men lying unconscious in the center. Their breathing was faint, and their faces were ashen. But their lips had turned black.

“It’s an extremely potent venom!” Ronald was displeased.

The three men were martial artists on The Heavenly Immortals and were crucial to their tournament. What was he supposed to do now that they were poisoned?

“Hurry, get someone from Stoneray Order!” Ronald ordered.

“No need for such hassle. Dustin can take care of this,” Paul said.

Even Nicholas hadn’t been able to treat him back when he had been injured, yet Dustin had managed to save him.

“Do you practice medicine, Dustin?” Ronald was surprised.

“A little.” Dustin didn’t bother denying it.

“Then, please take a look at them.” Ronald stepped aside.

Nodding, Dustin walked over and crouched down to study the three men’s conditions.

Soon, his expression turned grave.

“They were poisoned with a slow-acting poison. It’s tough to get rid of it. Symptoms don’t appear until they do any vigorous exercise. But the moment they do, the infected will fall unconscious and might even die,” Dustin explained.

“Can you cure them?” Ronald asked worriedly.

These three men were important for the tournament. He couldn't afford to lose them.

"I can save their lives, but they'll be weak for the next week. I doubt they'll be able to take part in today's tournament." Dustin shook his head.

Ronald and Paul both frowned when they heard this. Clearly, the person who poisoned these men was trying to make them lose this year's tournament.

"Please save them, Dustin." Ronald suppressed his anger.

"Alright." Dustin nodded and quickly pulled out his silver needles to treat the men.

"Who do you think did this, Sir?" Ronald asked, pondering deeply.

"Who else could it be? It's those bastards from Glenstead!" Paul snarled.

"They aren't sure whether they'd win, so they used these underhanded tactics instead. How shameless!"

"Still, we don't have any proof. We can do nothing about it." Ronald frowned.

He also knew that the Glenstead martial arts alliance had something to do with this. The two alliances had been at odds for some time. He never expected them to resort to such dirty tactics.

"Why don't we push the tournament back for a few days? We'll resume things when they've recovered." Patrick offered.

"Everyone is paying close attention to the tournament. There's no way we can just change the date.

Ronald shook his head.

"I guess we'll just have to find three substitutes." Paul's expression was grim.

Chase, Andy, and Shawn were powerful martial artists who were on The Heavenly Immortals. With their help, Balerno had a high chance of winning the tournament. But that would change if they had to switch participants.

"We still have time. I'll go and look for decent substitutes." Ronald left hurriedly. He had to try no matter how little time there was left!

Time flew by, and it was soon noon.

The sun shone brightly, and the brightness reflected off the lake's surface.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori

Chapter 801

Chapter 801

A gentle breeze that carried the subtle scent of earth ruffled everywhere.

Many had gathered around Shinefield Lake, and the tension in the air was high as the two alliances faced off.

The tournament was held in the middle of the lake, where an arena 100 meters long had been built days ago.

The lake surrounded the platform, so they would need to reach it by boat.

The contestants representing the Balerno martial arts alliance had gathered inside a gazebo at the South, where Ronald got three substitutes to replace the three poisoned men.

Although these men weren't as strong as the earlier three, it was still better than nothing.

"Today's tournament is extremely important." Ronald's expression was serious as he looked at each of them.

"The Balerno martial arts alliance's reputation rests on your shoulders, so please work together. I await the good news!"

He lowered his head respectfully.

"Don't worry, Sir! We'll beat those guys up!" The new members were full of confidence.

Winning the tournament not only promised them a hefty prize but would also give them fame, so they would do their best.

"This is a tag team competition, so you four better follow my instructions and not act alone," Jared said coolly. His arrogant attitude caused others to frown.

"Who the hell do you think you are? Why should we listen to you?" A round-faced contestant demanded.

Jared sneered, "Because I'm the first disciple of Steeljaws Fellowship and the rank twelfth on The Heavenly Immortals. Does that answer your question?"

"The twelfth?" The other contestant immediately shut his mouth. The other two contestants fell

silent as well.

Although they were also on The Heavenly Immortals, their ranking was below thirty, which was way lower than Jared's.

It was challenging to advance even a single rank on The Heavenly Immortals, much less two ranks. So, if someone ranked 20 places higher than them, there was no way they'd be any match

for them.

"Any other objections?" Jared snorted.

"N-no. You can give orders since you're the strongest." The round-faced contestant smiled apologetically.

"What about you guys?" Jared turned his head.

"We chose a leader so that we could communicate better. I have no objections."

"Neither do I."

The other two nodded frantically.

The martial world followed the rule that the strongest person would be in charge.

"I like quick learners, unlike someone who has decided to be stubborn!" Jared jeered, shooting Dustin a glare.

Dustin ignored the other man and stared at the arena in the middle of the lake.

"You seem quite strong, Fatty. You'll go first." Jared pointed at the round-faced contestant. Remember, you have to win no matter what it takes!"

"Of course!" Fatty patted his chest confidently.

"Alright. Get onto the boat." Jared nodded, pleased.

"The boat? You underestimate me, Jared." Fatty smiled. "I'm not that weak. Watch as I skim across the water!"

With that, Fatty shot forward with a leap. Then he landed on the water's surface and ran with incredible speed, causing countless ripples.

"Good job!" Jared praised.

Almost immediately, Fatty ran out of true energy. He sent water splashing everywhere as he fell facefirst into the lake.

Chapter 802

"Uh..." Those from the Balerno martial arts alliance were stunned to see Fatty fall into the lake.

It would have been fine if he wanted to show off, but how could he fall in? This was a tournament, for goodness' sake, not a circus performance!

This was utterly embarrassing for the Balerno martial arts alliance.

"That f*cking loser!" Jared seethed, ashamed since he had just praised Fatty for his skills.

"Pfft! Why would he embarrass himself when he's such a weakling?"

"Fuck off if you're a loser. Stop humiliating yourself!"

"Are all Balerno martial artists so weak? Is this even a competition?"

Glenstead martial artists burst out in laughter and mocked.

"He was too proud." Even Ronald was embarrassed by the sight.

After all, martial artists that were hastily chosen were no good.

"It'll be hard to win the first match." Paul shook his head.

Why did Fatty have to waste his true energy to show off? In the end, he embarrassed himself and depleted more than half of his true energy. How was he going to fight later?

Finally, bubbles emerged from the water, and a round face reappeared.

Embarrassed by all the laughter, Fatty forced himself to swim to the arena. He got onto the platform, drenched in lake water.

"Damn it! I should have taken the boat!" he muttered to himself.

He'd managed to cross rivers with the same technique before, so he thought he could do the same with the lake. He didn't expect himself to run out of true energy halfway due to the lake's size.

"A weakling shouldn't show off. That's just embarrassing!" A man in red sneered as he arrived at the arena by boat, a spear in his hand.

"How dare you laugh at me! I'll kill you!" Fatty roared.

"As if you could do that." The man in red jumped onto the platform.

"I'll make you regret underestimating me!" Fatty gritted his teeth.

The man in red humphed disdainfully, unfazed by Fatty's threat. In his opinion, showoffs like Fatty weren't worthy of stepping into this arena.

He'd be disappointed if all Balerno martial artists were like this.

Just then, a bell rang from afar to signal the start of the match.

According to the rules, the match would start when the bell rang the third time. From there onward, the fighters' life depended on their skills.

Soon, the bell rang another two times.

"You're dead meat!"

Fatty attacked as soon as the bell rang for the third time. With a wave of his arm, countless darts shot toward the man in red.

Chapter 803

Besides throwing his darts, Fatty also threw a punch toward his opponent. That way, even if his weapons failed to hit the target, his punch would still be able to hit the man in red.

"Such useless tricks!" The man in red sneered before whipping his spear around to slap the darts away.

Immediately after sweeping the final dart aside, the man thrust his spear forward at an incredible speed. Before Fatty had time to reach, the

backward.

"You-!"

Sor had impaled his shoulder, throwing him

Fatty tried to get up, but the spear's tip was already resting against his throat. He'd be killed if he made any sudden movements now.

"You've lost," The man in red said condescendingly.

"W-who on earth are you?" Fatty was terrified.

He never imagined that he'd be beaten so quickly and effortlessly.

"Listen well. I'm Oscar Winston, and I'm the eleventh on The Heavenly Immortals," the man in

red announced proudly.

"Eleventh on The Heavenly Immortals?" Fatty was shocked. No wonder his opponent was so strong.

Curse his rotten luck!

"What are you waiting for? Scram!" Oscar used his spear to flip Fatty back into the lake, and the

latter had no choice but to swim back to shore.

Ultimately, the Balerno martial arts alliance lost the first round terribly.

"Sir Reeds, your men seem quite weak. Can't you choose someone stronger?" A bearded man chuckled from inside the Glenstead martial arts alliance's gazebo.

This man was the leader of the Glenstead martial arts alliance, Conrad Melling. Next to him was

Brutus Grint, Zen Order's guildmaster.

"You shouldn't celebrate so early, Sir Melling. No one can tell what will happen for sure," Ronald

responded.

-Although they weren't speaking very loudly, their voices could still be heard from across the

lake.

"Sure. Let's keep watching!" Conrad laughed louder.

"Who'll go next?" Jared turned to look at the remaining three contestants and pointed at the man

in black next to him. "You're up!"

"But Oscar Winston is eleventh on The Heavenly Immortals, I'm no match for him!" The man in

black exclaimed.

"I'm not asking you to defeat him. You just have to make him use up his true energy. If you exhaust his true energy, I'll be able to defeat him easily!" Jared humphed.

"What? Doesn't that mean that you're just going to use me as your stepping stone?" The man in black was displeased

"This is the best solution. I'll give you some credit once I win the tournament," Jared persuaded.

Jared ranked lower than Oscar on The Heavenly Immortals, so his chances of winning the battle head-on were only fifty percent.

Thus, he had to use others to exhaust Oscar's true energy if he wanted a winning chance.

"Alright. I'll fight to the death for our alliance!" The man in black steeled himself and promised.

It was a matter of honor, so he had no other choice

"Remember, hold him back for as long as possible," Jared reminded.

"Don't worry, Jared. I might not be able to defeat him, but I can still slow him down. Just wait and see!"

The man in black leaped onto the boat and glided toward the arena.

Three minutes later, there was a pained wail as he was thrown off the platform and into the lake.

Chapter 804

The man in black hadn't even landed three hits on Oscar before he was thrown into the lake.

Those from the Balerno martial arts alliance couldn't help feeling pissed at how poorly their contestants performed.

Since the first match, they hadn't even fended off any of Oscar's attacks. Forget slowing him down; they weren't even challenging enough to be his warm-up.

"What the hell? How could the alliance send such shitty contestants? It's so humiliating!"

"Ugh, I can't stand how easily those from Glenstead are beating us!"

"I wouldn't have come if I knew they would be so weak. It just pisses me off!"

Many people in the audience began to curse.

It would have been fine if it was one terrible match, but there was no way they could stand still after seeing how Balerno lost two matches in a row.

After all, the match took place in Balerno's territory, and most of the audience were Balerno martial artists. They weren't happy to see their men losing to Glenstead on their land.

"Those losers!" Jared swore softly, angry at the first two contestants.

Although Ronald remained quiet, he was displeased as well. The three substitutes he found were clearly lacking compared to the initial three contestants.

"You're up next!" Jared turned his attention to the third contestant, a man in gray.

"Your mission is the same as the guy earlier. Try your best to tire Oscar out instead of facing him head-on. Got it?"

"I-I'll try." The man in gray gulped nervously.

He knew there was no way he could beat Oscar, so all that was left to see was just how long he

could hold the other man back.

Anxiously, he climbed into the boat and headed toward the arena.

Three minutes later, there was a scream as the man in gray was tossed into the lake after less

than ten strikes.

Water splashed everywhere before bubbles slowly rose to the surface of the water.

"Balerno martial artists are so weak! How could they lose three matches consecutively?"

"I didn't expect them to be so weak. I thought it was going to be a fantastic battle."

"Well, Oscar can take care of all five by himself!"

Those from the Glenstead martial arts alliance laughed while those from Balerno struggled to rein in their anger.

Some even left in disappointment since there was no point watching anymore.

"What's going on, Sir Reeds? Aren't we winning too easily? This is getting boring." Conrad smiled

mockingly. His words were like knives to the heart.

"That's odd. Why are the Balerno martial artists so weak?" Brutus was puzzled.

He had participated in the last tournament, and both sides had been evenly matched. But

Glenstead was winning too easily today.

"I heard that three of their contestants were poisoned, so they just grabbed three fighters to fill in the empty seats," Conrad answered with a smile.

"They were poisoned? Who was the culprit?" Brutus was surprised.

"Who knows? It wasn't me, at least." Conrad shrugged.

Although he wanted to win, he couldn't resort to such despicable tricks.

Meanwhile, in the Balerno gazebo, Ronald turned to look at Dustin and Jared: "We can't afford

to lose again. Which one of you is confident enough to win?"

"I'll do it." Jared volunteered before Dustin could.

"Are you sure?" Ronald raised an eyebrow.

"We'll be doomed if we rely on him. I'm the only one with a winning chance against Oscar now!" Jared sneered at Dustin.

He realized that relying on the substitutes to tire Oscar out had wasted time. He had to face Oscar himself.

"Alright. We're counting on you." Ronald patted Jared's shoulder.

"I'll definitely win!" Jared leaped onto the boat and headed straight toward the arena.

"Hey, look! It's Jared!"

"Good luck, Jared! Make us proud!"

"Jared will be able to defeat that arrogant bastard!"

Boulderthorn disciples perked up when they saw Jared-even the martial artists who had been leaving stopped in their tracks.

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Chapter 805

Now that their strongest fighter had appeared, they hoped he could save Balerno's reputation.

"Who are you?"

As Jared stepped onto the platform, Oscar swung his spear and pointed its head toward him.

“Jared Yancy. Twelfth on The Heavenly Immortals.” Jared glared at Oscar.

“I see.” Oscar narrowed his eyes, his expression turning serious.

They were outstanding individuals on The Heavenly Immortals and were only one rank apart. In other words, their skills were more or less on par. There was a chance of losing if they underestimated their enemy.

“I’ll win this match! Once I do, I’ll use you as my stepping stone to make my way up the top ten of the list!” Jared drew his sword.

“Really? Let’s see about that.” Oscar chuckled icily.

He gripped his spear with both hands firmly and got into position.

Soon, the bell rang three times.

They shot toward each other and began attacking.

Instantly, metal clanged, and sparks flew as they countered each others’ attacks. A crazy amount of true energy burst forth and whirled around the two fighters. It caused ripples in the lake and, the wind to soar.

Jared’s sword skills relied on pure strength, while Oscar’s spear skills relied on his agility and fluidity. The battle was exciting since the two of them were evenly matched.

“Take him down, Jared!”

“You can do it, Jared! Show him who’s boss!”

The Boulderthorn disciples shouted animatedly. Jared wasn’t just representing the Balerno martial arts alliance anymore. He was also representing Boulderthorn.

In the gazebo, Patrick asked, “Who do you think will win, Grandpa?”

“I can’t tell since they’re evenly matched.” Paul narrowed his eyes.

“I hope Jared wins, or Dustin’s responsibility will be huge.” Patrick sighed.

“You’ve got to win!”

Everyone’s eyes were glued to the tense battle. They’d still have a winning chance if Jared won, but if he lost, it would be game over.

As time ticked by, they began to fight more aggressively. They had practically exhausted their true energy, so they relied on sheer willpower and could lose at any moment.

“Go to hell!”

With a loud cry, the two mustered their remaining strength for the last attack to determine the

winner.

Jared swung his sword and sliced Oscar’s spear in half before driving the blade into Oscar’s shoulder. At the same time, Oscar thrust the remaining half of his spear into Jared’s chest.

In the end, Oscar collapsed onto the ground, throwing up blood, while Jared flew backward from the momentum and fell into the lake with a splash.

Both of them were severely wounded. However, according to the rules, Oscar won!

“He lost?” The Balerno martial artists were devastated by the result.

This was the first time they had ever lost four times in a row, leaving all of them disheartened.

They only had one contestant left. There was no way they could expect Dustin to perform a miracle and turn the table.

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Chapter 806

“Oh no... There goes our chance of winning.”

“How did things turn out this way? How could we have lost every single round?”

“The Knighthood Society tournament this year is an embarrassment for all of us martial artists from Balerno!”

Jared’s defeat sent the Balerno martial arts alliance into low spirits. There was anger,

disappointment, helplessness, and also resentment.

Both sides had always been on the same level in the previous Knighthood Society tournaments, making it an exciting event for everyone. No matter the outcome, they always gave their all and gained the audience’s respect.

But the tournament today was unexpectedly depressing for the Balerno martial arts alliance. They had been crushed in the first three rounds, and there wasn’t anything worth watching.

Things seemed to look up for them in the fourth round. In the end, they still lost. They have now consecutively lost for four matches and were utterly humiliated. It was truly shameful.

“No... That’s impossible! My senior is the best fighter out there! How could he be defeated?”

“It was obvious that Jared had hit Oscar first. What a shame that he was thrown off the platform!”

The Boulderthorn disciples found it hard to accept the outcome. Jared’s abilities were considered/ the best among the younger generation of Boulderthorn disciples. It was a pity that he lost.

“I guess we don’t have a chance of winning the tournament this year, sir.” Ronald sighed helplessly.

If Jared had won, there was still hope of turning the table. But now that Jared had lost, there was no way they'd be able to win anymore.

"We still have one more person left. We haven't lost yet," Paul said seriously.

"But sir, we have only Rhys left. How can he possibly defeat the five aces of Glenstead alone?"

Ronald shook his head.

"Well, now that Oscar is wounded, only four of them are left." Paul corrected.

"Sir, even if Oscar can't fight anymore, Glenstead still has four more contestants. And all four of

them are stronger than Oscar! Rhys doesn't stand a chance against all four of them!" Ronald smiled wryly.

It was tough enough to fight against Oscar, who was ranked 11th out of the Heavenly Immortals. But the remaining four were experts in the top ten ranking of the Heavenly Immortals.

It was true that Dustin had defeated Terry Doyle, who had ranked 13th. But his chances of winning against those in the top ten rankings were low. Now he was going up against four of them by himself. It was impossible for him.

"Let's just give it a try. We have no other options now." Paul sighed. Deep down, he knew that with just Dustin alone, it would take a miracle for him to turn the tables.

He hoped that Dustin would win just one round. At least then, they wouldn't be so embarrassed. It would make them the greatest joke ever if they were to lose five consecutive rounds.

When the wounded Jared was helped out of the lake, he was soaked from head to toe. His expression was dark.

It made him even more embarrassed, especially with everyone looking at him. He had gone up so confidently but ended up losing. It was humiliating.

"Jared! Are you alright?" A group of disciples from the Steeljaws Fellowship hurriedly rushed over to him.

“Just some minor injuries. It’s not a big deal,” Jared forced himself to say.

“Hah! Still acting tough when he can’t even stand straight.” Azalea, who stood behind Dustin, couldn’t resist mocking.

“Shut up! Had Oscar not thrown a surprise attack, do you think he’d be able to beat Jared?” Devon glared at her.

“That’s right! Oscar would have died had Jared not spared him some mercy!” others added.

“You should learn to admit your defeats. It’s embarrassing to make excuses when you’ve lost. Azalea rolled her eyes.

“You-!” Jared was so flustered, and with his internal injuries, he coughed up blood.

“Wow! Are you even coughing up blood now? You better hurry to a hospital or something. We’d hate to see you die here,” Azalea taunted.

“You b*tch! You’re asking for it!” Devon’s temper flared. But as he was about to get violent, he noticed a snake’s head poking from the collar of Azalea’s shirt.

He immediately pulled his hand back in fear when the venomous snake hissed. If he were to be bitten by the snake, he might lose his arm on the spot, just as his fellow guild member had.

“If you’re so good, why don’t you go up there and fight?” Desmond challenged.

“I’m not. But my man is.” Azalea linked her arm with Dustin’s, a boastful expression on her face.

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Chapter 807

Dustin glanced at Azalea and pulled his arm away from her grasp.

“Him? How strong do you think he is? He isn’t even fit to be compared to Jared!” Desmond mocked.

“Exactly! Jared’s ranked 12th among the Heavenly Immortals! This bastard isn’t even worthy to be near him!” Devon exclaimed.

“If Jared’s so great, why did he lose earlier?” Dustin countered. That simple question silenced

everyone.

“Hmph! I’ve indeed lost, but do you think that you’d be able to win? With your level of skills, you won’t even withstand three hits!” Jared forced through clenched jaws.

“Is that so? Let’s wait and see then.” Dustin smiled faintly, not saying another word. He would much rather prove himself with his abilities than participate in meaningless arguments.

Right then, someone exclaimed excitedly, “Look! Someone’s replacing Oscar in the arena!”

Everyone looked toward the middle of the lake, only to see Oscar leave the platform.

Another graceful and elegant man in white made his way toward the platform on a boat.

“Hey, isn’t that Joel Finch, ranked tenth among the Heavenly Immortals?”

“Oh, my God! It is Joel Finch! We’re in trouble!”

“Even Oscar seemed invincible. Now we’ve got Joel, who’s even better than Oscar. What’s the point in continuing? We might as well just admit defeat already!”

After they confirmed the identity of the man in white, the Balerno martial arts alliance cried out and panicked.

“It’s him?” Dustin raised a brow, finding it rather unexpected.

“Haha! It seems like you’re out of luck, bastard! You’re in trouble, going up against Joel!” Jared smirked, laughing at Dustin’s misfortune.

He had already embarrassed himself. He didn't mind seeing more people end up in the same situation as him.

"Jared, is Joel really that great?" Devon asked curiously.

"Great doesn't even begin to explain what he's capable of! He ranks tenth among the Heavenly

Immortals! That means he's one of the top ten best divine-level martial artists! Even I'd be defeated in a second if I ever went up against him!" Jared said earnestly.

"Gosh! That's amazing!" Everyone was shocked. The fact that Jared would praise him as such, showed how strong Joel's abilities were.

"Hey, bastard! Weren't you all high and mighty just a while ago? Why don't you give it a try in the arena?" Jared taunted.

"Haha! Look at him! I bet he's feeling weak in the knees right now. How would he even dare to go into the arena?" Desmond ridiculed.

"No way! Don't tell me that you don't even dare to try and fight? How cowardly!" Devon jeered.

In their eyes, Dustin was bound to lose. The only question was, how bad was his defeat going to be?

"What are you yapping on about? Joel Finch? I'm not afraid of him."

Dustin walked forward and gave the boat a light kick to get it moving. Then, he jumped elegantly onto the boat and made his way toward the middle of the lake.

"Wow! Did he go? How bold of him!" Devon smirked.

"He doesn't know where he stands, We'll just wait and see how he dies!" Desmond said in contempt.

“Hah! Even I’m no match for Joel! How does this bastard dare to take up his challenge? He must really want to humiliate himself!” Jared laughed meanly.

Dustin was just a nobody. How could he stand up against someone who ranked tenth among the Heavenly Immortals?

Up in the arena, Joel stood there with his arms behind his back. He welcomed the applause and cheers from the audience with an arrogant expression.

He was determined to make a name for himself today!

“Go, Joel! Show them what the Zen Order is made of!”

“Even Oscar could go against four of them himself. Joel is even better than Oscar. It’d be a breeze for him.”

“This will be a predictable match. Let’s see how long the opponent can hold up for.”

The Glenstead martial arts alliance was confident. Disciples of the Zen Order were exceptionally proud.

“Don’t worry, everyone. I’ll finish things up quickly.” Joel gestured towards his fellow guild members by the lake and turned to face his opponent.

But when he saw the familiar face on the boat, Joel felt as if lightning struck him. A wave of fear immediately overwhelmed him.

“Mon-monster! The monster is here!” After mumbling to himself for a bit, Joel suddenly shrieked.

Then, without another word, he jumped into the lake and escaped as though his life was on the

line.

Chapter 808

With a loud splash, Joel jumped into the lake and escaped when he saw Dustin.

He splashed and thrashed wildly in the water like a fish on the verge of death. He looked terrified.

Jared and Devon were stunned. Even all the Boulderthorn disciples and the Glenstead martial arts alliance members were shocked.

Everyone gaped in disbelief.

For the most senior disciple of the Zen Order, an expert ranked tenth among the Heavenly Immortals, to be scared and flee in terror. Nobody expected this outcome!

The pure fear in his eyes made him look like he'd seen a ghost. If they had not seen it for themselves, they would not believe such a thing happened.

"Wh-what? He ran away?"

"What the f*ck? What's going on? The match hasn't even started, and he's already given up?"

"Has Joel gone crazy? Look at him. He looks like he's possessed!"

After a short silence, an uproar broke out among the crowd.

Joel's actions stunned both those from the Balerno martial arts alliance and the Glenstead martial arts alliance.

"Sir, what's the Glenstead martial arts alliance doing?" Ronald was caught off guard.

Everyone had expected an exciting match. Joel running away even before the match started was unexpected.

"Well... I'm not too sure either." Paul looked puzzled.

He had believed that Dustin would win, but he never expected it to be so easy. He had won even without fighting!

"Jared, are my eyes playing tricks on me? Did Joel run away?" Devon could not believe his eyes.

"Joel's ranked tenth among the Heavenly Immortals! How could he lose in such an undignified manner?" Desmond's eyes widened in disbelief.

"Damn it! What the heck is Joel doing?" Jared frowned. He was as confused as everyone else was.

Technically speaking, it would be a piece of cake for Joel to defeat a nobody like Dustin.

How did he end up running away in fear at just the sight of his opponent? The match hadn't even

started at all!

How could a person with such status embarrass himself like that?

"Azalea, why did that person run away when he saw Dustin?" Abigail wondered aloud.

"I guess he probably lost to him in the past, so now he's traumatized," Azalea said with a smirk.

Dustin was unbelievably powerful. She had not seen the full extent of how powerful he could be. But her guess was that he was almost as strong as the Dark Lord.

"How easy." Dustin chuckled. He never expected Joel to react like that.

Dustin hadn't even entered the arena, and Joel had already jumped into the lake. He didn't have any intention to redeem his previous humiliation at all.

Joel splashed madly in the lake, trying to reach the lake's edge as fast as he could.

By then, those from the Glenstead martial arts alliance were already complaining and looking at Joel in disdain.

It was one thing to lose in a fight. But to run away before the match even started was an act of cowardice and very much looked down upon.

"What's wrong, Joel? Why are you running away?" Brutus Grint looked at Joel with displeasure, obviously unhappy with his actions.

"Joel, are you giving up even before the match has started? This is truly shameful!" Daniel Grint grumbled.

"I wouldn't have escaped if I had a choice, master! But I don't stand a chance against that person!"

Joel looked like he was about to cry, his eyes full of fear. "He-h-he's the monster who injured me so badly two days ago!"

"What? It was him?"

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 809 -

Chapter 809

Brutus frowned. Daniel and the others were also terrified by what they heard.

"Let's go back, master! I'm withdrawing from the tournament this year!" Joel sounded like he

was almost in tears. The traumatizing experience he had been through several days ago

haunted him like a nightmare.

He boasts of his exceptional talent and outstanding martial arts skills. He had never been defeated since he made a name for himself.

That night he never expected to run into two monsters.

The first monster was a lady who beat him up so badly with a teacup alone that he threw up blood.

Then, a man showed up, and he was even more terrifying. The man nearly killed him with his bare hands!

Since that night, his confidence and pride were completely ruined. He felt as if a shadow figure towered over him in his mind.

Thus, when he saw Dustin, he was scared to the point of fleeing without regard for his pride.

“Don’t worry, Joel. What happened the other night was just an accident. Maybe your eyes were just playing tricks on you!”

After Brutus reassured Joel, he turned and exchanged a glance with Daniel. “Dan, bring Joel to change into a dry set of clothes. Get him a cup of hot tea while you’re at it. That should calm his nerves.”

“Sure.” Daniel helped Joel, whose legs were still shaking, into a nearby courtyard villa.

“Mr. Grint, your disciple is quite disappointing!” Conrad Melling said with a dark expression. He did not hide his disapproval.

“I have not taught him well. Please forgive me, Sir Melling.” Brutus flashed him an awkward smile.

“Forget it. The tournament will still go on without him. Anyway, we will certainly win the tournament this year.” Conrad could not be bothered with such trivial matters.

Their three remaining candidates were all stronger and better than Joel. There was no doubt that those three would win.

“Who’s next?” Conrad’s gaze swept over to the three remaining contestants from Glenstead.

There were two men and one lady. The lady wore a mask and a strong and fit physique. She gave off a strong wildness.

The other two men consisted of one burly figure with a broadsword and the other with a pale face, bony figure. He looked sickly.

“I’ll go!” The burly man, Alan Barnes, stepped forward confidently. “I’ll get rid of that bastard with a swing of my sword!”

“That man must be powerful to come out last. I have confidence in dealing with men. Let me go.” The masked lady, Lexi Sutton, came forward too.

Then Torres Dale, the sickly man, coughed before saying, “I rank the highest out of the three of us. I should be the one going.”

They were all aware that this was the last match of the day. Whoever succeeds will receive great rewards and gain fame and reputation. So they were all fighting to be the one to fight in the last match.

“Hey, Sicko, you’re already on the brink of death. Stop fighting with us, and go get some rest.” The masked lady made a face before she continued, “And you, Big Guy, you might be strong, but you’re not agile. If he moves around a lot, you won’t be able to hit him. I’m the best candidate to go up against him!”

“Hah! Don’t you know you can subdue any opponent with brute strength? No matter what tricks he has up his sleeves, I can deflect it with my sword!” Alan boasted.

“I might be sickly, but that doesn’t mean I’m weak. I rank seventh among the Heavenly Immortals. I think that goes to prove what I said.” Torres covered his mouth with a handkerchief.

“You men can’t stand having a lady as an opponent, can you?” Lexi frowned.

“Cut the crap! It’s not every day we have the tournament. I’m here to gain fame and reputation!” Alan did not seem like he would back off.

“I haven’t got many years left to live. Please let me have my final moment of glory, you two.” Torres coughed into his handkerchief.

“No! I insist on having this match!”

“Nonsense! I should be the one going!”

“Well, it just so happens that I’m interested in having this match too.”

The three began arguing in public about who should fight the match.

The Knighthood Society tournament only took place once every three years, so it was a rare opportunity for them to show off. None of them were prepared to give up on the chance.

“Hey!” Right then, an indifferent voice suddenly came from afar.

“I say, the three of you should stop quarreling. Why don’t you join forces and fight me

together?”

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 810 -

Chapter 810

The voice surprised all three of them.

They looked over to where the voice came from, only to see Dustin standing on the platform in the middle of the lake. He had his hands behind his back, looking totally composed.

“Hey, brat. What did you just say? I didn’t catch you.” Alan’s eyes narrowed, squinting at Dustin.

“I said the three of you should fight me together. That will save us a lot of time, and you won’t have to fight over who fights the match. Wouldn’t that be better?” Dustin asked calmly.

An uproar broke out among the crowd.

“Fuck! Is the bastard out of his mind? How dare he be so arrogant?”

“Does he have a death wish? How could he challenge three experts who rank among the top ten of the Heavenly Immortals?”

“Hah! He doesn’t know what he’s getting himself into!”

The crowd pointed at Dustin and commented among themselves. They looked at him like he was out of his mind.

“Jared, is the fella out of his mind? He doesn’t even stand a chance against them. How dare he challenge all three of them at once? What a joke!” A smirk tugged on Devon’s lips.

“He’s just an attention-seeking clown. He knows he can’t win against them. He’s doing this so that when he loses, he can make an excuse for himself.” Jared shot Dustin a disdainful look.

“At the end of the day, he’s just given up. No wonder he’s acting so recklessly.” Boudernthorn disciples looked at him in contempt.

Dustin had been lucky and won the previous round without having to fight. The disciples thought that Dustin probably knew there was no chance of winning this round, so he quickly gave up.

“Hey, brat, do you even know what you’re saying? You’re challenging all three of us at once.

you even capable of taking us on?” Alan’s expression was dark.

Are

He knew everyone in the top ten ranks among the Heavenly Immortals, and this bastard was obviously not one of them. How dare a nobody who wasn’t even in the top ten challenge them?

“Well, you’ll find out whether or not I’m capable when the match begins, won’t you? Or, do you not dare to take up my challenge?” Dustin stared at him from the platform, calm as always.

“What a bastard! I see you’re not one to cry until death stares you in the eye!”

Alan was riled up, and he hopped onto the boat. Then, using his broadsword as an oar, he

brought it down heavily onto the water’s surface, sending water splashing everywhere.

That pushed the boat forward, and he made his way steadily onto the platform in the middle of the lake.

“You’re taking him for yourself? Not so fast!” Seeing Alan moving toward the arena, Lexi rushed forward and jumped into the boat.

“This is truly unbecoming of a martial artist!” Torres rushed to catch up with them as the boat was already quite far from the lake’s edge.

He jumped, landed on the lake’s surface, and swiftly ran toward the boat. When the boat was within reach, he jumped and did a somersault, landing breezily onto the boat.

Thus, the three of them went to the arena on the same boat.

“No way! Is he really going to go up against all three at once?”

“He asked for it. Who’s to be blamed? Even if he lost, he would deserve it.”

“He must be crazy! He’s risking the honor of the alliance just for his personal gain!”

Those from the Balerno martial arts alliance were infuriated to see Dustin going up against all three opponents simultaneously.

He might have a slight chance of winning if he went up against them individually. But going up against all three at one go was a death wish!

“Oi, brat! It’s not too late for you to take your words back yet. If you pick me as your opponent, I’ll let you have three moves first!” Alan was the first to speak when he reached the

stage.

“Three moves? I’ll give you five!” Lexi held out a hand and showed five fingers.

“Haha! I guess I’ll have to take a step back then. I’ll let you have ten moves first as a head start.

Torres smiled slyly.

The three behaved like bargaining peddlers, negotiating with Dustin to give him their best

offer.

“That’s enough. Stop arguing. Just come at me together.” Dustin waved dismissively. His indifferent attitude showed that he did not consider them worthy opponents.

“Hey, brat! Are you asking for death?” Alan was annoyed

“I’m just giving you a chance. None of you stand a chance against me one on one. But if all three of you attacked at once, you might have a slight chance,” Dustin said casually.

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Chapter 811

“Hah! What a bold statement! I’d like to see what you’re capable of!”

Alan couldn’t hold back any longer. He took a step forward, raising his broadsword high. Then, he brought it down at full force, slashing mercilessly at Dustin.

It was a powerful strike, almost possessing a force capable of splitting the earth. As the broadsword slashed toward Dustin, the lake surrounding the platform rippled from the force.

“Impressive swordplay!”

The onlookers were surprised. The Heavenly Immortals lived up to their name. It was amazing how just a casual move had such terrifying power.

Dustin shook his head. Instead of backing off, he pressed forward. While dodging the strike, he threw a heavy punch at Alan.

“That was quick!”

Alan’s eyes narrowed as he reflexively blocked the punch with the back of his broadsword. Dustin’s fist landed heavily on the sword, making a dull thud.

Instantly, Alan was sent flying several feet away, his sword still in hand. When he landed, he needed a few moments to steady himself.

“How is that possible?” Alan paled.

He felt numb along the length of his arm, and his blood boiled. The back of his broadsword, made of darksteel, had bent from the force of Dustin’s punch.

He no longer dared to underestimate his opponent and took the fight seriously.

The punch had taught him a lesson. He might have been seriously injured on the spot if he had not deflected the blow with the back of his sword.

His opponent's strength was truly terrifying!

"My gosh! That bastard has actually gained the upper hand?"

"No wonder he can afford to act so arrogantly. He does indeed have several tricks up his sleeves!"

The crowd was astonished to see Alan pushed backward by Dustin.

"Damn it! Who would expect the bastard to actually have some real skills?" Devon was astounded.

"Hah! What's so great about him? He got lucky because his opponent underestimated him!" Jared wasn't happy to see Dustin gaining the upper hand over his opponent.

The better Dustin performed, the more it made Jared look bad. As someone regarded as a genius, he refused to accept that.

"He's holding up well with one opponent. But if all three of them came at him, he still wouldn't stand a chance." Ronald looked at the arena regretfully.

He had to admit that Dustin was good and had excellent skills. He was good enough to be among the top ten Heavenly Immortals.

But he had been too arrogant and had acted irrationally. And that would ultimately cause him

to lose.

"Lexi, Torres, that person is powerful. It seems like we really need to join forces." Alan flexed his numb arm, eyes darting around alertly.

"It might seem a little unfair to go up on him together. But since he was the one who requested it, we haven't got anything to feel sorry for." Lexi eyed Alan's bent darksteel broadsword and flinched involuntarily.

Alan had always had ungodly strength and defeated his opponents with brute strength. But he had lost in the battle of strength just a while ago.

That showed just how strong the person they were going up against was.

“Both of you go on ahead. I’ll cover the rear.” Torres took two steps back, a cold glint flashing in his eyes.

As an assassin, he had always disliked hand-to-hand combat.

“Alright. We’ll have some fun first, then!” Alan and Lexi exchanged a glance and nodded at each other.

“Come on, then.” Dustin beckoned for them to come forward with a curl of his finger.

“Charge!” Without another word, two of them charged towa

Chapter 812

Alan attacked straight on while Lexi supported him from the side. They worked in perfect unison, each move aiming to kill.

In a match between experts, the outcome was never certain. Hence, they needed to gain the upper hand.

Dustin remained impassive and focused on dodging the oncoming attacks from both sides.

His focus was on Torres. The cold and murderous intent radiating from him was impossible to ignore.

For an assassin to be ranked among the top ten Heavenly Immortals proved that he was far from normal.

Though he appeared weak and sickly, that was a front to deceive his enemies. He would strike mercilessly once there was an opportunity, making even grandmasters wary.

Alan’s broadsword slashed wildly in the arena, making loud whooshing sounds.

Attacks came relentlessly at Dustin from both sides. Their movements disturbed the water around them so much that the fishes leaped up in alarm.

Dustin moved swiftly, dodging left and right to escape their attacks. But in the eyes of the crowd, it looked like he was being chased around.

"Get him! Kill him!"

Devon clenched his fists, fixing his gaze on Dustin. The more danger Dustin was in, the more excited he was.

"Hah! He can't even handle two of them. How dare he challenge the three of them to attack together? He doesn't know where he stands!" Jared laughed mirthlessly.

There were few people who were yet grandmasters and could hold up against the joint attack of two Heavenly Immortals.

To the crowd, it looked like Dustin was already cowering and fleeing in panic when the match had just started.

"Azalea, Dustin wouldn't lose, would he?" Abigail watched the match, looking anxious.

"Don't worry. It's too early to know who'll end up the last man standing." Azalea twirled her hair with her finger, smiling.

"He has pretty impressive footwork. I wonder how long he'll last." Ronald watched on keenly, his expression grave.

Facing two opponents was already the limit. But an expert ranked seventh among the

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"Come on, then." Dustin beckoned for them to come forward with a curl of his finger.

"Charge!" Without another word, two of them charged toward Dustin.

The highly anticipated showdown finally started.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 813 -

Chapter 813

"I-" Joel started but stopped himself. In the end, he just sighed.

If he had not experienced it, he would have found it hard to believe that Balerno had such a fearful talent too.

Over in the arena, the match got heated.

Alan and Lexi gave everything they had. They initially started out attacking full-on, pursuing Dustin relentlessly.

But as time went on, they began to feel something was amiss. They couldn't reach Dustin, no matter how they attacked or surrounded him.

He moved around like a ghost, and they could not touch him. He would evade their fatal strikes whenever they thought they would hit him..

They could pin it on luck if it happened only once or twice. But it was different when it happened multiple times.

It was as if the two of them were not attacking but rather being led on. It felt terrible, and the two began to panic.

They knew that if that went on, they would exhaust their true energy. And when that happened, they would be entirely at Dustin's mercy.

"Torres! We can't hold on any longer! You better help us out!" Seeing how things weren't going great for them, Lexi turned to shout at Torres.

Before she could react, a black, spherical object fell from above. Then, with a loud bang, it exploded at their feet.

As the sphere exploded, thick black smoke surged out, engulfing them instantly. The smoke did not stop pouring out, eventually spreading out to cover the whole platform.

The audience could not see what was happening in the arena for a moment.

And then, the most terrifying thing happened.

When the smoke came into contact with the lake's water, hundreds of fishes within a 100-yard

radius floated to the surface with their bellies up. The smoke was highly poisonous!

Engulfed by the smoke, Alan and Lexi began coughing, their expressions filled with agony. Their skin also started turning black quickly, as if they were being burned.

They instinctively channeled their energy from within to force the toxic out of their body. But the moment they did that, they spat out black blood and collapsed.

“Torres! You poisoned us? Have you gone out of your f*cking mind?” Lexi asked weakly.

Heavenly Immortals was observing from the side.

In such an unfair match, there could only be one outcome.

“Rhys, you’ve put yourself on the spot this time.” Paul frowned.

He had expected Dustin to turn the tables and save the day. But from how things were going now, that no longer seemed possible.

“Joel, look at him. He doesn’t look like he’s all that great. Why are you so terrified of him?”

At the Glenstead martial arts alliance’s side, Joel had changed into clean clothes. Then, accompanied by Daniel, they reentered the gazebo to watch the match.

“No! You don’t understand!” Joel shook his head, fear written on his face.

“He hasn’t unleashed his full powers yet. He’s just toying with them!”

This was not the full extent of the powers of someone who had wounded him badly with his bare hands.

“Say, Mr. Grint, has your disciple been scared, silly? How could he spout such nonsense?” Conrad was displeased.

It was one thing to be scared and run away from the match. But worse, he was spreading foolish lies and ruining their spirits. That was an act that deserved to be punished.

“I’m speaking the truth, Sir Melling! That person’s strength is immeasurable; I wouldn’t be surprised if he has already reached the level of a grandmaster! We shouldn’t underestimate him!” Joel said seriously.

“The level of a grandmaster? Haha!” Conrad chuckled.

“Young man, you’re sounding more and more outrageous with each passing second! There are only a few who have reached the level of grandmaster in the whole of Balerno! And I’ve never heard of a grandmaster as young as him!”

“Sir Melling=”

“That’s enough!”

Joel wanted to continue speaking, but Brutus cut him off curtly. “Joel, you should rest up if you’re feeling unwell. Stop embarrassing us!”

“Joel, that rascal is almost losing it. Why are you still praising the enemy and putting our side down? What’s the point?” Daniel frowned.

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Chapter 814

Lexi was shocked when she saw Alan beheaded.

Torres’ ruthlessness was beyond her expectations. Who would have thought that he’d kill someone on a whim?

They didn’t even have any serious conflicts beforehand. The only conflict of interest they shared was who would compete in the match first.

They had no grudge between them and were on the same side. Lexi could not comprehend why Torres would do such a thing.

“It’s your turn now.” Torres smirked, sticking his tongue out to lick the blood off his knife.

He looked like a psychopath!

“Why are you doing this? We haven’t got any grudges between us. Why can’t you show us some mercy?” Lexi was terrified.

She struggled with all her might, but as she was paralyzed by the poison, she could not escape.

“I do not need a reason to wipe out you Dragonmarshians, especially talents like you! The more of the likes of you that die, the better! Now, go to hell!” With that, he aimed the knife at Lexi.

Suddenly, a silver needle flew toward Torres from amidst the smoke and accurately hit the blade. The impact sent the knife flying from Torres' hand and clattering to the ground.

He frowned and looked in the direction where the needle came from. Before him, amidst the smoke, emerged a figure.

It was Dustin!

"Hey, brat! You're not dead yet?" Torres' eyes widened, surprised.

After all, the poison he had carefully concocted was one that few could withstand, apart from grandmasters. It was strange to see the man before him unaffected by the poison.

"To be honest, I am immune to all poisons. Your poison does not affect me at all," Dustin said

casually.

"No wonder. It seems like I've met a fellow practitioner."

Torres reached behind his back and pulled out two daggers.

"Buddy! Save me... Quick!" Lexi wailed in agony as black blood flowed out from her nose continuously.

Dustin sent an antidote pill flying straight into her mouth with a flick.

Lexi swallowed the pill. Soon, she was no longer in pain. Her skin, which had previously turned black from the poison, gradually returned to normal.

"Thank you! Thank you!" Lexi wept in relief and gratitude at being saved.

"Impressive! You do have some tricks up your sleeves, I see!"

Torres frowned slightly. No regular person could have the antidote to the poison he came up with.

"From what you just said, it sounded like you're not Dragonmarshian, are you? Tell me, exactly are you?" Dustin suddenly asked.

who

Judging from how he could easily kill his companions, he clearly wasn't a good person.

"Hah! You're going to die soon. Why do you need to know so much?" Torres' expression darkened.

"You better come clean, or you will die a miserable death." Dustin looked at him indifferently.

"You're just a nobody! How dare you speak to me so arrogantly? Die!"

Without another word, Torres vanished from sight. When he reappeared again, he was already behind Dustin. He aimed a dagger toward Dustin's throat, which emitted a dark glint.

Without even turning around, Dustin reached a hand out and blocked the side of his neck. The dagger slashed across his palm, making a metallic clang. But he wasn't injured at all.

Torres' expression darkened. Then his dagger changed course, and instead of slashing, he stabbed it straight at Dustin's back.

Again, another metallic clang rang.

To Torres' astonishment, his strike failed to harm Dustin, and his dagger broke. "How is this possible?" Torres was alarmed.

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Chapter 815

Torres' dagger was made of darksteel, which was virtually indestructible.

Stabbing someone with the dagger should have been like a knife cutting through butter. Then, why had he not been able to harm Dustin? Who exactly was he?

"Are you still going to put up a fight?" Dustin slowly turned around to face him, his gaze sharp.

"Go to hell!"

Torres took a step back, creating distance between them. At the same time, he threw a volley of poisoned darts at Dustin. They rained down on him instantly.

With a cold expression, Dustin simply brushed them away with a wave of his hand.

With a whoosh, Dustin reflected all the darts at Torres.

Unable to dodge in time, most of the poisoned darts hit Torres. He fell to the ground on the spot.

As he tried to get up, Dustin placed his foot on Torres' chest, pinning him. Torres could not

move.

"Spill! Who on earth are you?" Dustin looked down at him, an impassive look in his eyes.

"I'm someone you cannot afford to cross. So get the hell off me and let me go, or you'll regret the day you were born!" Torres threatened fiercely, despite the disadvantageous position he

was in.

"Oh? Is that so?"

Dustin put force on his foot, cracking Torres' ribs one by one. Torres bled from his nose and mouth. A deathly fear gripped him.

"Alright! I'll speak!" Seeing how his chest was about to collapse from the pressure, Torres lost

his cool.

"I'm a Shadowslayer assassin from Kimboku. I've been hiding in Dragonmarsh all this time, collecting information on all of you."

"Kimboku? Shadowslayer?" Dustin widened his eyes in surprise.

Kimboku was Dragonmarsh's nemesis. Both countries had always had ongoing friction and disagreements.

As for Shadowslayer, it was one of the top three sects in Kimboku. It produced many assassins who specialized in collecting intelligence and carrying out secret operations.

Shadowslayer assassins were a mystery. They rarely ever made an appearance and were always in hiding.

Dustin never expected to meet one of them here.

And most importantly, one who had managed to make his way among the Heavenly Immortals, becoming an expert martial artist respected by all.

“I believe you’ve heard of Shadowslayer. If you do not wish to get into trouble, let me go right this instant. Or you’ll regret it!” Torres threatened once again.

“You Shadowslayers have been wreaking havoc in Dragonmarsh. Do you think you can make it out alive today?” Dustin asked frostily.

“I’m warning you, you better not act recklessly. If you dare harm me, you will undoubtedly face the relentless pursuit of the Shadowslayers. You-!”

Before he could finish his sentence, Dustin shifted his full weight on his foot. A dull cracking sound was heard, and Torres’ chest exploded. His eyes popped out of their sockets, and he died on the spot.

At the same time, the crowd was in confusion.

“What’s going on? Which side has won?”

“Do you need to ask? Of course, the Glenstead martial arts alliance won! They fought three to

one! It would have been a breeze for them!”

“Damn it! We missed out on the best part of the show because of the smoke! I can’t see shit!”

The thick, black smoke enveloped the arena. The crowd couldn’t help but complain.

“Jared, the smoke looks like it’s extremely poisonous. Do you think the bastard died from the poison yet?” Devon asked warily.

“Hah! He went up against three of them, and there was poison in the smoke. No matter how great he is, he’s bound to die today!” Jared smiled coldly.

“Jared, look! The smoke is clearing up!” a Boulderthorn disciple exclaimed.

As everyone focused on the arena, they saw the smoke gradually clearing up after a gust of wind blew it away.

At the same time, a figure stood with hands behind his back, gradually revealing himself before their eyes.

But everyone was shocked once they got a clear view of the person on the platform.

The smile on Jared and the Boulderthorn disciples froze completely. They gaped, tongue-tied,

with an expression of disbelief.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori

Chapter 816

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Chapter 816

"No way! The experts from the Glenstead martial arts alliance lost? What is going on?"

"Who on earth is this person? He went up against three of them alone and still emerged victorious?"

"No! That's impossible! How can a nobody defeat three Heavenly Immortals?"

Chaos broke out among the crowd when they saw the result of the match.

Everyone was shocked and in disbelief. Nobody could accept that an unknown martial artist defeated three of the top ten Heavenly Immortals.

"How did this happen? How could we have lost?" Conrad stared, wide-eyed in disbelief.

Over the years, he had experienced many things. But when faced with such an unbelievable outcome, he still found it hard to remain calm.

It had seemed sure that they would win, so how did things turn out this way?

"What on earth happened just now?" Brutus frowned, still in disbelief.

Over in the arena, one was poisoned, one had their head severed, and another's chest exploded. The three Heavenly Immortals were dead and wounded.

It was hard to accept, but the result was obvious for all to see.

"I told you. This person isn't as simple as he seems. But none of you believed me," Joel said with a sigh.

Besides the lingering fear, he also felt a sense of relief. He felt lucky that he hadn't fought in the match, or he would have been beaten to a pulp on the ground.

"Wha-How is this possible? That bastard... He's not dead yet?"

Jared and the rest of the Boulderthorn disciples gaped in surprise. It took them a long time to comprehend what they saw. From the way they saw it, there was no way Dustin could have

made it out alive.

But it turns out that he had survived and even defeated all his opponents. It was mind-blowing!

"Haha! We won! He won! Dustin won!"

After a brief moment to let the fact sink in, Abigail jumped for joy. Pride was written all over her face. After all, that was her teacher!

"As expected, he was hiding his true abilities all this while!" Azalea licked her lips. The desire in her eyes grew even stronger.

"Great job! Well done!" Ronald laughed heartily, emitting a cheerful glow.

They had all expected Dustin to lose, but a miracle happened. With his own strength, Dustin turned the tide and led the Balerno martial arts alliance to victory.

"I knew I didn't misjudge him." Paul chuckled, stroking his beard. He looked pleased.

In truth, he hadn't expected Dustin to win, but he had been pleasantly surprised.

"Today's match will surely go down in history." Patrick was both amazed and in awe.

The outcome was beyond anyone's expectations.

Because of Dustin's victory, the Glenstead martial arts alliance's morale went downhill. They all began cursing and insulting.

Whereas the Balerno martial arts alliance was cheering and clapping.

Regardless of Dustin's previous reputation, he had proven himself today.

Just as everyone was in a celebratory mood, Lexi, who was still in the arena, suddenly bolted up. With a murderous glint in her eyes, she brought a knife down toward Dustin's throat.

"Watch out!" someone exclaimed.

Dustin didn't turn around. He simply reached out two fingers and easily held the blade between his fingers. Then, with a light twist of his fingers, the blade snapped.

Lexi was shocked. She didn't expect such a quick reaction from him to block her sneak attack.

"I saved your life, and this is how you repay me?" Dustin turned around slowly, an icy look in

his eyes.

If he had not given her the antidote, she would have been dead by now. But instead of thanking him, she intended to kill him? How ungrateful!

"This-this is a misunderstanding! I-I was just joking."

Lexi immediately threw her broken knife away, forcing a smile on her face. She pretended to look pitiful.

Dustin wasted no words on her and punched her chest. She threw up blood and was sent flying into the lake. No one could tell if she was still

alive.

"Trash! What a bunch of trash!"

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Chapter 817

Conrad was so furious that he walked away without a word.

“Glenstead martial arts alliance got off to a good start. But in the end, the tables turned, and they lost. How embarrassing!”

The crowd that supported the Glenstead martial arts alliance left in a huff. Glenstead martial arts alliance had lost in a three-to-one match. It was too shameful for them to stay on any longer.

This year’s tournament had twists and turns. In the end, Dustin emerged as the dark horse. He, alone, brought the Balerno martial arts alliance to victory.

From that moment, he became the most sought-after talent who was respected and welcomed by all.

Ronald set up a huge feast at the alliance headquarters to celebrate their victory. Many guests were invited to the event, and Dustin was inevitably the star of the night.

Countless martial arts experts and seniors in the field turned up to congratulate him. Dustin was pushed into the spotlight.

The grand celebratory party was held in the lounge of the alliance headquarters that night.

“Haha! Rhys! You gave me a huge surprise today! Here’s a toast to you!” During the feast, Ronald raised a glass to Dustin.

“A toast to Rhys!” The rest of them stood up and raised their glasses to Dustin too.

“Thank you, everyone!” Dustin smiled and raised his glass, downing it in one go.

“Alright! The Balerno martial arts alliance has had its moment of glory today! Drink” Ronald chortled happily.

“Cheers!” Everyone raised their glasses in response.

up, folks!

The party soon got lively, and many prominent figures in the martial world came forward to

raise Dustin a toast.

“Rhys, I’ve got some matters to deal with, so I won’t drink with you tonight.” After having several drinks, Paul stood up and got ready to leave.

“Sir Paul, I’ve accomplished what I’ve promised. You haven’t forgotten your end of the deal, have you?” Dustin reminded.

He had only participated in the tournament to get information on the Cherusia.

“Rest assured. I never go back on my word. Enjoy your night and drink up. I’ll look for you tomorrow. I’ll tell you everything you want to know then.” Paul smiled at him.

“Sure thing. Thank you, Sir Paul.” Dustin bowed at him.

“Have fun!” Paul patted him on the back and left with Patrick and a few of their men.

The guests quickly dragged Dustin away to have a good time.

The night passed peacefully.

Early the following day, Dustin entered a car and went to Paul’s house as agreed. When he got out of the car, the first thing he saw was Patrick’s bright smile.

“You’re here, Rhys? Grandfather’s waiting for you in the study. Please follow me.” Patrick gestured for Dustin to follow him.

Then, he led him across the lawn, through the gardens, and into the courtyard.

The Hill family residence was huge and built beside a mountain. It was almost like a maze, and people unfamiliar with the place could easily get lost there.

Dustin remembered that the last time he had been there was due to his conflict with Torben. Fortunately, Sir Hill had been reasonable and didn’t let things escalate further.

“Rhys, we’re here. Please head on in.”

After taking several turns, they finally arrived in front of a house made of bamboo. It had a courtyard with an ancient charm and a unique atmosphere.

The faint smell of floral fragrance was pleasant and refreshing.

Dustin stepped into the courtyard and made his way to the bamboo house. He knocked lightly

on the door.

It swung open with a creak, revealing Paul seated on the floor inside with his legs crossed. He was meditating, and an incense burned on an incense burner before him.

“I’m here, Sir Paul. Can you please tell me about the Cherusia?” Dustin bowed respectfully.

However, Paul did not hear him and continued meditating with both palms pressed together.

“Sir Paul, the Cherusia means a lot to me. Please tell me what you know about it. Sir Paul? Sir

Paul!”

Dustin frowned as he stepped forward, gently patting Paul on the shoulders.

But the very next second, Paul fell backward and collapsed. His face was pale, and blood flowed from his eyes, nose, ears, and mouth.

He was dead!

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Chapter 818

“H-he’s dead?” Dustin was shocked, looking at Paul lying there lifelessly. His eyes widened in disbelief.

The sudden turn of events caught him off guard, and he had trouble processing what he saw.

How could this be? Why did Paul die? Who did it?

Paul was a grandmaster martial artist, one of the five ultimate grandmasters of Balerno! Who was capable of killing him?

The killer carried out the deed so quietly without anyone finding out. Who could it be?

Dustin's mind raced, trying hard to catch any trace of abnormality and make sense of the situation. However, he could not make heads or tails of the situation.

Everything had happened too suddenly, without even the slightest sign.

Dustin crouched down to check Paul's body.

He noticed that his body still had a lingering trace of warmth to it. From that, he deduced that the time of death was less than an hour

ago.

And before he died, he had been intoxicated by a substance that had messed with his senses, which led to delayed reactions.

As for the fatal wound, Dustin noticed that it was a wound on his back. It must have been a short weapon like a knife or dagger.

The killer stabbed Paul in the back and into the heart, delivering a lethal blow. The blade was coated with a deadly poison to ensure nothing went wrong.

It would take an extremely skilled person, or someone the victim knew personally, to assassinate a grandmaster silently. Those were the only ways a person could sneak up on them or catch them unguarded.

"Grandfather, here's your tea..."

Patrick walked in right then. But when he saw Paul's dead body on the floor, he felt like lightning had struck him.

The pot of tea in his hands fell to the floor with a loud thud, shattering into a million pieces.

“Dustin! You-You killed my grandfather?” When he finally reacted, Patrick paled and stumbled back in shock

“It wasn’t me. When I entered, Sir Paul was already dead,” Dustin hurriedly explained.

Blood was on his hands as he had checked Paul’s wounds earlier. He knew how misleading it

looked.

“There was only the both of you here. Who else could it have been if not you?” Patrick was anguished. “My grandfather had been nothing but nice to you, Dustin. Why would you do such a thing?”

“Calm down. Things aren’t as they seem.” Dustin frowned.

“My grandfather’s dead! How do you expect me to stay calm? If you’re not the murderer, then immediately surrender without putting up a fight. I will investigate the matter and give you justice once I find out the truth!” Patrick demanded.

“Fine. My conscience is clear, and I have nothing to fear.” Dustin nodded.

After all, he was the only one in the room with Paul. Now that Paul was dead, he would inevitably be the main suspect.

It only made sense for him to cooperate with investigations.

“What’s the matter?” Hearing the commotion, Spring, Autumn, and several others rushed in.

Everyone was horrified when they saw Paul’s body lying on the ground in the bamboo house. And then, they saw the blood on Dustin’s hands. Rage took over them, and their eyes burned with fury.

“Dustin! Y-you! How dare you! How dare you murder my father?” Autumn glared at him murderously.

“I did not kill him. You got it wrong.” Dustin denied it immediately.

“I got it wrong? All of us here witness this, and you still intend to deny it?” Autumn asked through clenched jaws.

“That’s right! Look at the blood on your hands! I’m sure you were the one who murdered my grandfather! You monster!” Torben roared.

He had been utterly humiliated when Dustin beat him up in the past. However, he had gone too far by murdering his grandfather this time. He was too much!

“Dustin! Why did you do this? When has my father ever wronged you?” Spring demanded.

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Chapter 819

“Spring! Don’t waste your breath on him! He must pay dearly for murdering Father!” Autumn roared. “Guards! Avenge my father and chop this rascal up into pieces!”

“Yes, sir!”

Everyone in the Hill household wielded their weapons and closed in on Dustin.

“Listen, this is all a trap. Someone deliberately planned all this to set me up!” Dustin explained as he dodged their attacks.

He finally realized that something was amiss. Paul had been assassinated right when he was supposed to meet him.

It was all too much of a coincidence. Someone was blatantly out to frame him.

“Charge! Kill him!”

None of the Hills were ready to hear him out. They charged at him relentlessly, every move intending to kill.

Paul was the backbone of the family. He represented the honor and glory of the Hills.

Now that he was murdered in their home, it was only natural that they would be furious. Their only wish right now was to kill Dustin and avenge Paul.

“Everyone, please give me some time! I will certainly find the real culprit!”

Seeing how his explanations weren't working, Dustin wasted no more time. With a light step, he jumped into the air and broke straight through the roof of the bamboo house.

He disappeared from everyone's sight.

“After him! Kill him no matter what it takes!” Autumn shouted, his eyes bloodshot.

For a moment, the entire Hill family was in a flurry of movements.

Hordes of their elite guards and subordinates raced out after Dustin. Even the hidden guards who rarely made an appearance were sent into action.

They had only one target in mind, and that was to kill Dustin Rhys!

At the same time, over in the martial arts alliance's headquarters,

Ronald was in a meeting with several of the alliance's elders. They were discussing their plans for the future.

After winning the Knighthood Society tournament, the Balerno martial arts alliance became more well-known. They would completely dominate the Glenstead martial arts alliance for the next three years.

They wouldn't just gain more resources, but they could also recruit more talents. Even Oakvale would shower them with generous rewards. They truly gained a lot from the win.

“Sir Reeds, it's all thanks to Dustin that we won this time. Remember to reward him handsomely

1/2

for it.”

“That's right. He's really talented and exceptionally skilled. We must focus on nurturing him to make the most of his potential!”

The elders all sang Dustin's praises. They have very high expectations for the dark horse.

"Haha! Rest assured. He's such an outstanding talent. I'll provide him with all the resources and help him become a grandmaster!" Ronald chuckled.

"That would be for the best." They nodded cheerfully.

Once Dustin became a grandmaster, the Balerno martial arts alliance's strength would greatly increase. By then, those from the Glenstead martial arts alliance would have something to worry

about.

"Sir! We've got bad news! Something terrible has happened!"

Just then, a member of the alliance rushed in. He was sweating.

"What is it that got you so flustered?" Ronald was obviously displeased.

"It's Sir Paul... He's... He's dead!" the guild member reported.

"What? Sir Paul's dead? How is that possible?" Ronald's expression fell.

The rest of the elders were clearly in disbelief too.

"It's true! I just received news from the Hill family that Sir Paul has been assassinated!" The member looked like he was about to break into tears.

"Who? Who did it?" Ronald was furious. He grabbed the person who broke the news to them and lifted him off his feet.

"It... It was Dustin Rhys! He killed Sir Paul!"

Everyone was dumbfounded and stood frozen in place with the news.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 820 -

“D-Dustin? How could it be him?” Ronald was taken aback. He was in total disbelief.

They had just been discussing how they were going to nurture him. And now, something like this happened.

“Could you be mistaken? Why would Dustin murder Sir Paul?” one of the elders asked.

“It’s true! I got the news firsthand from the Hills household. There were many eyewitnesses too! There’s no mistaking it!” the member said solemnly.

“How could that be? Has he gone crazy?”

“To think that we were just talking about helping him grow! Who would’ve thought that he’s such a merciless beast?”

“He’s a threat to the alliance!”

After hearing the news was true, the elders were all upset and furious.

Paul Hill had made tremendous contributions to the Balerno martial arts alliance. He was a figure of great importance.

Everyone who met him had to show him a certain level of respect.

For such a respectable person to be killed evoked a sense of anger and resentment in them. And even more so when the murderer was Dustin, who was currently at the center of attention. “Come on! Let’s go to the Hills to check things out!” Ronald ordered with a dark expression.

Then, with those from the alliance in tow, they went to the Hill family residence. They wanted to see for themselves if the claims were true.

Over at the Glenstead martial arts alliance.

Early in the morning, Conrad called for a meeting with the higher-ups. It was to discuss their defeat the previous day.

Halfway through the meeting, they received the news about Paul’s death.

“What? Paul Hill is dead?”

At first, Conrad was stunned. Then, he jumped up and began laughing heartily. “Hahaha! That’s great news! Absolutely great news!

“That old man should have died long ago! Which hero should we be thanking for his death?”

“Sir, it was Dustin Rhys, the one who won in the tournament yesterday!” the person reported.

“Dustin Rhys? It was him?” Conrad was surprised.

“That rascal should be a hotshot with the Balerno martial arts alliance now. Why would he do something like that to put himself in trouble? What’s going on?”

“We still do not know what exactly happened. I suppose there was some sort of internal strife,”

Conrad’s subordinate replied.

“Sir, Paul’s death came on too suddenly. Will we be blamed for what happened?” Brutus asked.

The Glenstead and Balerno martial arts alliances didn’t get along. They also just had a disagreement recently.

With Paul’s sudden murder, the Glenstead martial arts alliance would inevitably be suspected.

After all, the death of a grandmaster was a huge matter. It might lead to a war between both alliances. If that happened, things could rapidly get out of hand.

“Why are you so flustered? Didn’t you hear? Dustin Rhys is the murderer. What’s anything got to do with us?” Conrad wasn’t worried.

“Besides, it’s Paul Hill we’re talking about. Even if I personally went for him, I can’t say for sure that I’d be able to defeat him.

“It is no easy feat trying to kill him. Only someone close to him could sneak an attack on him. Ronald’s no fool. He’d understand this.”

“So, there really has been internal strife in the Balerno martial arts alliance?” Brutus frowned. “We’ll know once we go there and see for ourselves. Come on, let’s go and join the excitement!”

With a wave, Conrad led them out the door.

At this point, be it the Balerno martial arts alliance, the Glenstead martial arts alliance, or even the Hill household, they all had their attention on Dustin.

He had gone from a hotshot genius to a murderer overnight.

The entire martial arts world was in chaos because of it. Countless martial artists were on the lookout for him, the murderer.

”

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 821 -

Chapter 821

Zephyr Lodge, on the outskirts of town, was now the base for Kirin Gang.

Dustin had gone there to lay low after he left the Hill family residence.

The Hills were upset. So, there was no point in trying to explain himself to them. The best course of action was to uncover the truth to prove his innocence.

Who was the one who murdered Paul? Why did the murderer set him up?

With those questions in mind, Dustin ordered everyone in Kirin Gang to uncover the truth. Everyone available was sent out to gather information.

Time was of the essence. They had to stabilize the situation before things got worse.

“Sir Rhys!” Nelson barged into the meeting room with sweat running down his face. “Sir Rhys! We’ve got trouble! The Hills and their men are headed for Zephyr Lodge!”

“So soon?” Dustin frowned.

They had just started using Zephyr Lodge as their base. Only a handful of people knew its location. He never thought they would be able to track him down within mere hours. It was obvious that someone had been keeping an eye on him and his whereabouts.

“It’s not just the Hills. The higher-ups in the alliance and many martial artists have joined them!” Nelson said anxiously.

“Sir Rhys, things aren’t looking good for us. You should escape while you can. I’ll hold them up!” “I’ll stand my ground, come what may,” Dustin said.

“Escaping will only make me look guilty. I’ll have to face them sooner or later.”

After a moment of hesitation, Dustin finally stepped out the door. Running away wasn’t going to solve anything.

If he didn't clear his name, he'd become the public enemy of the entire martial world in the future!

"Get the hell out here, Dustin! You murderer! Get out and accept your fate!"

By then, there were hordes of people gathered outside Zephyr Lodge. At a glance, there were more than a thousand of them.

The Hill family stood at the center, with the Balerno martial arts alliance on the left and the Glenstead martial arts alliance on the right.

Behind them were martial artists who came after hearing about Paul's death. They were ready to seek justice on his behalf.

"Dustin! I know you're inside. Come out, or I'll burn this place down!" Autumn, known for his temper, shouted angrily.

The doors of the lodge were slowly pulled open with a resounding creak. Soon after, Dustin and Nelson stepped out and faced the thousands of furious gazes.

"You've finally decided to come out, Dustin!" Autumn huffed indignantly.

"I'll give you a chance to atone for your sins by killing yourself right here in front of everyone. At least this way, you'll die a more honorable death!"

"Kill yourself! Kill yourself!" The crowd clamored and shouted.

Their voices thundered across the skies, echoing over Zephyr Lodge. It was a long time before the voices died down.

"Sir Paul's death has nothing to do with me! Someone tried to frame me! Please be reasonable," Dustin said seriously.

"Nonsense! So many of us saw it! How could we all be mistaken?" Autumn yelled.

"You only saw the surface of things," Dustin explained, "I planned to meet Sir Paul this morning. But when I got to the bamboo house, he was already dead.

"Then you guys charged in when I was examining his body. I'm sure everything was deliberately

set up to frame me!”

“You claim that it’s a setup? Very well. Look here and tell me what this is?”

With a cold expression, Spring whipped out a bloody dagger.

He shouted, “This was a gift Sir Reeds presented you yesterday. It’s also the weapon that

murdered my father! What do you have to say about this?”

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 822 -

Chapter 822

Dustin was surprised by the dagger that clattered noisily by his feet.

The dagger was indeed the one that Ronald gave him. But after a few drinks last night, he had put

it in his room.

He hadn’t paid the dagger much attention this morning when he left for the Hill family residence. He hadn’t expected it would be the weapon that killed Paul!

And because of that, he was now the prime suspect!

“Well? Do you have anything else to say? Are you going to tell me that the dagger had been stolen?” Spring asked darkly.

Dustin furrowed his brow. He swallowed back the words on the tip of his tongue.

It was true. He indeed wanted to say that the dagger had been stolen. But at this point, no one was going to believe that.

“Rascal, we’ve got solid evidence now. Let’s see how you get out of this!” Autumn roared.

“Dad! Don’t waste your breath on him. Just kill him right now to avenge Granddad!” Torben egged him on from behind.

“Dustin! Did you really kill Sir Paul?” Ronald, who had been quiet the entire time, finally spoke up. “Why did you do it? He had always viewed you as his successor. Why would you do that?”

“We trusted you so much! How could you kill Sir Paul? You beast!” Many members of the alliance shouted.

Paul was a respectable figure. Many of them in the alliance had received kindness and guidance from him. With his death, they were both saddened and angry.

“Sir Reeds, I’m innocent! Someone framed me. Think about it. I hold no grudges against Sir Paul! Why would I do this?” Dustin frowned.

“You’re the only one who can answer that. Who exactly are you?” Spring shouted.

“I know who he is!” Just then, a masked lady stepped out of the crowd. It was Lexi, the one Dustin had gone up against just the day before.

She pointed at Dustin and said venomously, “This man is from Kimboku. He’s an assassin from Shadowslayer. He has been staying undercover in Dragonmarsh to assassinate Dragonmarshian experts!”

The crowd was sent into an uproar.

“What? An assassin from Kimboku?”

“Damn it! No wonder the rascal killed Sir Paul! He’s a traitor!”

“He’s an enemy of the state! People like him deserve to die!”

Everyone was riled up. They had assumed that it was just a personal grudge, until now. But this was tied to the entire nation!

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“I have shown you mercy and spared your life. Why are you spreading lies about me?”

Dustin’s gaze shot over to Lexi. He hadn’t used all his strength in the punch yesterday and had spared her. He didn’t expect his kind gesture would put him in trouble.

“Stop denying it! I heard you clearly yesterday! You’re a spy from Kimboku! You were the one who poisoned all three of us from the Glenstead martial arts alliance!” Lexi yelled.

“So that’s what happened! I was wondering how the experts got poisoned! So this bastard was behind it!”

“We can’t let him get away with this! Take him down*!”

“Charge! Slay the national traitor!”

As the shouts rang out, many martial artists charged forward with fury.

They had already lost all sense of rationality. It no longer mattered to them who was in the wrong.

They were convinced that Dustin was the murderer and were out to kill him!

“Calm down, all of you!”

With a forceful stomp, an explosion sounded. A large crater formed at Dustin’s feet where he had

stomped.

He unleashed a burst of energy. Then, all the martial artists rushing toward him were swept off

their feet.

“This person is powerful! Attack together!”

As tens of the men fell, more of them charged toward Dustin with bloodlust.

Dustin frowned. Just as he was about to channel his energy again, a large group of men appeared.

Their numbers were vast, and they appeared from all around. It was the disciples of the Kirin

Gang!

“Hold it right there! Who dares harm Sir Rhys?” Cornelius, from the Darklaws, shouted. He was at the forefront of the men, leading them forward.

Then, along with the four major guilds, they surrounded all the people from the Balerno and

Glenstead martial arts alliance.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 823 -

Chapter 823

There were just slightly more than a thousand people from the alliances. However, the disciples of the Kirin Gang added up to over five thousand people.

Skills aside, just their numbers alone were enough to scare their opponents. Those clamoring to kill Dustin earlier on now kept their mouths shut.

The people from Kirin Gang not only had knives with them. Some of the elites even had firearms. Unless one was a grandmaster, they could not hold up against those weapons.

“Sir Rhys, are you alright?” Cornelius and a group of elites from Kirin Gang rushed up to Dustin. They formed a circle around him, protecting him from the crowd.

“I’m fine.” Dustin shook his head.

If he wished to leave, no one could stop him. But he might have to live with the label of a murderer and be hated by everyone for the rest of his life.

“Dustin! Do you honestly think your underlings can fend off the Hill family’s hidden guards?” Spring took a step forward aggressively.

Though the Kirin Gang had the numbers, the hidden guards could easily wipe them all out. Of course, they would also suffer a great loss.

“And it’s not just the Hill family’s hidden guards! There’s also us, elites from the alliance!” Several elders from the alliance stepped forward with stern gazes.

So what if Kirin Gang had the numbers? In the face of true experts, these weaklings amounted to nothing!

“Dustin, surrender yourself if you do not wish to sacrifice innocent lives,” Ronald warned.

“Sir Reeds, I have no intention of making an enemy out of everyone.” Dustin waved his hand, signaling for the disciples of the Kirin Gang to disperse.

Then, he continued, “I know I’m the prime suspect, but please give me a chance to prove my innocence.

“Sir Paul’s death is odd, and there are too many points of suspicion surrounding it. I hope to investigate it.”

“Investigate my foot! You’re the murderer!” Autumn shouted.

“If I were really the murderer, would I just wait for you to catch me? Wouldn’t it be better for me to escape immediately?” Dustin countered.

“Well...” Autumn was at a loss for words.

The rest of the people also exchanged puzzled glances. Things did seem strange.

“Hmph! Maybe you were just trying to luck out, hoping we wouldn’t find you!” Torben said.

“Fine! Then tell me, who would leave behind a weapon that carried their identity after killing someone? Do you think I’m that stupid?” Dustin challenged.

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That was enough to shut Torben up. Even the crowd also seemed to show a thoughtful expression.

They had only followed what others said without giving it much thought. Their anger had completely clouded their judgment.

Now that Dustin pointed it out, there were indeed many points of suspicion.

“What you said makes sense, but that doesn’t prove your innocence. You were the only one present when my father died!” Spring said frostily

“That’s why I said I need time to prove my innocence. I will certainly find out who the real murderer is!” Dustin said solemnly.

“How long will you need?”

“Seven days,” Dustin blurted. “I’ll uncover the truth within seven days!”

“Fine! I’ll give you seven days. If you can’t prove you’re innocent by then, be prepared to face the consequences!” Ronald declared.

“Sure!” Dustin agreed.

“Sir Reeds! What are you doing? This is the man who assassinated my father!” Autumn lost his cool.

“There’s something fishy going on. We need to get to the bottom of things. If he really is the murderer, I’ll kill him to avenge Sir Paul!” Ronald said sombrely.

“Sir Reeds, what if he escapes?” Autumn frowned.

“That’s right! How will we find him if he escapes?” Torben echoed.

“If I set my heart on killing someone, they won’t be able to escape death, no matter where they run to!” Ronald said coldly.

“There’s no need for such hassle.” Conrad stepped forward.

He said with a smile, “This here is a Septemortis. If you don’t take the antidote within seven days, you’ll surely die. You can have this.”

Then, with a flick of his finger, he sent a black pill flying toward Dustin. It landed squarely on his palm.

Septemortis was one of the ten deadliest poisons to ever exist. It was capable of poisoning even grandmasters!

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Chapter 824

“Septemortis?”

Everyone looked wary of the black pill.

It was an extremely poisonous substance. Once consumed, death was certain if one didn't have the antidote.

No one could resist the poison's effect, regardless of their cultivation. It was something that struck fear in everyone's hearts.

“Dustin! If your conscience is clear, then take the pill!” Spring shouted at him.

“That's right! If you don't take the pill to show you're innocent, we won't let you go!” the Hills clamored.

They weren't happy to let Dustin go. But now that they had the Septemortis, things were different. No matter what tricks Dustin had up his sleeves, he couldn't escape death unless he gave them a satisfactory explanation.

“Fine. I'll take it.” Dustin nodded and placed the pill in his mouth.

“Sir Rhys! No!” Nelson immediately stopped Dustin when he saw what he had done. “This is highly poisonous! You'll die!”

“If he doesn't take it, he'll die too!” Autumn yelled.

“Damn it! I'll fight it out with you!” Nelson roared.

“We'll fight it out!” The disciples from Kirin Gang drew their weapons, ready to fight till the end.

They couldn't stand to see their leader forced into taking poison.

“That's enough!” Dustin raised a hand, stopping them in their tracks.

He said calmly, “All this commotion is because of me. I'm willing to take the risk. I'll give everyone an explanation in seven days.”

Then, he swallowed the Septemortis.

“Alright. I’ll let you off today for Sir Reeds’ sake. But you better bear in mind that you have only seven days! Let’s go!”

Seeing that Dustin had swallowed the pill, Spring didn’t want to stay any longer. With a wave, he led the Hill family’s elite guards away.

“Uncle Spring, wouldn’t it be better to kill him now? Aren’t we being too generous to give him seven days?” Torben was still displeased.

He held a grudge against Dustin and wanted to see him dead.

“We don’t know how powerful he is. And those around him aren’t ordinary people, either. Unless Sir Reeds helps us out, I’m afraid we won’t get anything from going against that brat,” Spring explained.

Then, he added, “We might as well do Sir Reeds a favor now. After all, the rascal has taken the

poison He won’t live more than seven days.”

“Hmph! Then we’ll let him live his last seven days!” Torben said, gritting his teeth.

Though he wasn’t happy with the outcome, he had to admit that Dustin was very powerful. They’d suffer significant losses if they insisted on going against him.

“Sir Reeds, I’ll entrust the antidote to you.” Conrad flicked a white pill into Ronald’s hand.

Then, he said, “I have always respected Sir Hill. I am truly saddened by his passing. I trust you’ll handle things fairly and give the murderer the punishment he deserves!”

“This isn’t something you should be worrying about, Sir Melling. We’ll handle things at Balerno martial arts alliance our way,” Ronald said calmly.

He knew very well that Conrad was just gloating over their misfortune. He wasn’t in the mood to entertain him now.

“Since you already know what to do, I won’t comment further. I’ll take my leave now.” Conrad nodded at Ronald and left with his men.

He looked cheerful and full of energy.

Paul's death meant the Balerno martial arts alliance would lose significant support. And most importantly, Dustin, their up-and-coming genius, would soon fall too.

Those were two great pieces of news to the Glenstead martial arts alliance.

He decided to get himself several celebratory drinks once he returned.

"Dustin, I know that you're not the murderer. But I have no choice. If I didn't do what I did, they wouldn't back off. I hope you can understand where I'm coming from." Ronald's expression was complex.

"It's fine as long as you trust me," Dustin said respectfully.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 825 -

Chapter 825

If Ronald hadn't calmed the crowd and bought Dustin some time to investigate, violence would've erupted. Things would be vastly different if that happened.

"Dustin, I can't help you openly. But if you ever run into any problems, you may come to me in private," Ronald told him sincerely.

"Thank you, Sir Reeds." Dustin was thankful.

"Now that things have come to this, you should watch your back." Ronald shook his head and sighed before walking away.

The crowd came quickly and left just as quickly.

Once they saw Dustin swallow the Septemortis, they knew he would die. It no longer mattered to them whether he was guilty.

"Sir Rhys, you were too rash to take the poison! Why would you risk your life like that?" Cornelius sighed heavily. He really couldn't understand why Dustin would take the pill.

“All the elites from Balerno and Glenstead martial arts alliance were gathered here. Even with all of you here, you won’t be able to stop them,” Dustin answered calmly.

“Even if we can’t defeat them, we can take a few down with us. I refuse to believe that all of them aren’t afraid of death!” Cornelius retorted defiantly!

“Alright. There’s no point discussing this anymore. Your main focus now should be to find the culprit as soon as possible!” Dustin said seriously.

“What about you, Sir Rhys?” Cornelius asked with his brow furrowed.

“I’ll be fine. Don’t worry about me. Go on.” Dustin waved his hand to dismiss them.

“Yes, sir!” Cornelius answered and led his men away.

“Sir Rhys, your nose is bleeding!” Nelson suddenly exclaimed.

“What?” Dustin touched his nose and saw blood on his fingers. “Damn it! The Septemortis is truly extraordinary! Who’d have thought that I would experience a reaction so soon?”

He was practically invincible. However, his body was unable to withstand the ten deadliest poisons.

The residual venom from the Deadly Slither before was enough to make him unconscious.

Now that he had taken an entire Septemortis pill, it weakened his immune system.

Most importantly, the Septemortis poison couldn’t be expelled by a person’s cultivation. There was absolutely nothing he could do as the toxin slowly entered his bloodstream. Once that happened, it would move on to attack his organs.

Though the process would take time, it was deadly. And the scariest thing was how complicated it was to clear out the poison completely.

Dustin had excellent medical skills. But his hands were tied if he didn’t have the relevant

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Chapter 825

medications.

“Seems like we’ll have to get our hands on the culprit this time, no matter what,” Dustin mumbled to himself. He was starting to feel the pressure building up.

“Sir Rhys, are you alright? Do you need to go to the hospital?” Nelson asked.

It was concerning to see Dustin’s nose bleeding right after he had swallowed a poisonous pill.

“I’m fine. That wouldn’t be necessary.” Dustin shook his head. If he couldn’t get rid of the poison,

the hospital couldn’t either.

“Are you sure you’re alright? The bleeding isn’t stopping. In fact, it looks like you’re bleeding even more now,” Nelson asked anxiously.

“It’s just a nosebleed. It’s nothing serious.” Dustin smiled, trying to appear calm. “Besides, just a little poison won’t be enough to harm me.”

The moment he finished talking, the world before him turned black.

Dustin had collapsed.

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 826

Chapter 826

When Dustin finally opened his eyes again, he was in the hospital.

It seems that the toxin within him had finally stabilized. But things still weren't looking up for

him.

"You're awake, dear?" a surprised voice sounded beside him.

When Dustin turned around, he found Natasha sitting by his bedside. Worry was evident on her beautiful face.

"Natasha, why are you here?" Dustin was shocked.

"I heard from Nelson that you fainted. Of course, I had to come over to check on you. What's the matter? Are you feeling uncomfortable anywhere?" Natasha asked, concerned.

"I'm fine. I guess I was just exhausted, so I dozed off." Dustin pretended to be relaxed.

"Exhausted? Poisoned, more like," Nelson muttered.

"Shut up!" Dustin glared at him.

"Poisoned? What happened?" Natasha asked, furrowing her brow.

"It's just a little poison. It isn't serious. I'll be fine after taking some medications." Dustin chuckled. "Are you sure?" Natasha was doubtful.

"What? Don't you trust my medical skills? I can't say that I can bring the dead back to life. But I'm confident I have what it takes to treat illnesses and remedy poisonings." Dustin looked confident. "You've got a point there." Natasha sighed in relief.

Ever since she got to know Dustin, he could handle all sorts of complex illnesses. A little poison shouldn't be of too much concern.

“Alright, don’t worry about me. You should take better care of yourself! Look at you. I haven’t seen you in a few days, and you’re already starting to look exhausted.” Dustin changed the topic.

“I look exhausted? Do I?”

Natasha immediately pulled out a compact mirror to have a look at herself. Women were always very concerned about how they looked.

“Nelson ...”

Right then, a pregnant lady walked in with a little girl who looked around five years old.

“Why are you here?” Nelson obviously hadn’t expected to see them.

“Daddy!” the little girl cried happily and jumped into Nelson’s arms.

“Oh! My Sweet darling!” Nelson beamed and picked up the little girl, kissing her cheek.

“Nelson, you’ve been in the hospital for the entire day. You haven’t had anything to eat yet, have you? I brought you all something to eat.” As Cecilia spoke, she gave him a lunchbox.

“Why did you go through all that trouble? I’m a grown man. I won’t starve just because I’ve skipped

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a meal.”

Though Nelson complained, he couldn’t seem to hide the wide smile on his face.

“You’re a big guy and can handle skipping a meal. But we can’t let Mr. Rhys go hungry,” Cecilia

retorted.

“Oh, that’s true! I nearly forgot about Sir Rhys!”

Nelson knocked his head and quickly turned to smile apologetically at Dustin. "Sir Rhys, I'd like to introduce you to my wife, Cecilia, and my daughter, Haley."

"Hello, Cecilia." Dustin nodded at her with a smile.

"Mr. Rhys, I've prepared a simple meal. I hope it'll suit your taste," she said shyly.

Dustin might be young, but he was still her husband's boss.

"Uncle Dustin, my mom makes the best food! Quick! Try it!" Haley urged, excitement showing on

her face.

"Is that so? Then I'll have to give it a taste!"

Dustin smiled and took the lunchbox. Then, he took a big bite of the food.

"It really is delicious!" he praised.

"See, I wasn't lying, right?" Haley giggled as she looked up at Dustin, appearing very proud of

herself.

"Mr. Rhys, I have a request. I hope you'll be able to grant it," Cecilia said hesitantly.

"Please go ahead, Cecilia."

Dustin put down the food and looked at her with a serious expression.

"It's Haley's birthday tomorrow. I'd like to request a day off for Nelson so he can take her to a theme park for some fun," she said carefully.

"I'd thought it was something serious. Of course, that wouldn't be a problem!" Dustin agreed with a

smile.

“Yay! We’re going to the theme park tomorrow!” Haley cheered excitedly when she heard Dustin’s reply.

She didn’t forget to thank him sincerely too. “Thank you, Uncle Dustin! I wish you the best of luck and happiness and that you can rest in peace.”

“Rest in peace?” Natasha was first taken aback for a moment before she burst into laughter.

The child was too entertaining!

“What nonsense are you spouting? I think you mean to wish him a good and peaceful rest!” Nelson shot her a look and quickly corrected her.

“I’m so sorry, Mr. Rhys! She didn’t mean what she said. Please don’t take it to heart,” Cecilia immediately apologized.

She worried he might be offended to hear something like that when he was hospitalized.

“That’s alright. She means no harm.” Dustin smiled warmly, not offended in the least.

“Uncle Dustin, it’s my birthday tomorrow. Will you join us to celebrate my birthday?” Haley cocked her head and asked innocently.

“Sure! I’ll be there!” Dustin ruffled her hair affectionately and agreed with a smile.

“Awesome!” Haley jumped with joy.

“Haley, you invited Uncle Dustin. What about me?” Natasha teased.

“You’re welcome to join, pretty lady!” Haley nodded enthusiastically.

“You’re such an adorable child! I’ve got a gift for you!”

As Natasha spoke, she pulled out an intricate crystal necklace and placed it in Haley’s hand.

Then, she asked her with a smile, “Do you like it?”

“I do! Thank you, pretty lady!”

Haley quickly planted a kiss on Natasha's cheek, making her giggle.

"Miss Harmon, the necklace is too expensive for Haley! You should keep it!" Nelson was shocked.

"I can't take back a gift that I've given her! Besides, it's just a necklace. It isn't worth much." Natasha patted Haley on the head.

"Well, thank you then, Miss Harmon." Nelson smiled politely at her.

The crystal necklace was worth millions, and she gave it out so easily. Nelson was impressed by her generosity.

"Haley, do you know if it's a younger brother or a younger sister in Mommy's tummy?" Natasha asked jokingly.

"Um..." Haley scratched her head. In the end, she said, "It doesn't matter. I'll love him or her a lot either way."

The adults smiled at each other when they heard that. They were amazed at how clever the child

was.

"When will you be having a baby too, pretty lady?" Haley asked earnestly.

"Me?" Natasha was caught off guard.

She shot Dustin a gaze before chuckling. "Well, I can't have a baby by myself. You'll have to ask Uncle Dustin about that. See if he agrees to it."

"Uncle Dustin, why won't you have a baby with her?" Haley turned to look at Dustin.

"Well ..." Dustin found himself momentarily speechless. He looked at her awkwardly.

He wasn't affected by her wishing him to rest in peace. But now, she threw him such a tough question to answer?

"Do you not want a baby with the pretty lady because you don't like her?" Haley asked again. "Hmm?" Natasha looked at Dustin with her arms crossed.

"I do! Of course, I do like her," Dustin said with a nervous smile.

"Are kids these days all so mature?" he wondered.

"Well, if you like her, then why won't you have a baby with her?" Haley asked.

"We're not married yet. We'll have a baby after we get married," Dustin forced an answer.

"And when will you get married?" Haley seemed relentless.

Dustin was stumped.

"Can we please change the conversation, kiddo? I'm begging you!" Dustin silently pleaded in his

head.

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"Alright, Haley. Don't make things difficult for Uncle Dustin. Look, his forehead is already dripping with sweat." Natasha couldn't help but laugh, trying to save Dustin from embarrassment.

Only he would get bullied by a child so badly.

"Uncle Dustin, you're sweating? Let me wipe your forehead." Haley took out a couple of tissues and began to dab at Dustin's forehead.

"Haley, it's getting dark. You should head back with Mom," Nelson interjected.

"But I still want to talk to Uncle Dustin." Haley seemed reluctant to go.

"It's your birthday tomorrow, right? We can talk more tomorrow," Dustin hurriedly added.

"Really?" Haley's face lit up with joy.

"Of course." Dustin nodded seriously.

"Pinky promise," Haley said while sticking out her pinky finger.

"I promise." Dustin smiled and hooked his pinky with hers.

"Uncle Dustin, I want to tell you a secret." After linking pinkies, Haley leaned close to Dustin's ear.

She whispered, "Dad keeps coughing a lot these days. He must be sick. Could you take good care of him for me?"

"Of course." Dustin nodded with a smile.

"Here, this is a transformer I just bought. I want to give it to you." Haley took out a toy and thrust it to Dustin.

"If you're in trouble, you can use it to transform into Mister Strong. Take care of my father and maintain world peace."

Dustin broke into laughter. "Okay. I'll transform into Mister Strong and take care of your father." This little girl was such a funny kid.

"Then it's a deal. Bye!" Haley waved. Then, she followed her mother and left happily.

"Nelson, I really can't imagine how your daughter is so cute when you're so tough and brawny." Dustin was envious.

"Heh, she got it from her mother." Nelson laughed, looking proud.

Although his little girl was a chatterbox, she was a considerate angel.

"It looks like your wife is going to give birth any time now. For now, you don't have to personally see the gang's matters. Spend more time with your wife and child. Pregnant women need extra care," Dustin reminded him.

"Thanks, Sir Rhys. I'll do that." Nelson nodded with a smile.

While the two were speaking, a beautiful woman suddenly walked in.

When Dustin raised his head, his expression froze.

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It was none other than Dahlia!

"What are you doing here?" Natasha raised an eyebrow as her smile disappeared.

"I heard Dustin was sick, so I came to see him." Dahlia plopped a fruit basket on the table.

"Naturally, I should be the one to take care of him when he's sick. You don't need to worry about him," Natasha said lightly.

"Ms. Harmon, you were born with a silver spoon in your mouth. You've never gotten your hands dirty. So, you may not know how to take care of someone properly," Dahlia replied coldly.

"Hmph, even if I'm useless, I'm still better than a certain ungrateful someone," Natasha retorted sarcastically.

Dahlia frowned slightly. She didn't have the patience to continue bickering, so she walked straight to the bed.

She hesitated for a moment before saying, "Dustin, how are you? Where are you hurt?"

"Thanks for the concern, Ms. Nicholson, but I'm fine," Dustin said indifferently.

"Good" Dahlia sighed in relief before continuing, "I wanted to talk to you about what happened that night."

"What's there to talk about? It's all in the past." Dustin remained unmoved.

Chapter 829

"That night, I was too impulsive and unintentionally hit you. I should apologize." Dahlia bit her lip.

Changing the topic, she continued, "Nonetheless, everything I do is for your own good. Mr. Killian comes from a prominent background. If you hit him, you'd only cause trouble for yourself."

"Gavin does have some status, but that doesn't mean I fear him," Dustin said indifferently.

"Dustin, Mr. Killian isn't as ordinary as you think. You can't afford to offend someone as important as him!" Dahlia warned.

Gavin was a successful young man from an influential family. He also has a high rank and even commanded a massive troop.

With just one order, he could command the entire troop to go against someone.

To offend someone like that was equivalent to digging one's own grave.

"You can think whatever you want. If you think I can't afford to offend him, then so be it." Dustin didn't want to explain himself.

He knew that no matter what he said, Dahlia wouldn't believe him.

"What? You're still mad at me?" Dahlia frowned.

"Why would I be? You have no ties to me. There's no need to get mad," Dustin said expressionlessly.

"No ties? What do you mean by that? Are you going to keep treating me as an outsider?" Dahlia said with a cold expression.

"Duh." Dustin shrugged.

"Dustin, don't you have a conscience?!" Dahlia was getting angry.

"All I did was slap you. If you're still upset, then slap me in return. If one slap isn't enough, then give me two. If two isn't enough, then give me ten. I'll stand still and let you vent your anger until you're satisfied. Would that work?"

Yes, she had indeed lost control and hit him. But she'd already apologized.

Did he have to hold a grudge and refuse to let go?

Not to mention, because of the mess Dustin caused, she had to make compromises for everyone's sake. She had to persuade Gavin and apologize to him.

Only then did Gavin's anger die down, and he stopped pursuing the matter.

If she hadn't done that, Dustin would be in hot water!

Everything she did was in hopes that he would be fine.

She didn't understand where she had gone wrong.

"Dahlia, it seems like you still don't understand the big picture. It's not the slap I care about. It's how you've never trusted me," Dustin said solemnly,

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He added, "You were like this back then, and you're still like this now. No matter how many things happen, you never change."

"How do you expect me to trust you? I saw it with my own eyes. Could that have been fake?"

Dahlia raised her eyebrows in anger.

She'd already lowered herself to apologize. Must he try to rip her of her dignity?

"Whatever. Pretend I never said anything." Dustin shook his head, looking disappointed.

As he thought, she was still the same.

"You are impossible to reason with!" Dahlia gritted her teeth. She was so mad that she just turned around and left.

When she reached the door, she stopped abruptly.

She took a deep breath and said coldly, "Dustin, today is my mother's birthday. I'm throwing her a banquet in the Lunos Hotel. I hope you'll come. If you don't, then we'll never see each other again!"

With that, she walked out.

That was her final warning. The last glimmer of hope between them.

Whether they stayed together and walked away from each other was up to Dustin.

"Your little girlfriend seems really angry. What, you're not going to try to talk her down?" Natasha teased with a smirk.

"Let her be mad. It has nothing to do with me." Dustin rolled his eyes. He didn't have the patience

to deal with that.

"Hmph, at least you have some backbone!" Natasha nodded with satisfaction.

If he desperately tried to appease her just after getting slapped two days ago, then he really didn't have a single shred of dignity.

"Sir Rhys, there's good news!"

At that moment, Felix-the guildmaster of the Charging Tiger Guild-suddenly ran over. He was

overjoyed.

"What good news?" Dustin was surprised.

"We found him ... We found Sir Paul's killer!"

Chapter 830

"You found him?" Dustin's expression turned grim. "Who was it?!"

"An assassin from Shadowlayer. He'd laid low in the Hill family for many years. Today, when Sir Paul had his guard down, he drugged and killed him!" Felix reported.

"It was the Shadowlayer again?" Dustin frowned slightly. "Where's the murderer? Were you able to track him down?"

"According to our investigation, he's hiding in a house at the foot of Mount Shinefield," Felix answered.

"Gather all the elite warriors in the gang and head to Mount Shinefield for a manhunt! We can't let him get away!" Dustin ordered.

"Yes, sir!" Felix said. He turned around and left.

Twenty minutes later, Dustin led over a hundred elite members of the Kirin Gang. They charged their way up Mount Shinefield.

In order to not spook the target, they didn't notify anyone else. This operation was kept under close wraps.

When they got to Mount Shinefield, the sky was almost completely dark.

Yesterday, Mount Shinefield was bustling with excitement because of the Knighthood Society tournament.

Yet, it seemed very deserted tonight.

Gazing at the horizon, the entire mountain was pitch black. It looked like a deep abyss, ready to swallow its victims.

Dim moonlight fell on the ground, casting blinking light.

"Dear, I think something's not right here," Natasha suddenly said after everyone got down from the car.

"What's not right?" Dustin swept his gaze over the surroundings. He began to survey it carefully. "It's too quiet." Natasha shook her head. "A mountain should be teeming with animals, but if you listen closely, you can't hear a single sound."

Her intuition was telling her that something was amiss.

"Ms. Harmon, it's already dark. The animals have to rest too, right? What's strange about it?" Nelson said, unconcerned.

"Don't you know that many animals are nocturnal?" Natasha frowned slightly.

"Really?" Nelson was dumbfounded. He never graduated middle school, so he really hadn't known.

"Wait." Suddenly, Dustin's eyes widened.

He noticed a faint glimmer of light in the dark forest. It was so subtle that an ordinary person wouldn't have noticed it.

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However, he was certain that it was a reflection of a gun's scope!

"Watch out!" Sensing something was amiss, he immediately pushed Natasha to the ground. As Dustin reacted, a spark flashed in the dark forest, followed closely by a gunshot.

One armor-piercing bullet after another suddenly shot out from the darkness. They narrowly missed Dustin's body. It ended up hitting the car instead.

With a loud boom, there was another explosion.

The entire car was riddled with holes. The sheer impact was causing it to sway from side to side.

Nelson was momentarily stunned. He then let out a furious roar, "This is an ambush! Those f*ckers!"

As soon as he finished speaking, more gunshots were fired. Elite members of the Kirin Gang were shot dead one after another.

The human body was as delicate as a piece of paper in the face of the terrifying armor-piercing bullets. A light touch could rip right through them

If they were shot in the torso, at least they'd die instantly without suffering.

However, if they were hit in the arms or legs, their limbs would just break. Then, they'd die of blood loss after a long bout of agony.

In the span of a few seconds, over a dozen Kirin Gang members fell.

Wails and cries filled the air.

Not just that, after the gunshots were fired, two rows of cars suddenly switched on their headlights along both sides of the roads.

They were all black Jeeps that were growling like beasts. They began to surround them.

The people in the cars were firing bullets nonstop.

"Sir Rhys, we were tricked! This is a trap!"

Watching his brothers die one after another, Nelson flew into a rage.