

Bumpkin 1261

Chapter 1261 He Spelled Trouble

Everyone thought that Matthew was already dead. Who would have known that he was still alive?

"What are you two planning to do now?"

Since Matthew had already revealed his identity, Crayson couldn't force him to continue pretending, so he could only ask them for their thoughts.

After speaking, he reminded them, "The hunting ceremony is approaching, and revealing your identity will only make Tanya's people target Veronica even more. This is not a good thing."

"I have my own arrangements for the hunting ceremony."

Matthew held Veronica's hand tightly, never letting go for a moment. "But now, I need to go out with Roni."

"Do you have to go to Zac?"

Crayson took a puff of his cigarette, exhaling smoke, his tone heavy.

"Yes," Matthew replied concisely, seeming unwilling to say more.

"Alright. Since you've already discussed it, then go." Crayson waved his hand.

The couple exchanged a glance and walked out.

After they had left for a while, Destiny walked up to Crayson and sat beside him. "Master, you knew about Matthew's identity a long time ago. Why didn't you tell me?"

From her tone, hearing a hint of blame was not difficult.

"You think I knew early on?"

Crayson glanced at her. "Matthew is not an average Joe and concealed it very well. I didn't see through it at all. If it wasn't for one night when I couldn't sleep and saw him climb from the third floor to Veronica's bedroom on the second floor, I might never have guessed his identity."

"Is that so?"

"Otherwise?" Crayson picked up the tea on the table and took a sip. "In the end, we were careless and underestimated the enemy. And you! You couldn't even recognize your own subordinate, and now you have the nerve to question me?"

Destiny, who had just been arrogant, suddenly deflated and smiled awkwardly. "I-I'm not that familiar with Iron Pillar. He's in charge of the kitchen, and I haven't seen him much, so I didn't pay much attention."

As she said this, the smile on her face disappeared, and her expression turned sinister. "However, it's truly incredible that Matthew was able to avoid Zac and us. He even successfully entered the hidden clan. I think our plan will encounter unexpected changes because of him."

Crayson held the purple clay cup in his hand and finished the drink in one gulp. His hazy eyes seemed to be conveying his feelings. "The ascension ceremony is near. No one shall destroy my plan!"

"By that you mean..."

You want to eliminate him?

She didn't finish her sentence; however, she knew his plans when she saw him crushing the cup in his right hand into pieces.

Chapter 1262 Where There's Smoke, There's Fire

"Nonsense! I'm already over ninety pounds." Shirley shook her head as she placed another shrimp dumpling on Skyler's plate. "You should eat more."

Skyler raised an eyebrow and grinned mischievously. "Why? Are you worried that I won't have enough strength?"

However, the innocent Shirley missed the underlying meaning in Skyler's words.

"No, I just want you to eat more."

"Oh, I see now. You are complaining that I haven't taken care of you properly."

"What? I..."

Suddenly, Shirley seemed to have realized something as her face turned red. "What are you talking about?"

He was always a cheeky man. How could he talk about that so often?

"What's going on? I could hear the two of you talking from afar,"

Veronica asked after she entered the living room, holding hands with Iron since the door was left wide open.

"Huh? Veronica and Iron?"

Shirley immediately stood up as she was delighted. "We've just started eating. Would you like to join us?"

"What time is it now? Why are you only having breakfast at such a late hour?"

Then, Veronica glanced at the clock on the wall. It was already 9:30 a.m.

"I..."

Shirley felt awkward, and she blushed. She couldn't help but think about what happened last night after hearing Veronica, and her cheeks reddened even more.

"Oh? Did we miss something?"

Veronica tilted her head and glanced at Matthew when she sensed something fishy. They looked at each other and shared a smile.

"Huh? Nothing, really."

Shirley shook her head. "I was too lazy to get out of bed earlier, so I woke up a bit late."

He pretended to believe her as he nodded. "Oh, I see. Why are you so nervous, Shirley? Roni was asking you a simple question."

Although Shirley felt things seemed to have gone wrong, her reaction gave off a feeling of "Where there's smoke, there's fire."

Skyler smiled helplessly and asked Matthew when Shirley blushed. "Why did you come so early?"

"Are you not welcoming me?"

Matthew's question held a deeper meaning.

"One Piece Restaurant is your property, and I'm just tagging along with Shirley. How could I not welcome you?" Skyler glanced at Veronica and raised an eyebrow. "Am I right, Veronica?"

However, Matthew immediately slapped him as soon as he finished speaking. "Call her Roni!"

"Alright, alright. Fine. Roni. There you go."

Chapter 1263 Full Of Challenges

They simply couldn't hide their feelings since they secretly admired each other.

Veronica noticed something suspicious the moment she came in with Matthew.

Shirley bit her lip, glanced at Veronica, and blushed as she shyly smiled. "Veronica... "

"You're free to love. I won't intervene."

Veronica refrained from saying too much due to Skyler's presence.

"I... I just want to tell you that I didn't mean to keep it from you. We are only trying to get to know each other better. If it doesn't work out..."

Skyler interjected before she could finish her sentence, "There's no way it doesn't work out. Period."

"Shirley has been in the hidden clan for two days, Roni. She must be tired of staying in her room all the time. Why don't you take her out for a walk?"

Matthew suggested.

Veronica instantly knew that he wanted to discuss something important with Skyler alone, so she went along.

She smiled as she held Shirley's hand, and she said, "Come on, I'll show you around."

"Hehe, sure. I've been bored for the past few days."

Shirley smiled wholeheartedly as she got up and left with Veronica.

Veronica asked when they were walking along the corridor, "Why did you suddenly agree to give him a chance?"

"Um..."

Shirley hesitated. She didn't want to reveal what had happened, fearing that Veronica might think badly of her.

After pondering for a moment, she answered, "He confessed to me, and I said yes in the heat of the moment. But we agreed to give it some time before we make it official."

"Shirley."

Veronica stopped and stood in front of Shirley. Then, she said with a serious expression, "I'm not against you being with Skyler, but you have to think it through. I just don't want to see you get hurt, do you

understand?"

How could Shirley be so sure about Skyler, who had been visiting entertainment venues frequently? Even Veronica couldn't tell what his true nature was.

Besides, they were born in contrasting family backgrounds. Sofia Green was also in between their relationship, which could further complicate the matter.

"I know you care about me, Veronica."

Shirley lowered her gaze as she fidgeted nervously. She eventually broke the silence after a long moment of hesitation and a quick scan of their surroundings to make sure no one was around.

"Actually... Actually..."

"Let's talk in my room."

Veronica tactfully pulled her hand and led her upstairs when she sensed Shirley was about to share something private.

Chapter 1264 Returning to the Hidden Clan

Veronica continued in a determined tone, "Involving yourself in a wealthy family is a serious matter, do you understand?"

"I do."

Shirley replied with a worried expression, "That's why I want to give it a try."

"Alright. Go ahead and give it a shot since you have feelings for him. That way, you won't find any regret, even if it doesn't work out in the end. Otherwise, it will be a regret you'll carry for a lifetime if you never try."

She emphasized that taking a chance was better than regretting not trying at all, even if met with failure in the end.

"Thank you, Veronica." Shirley smiled sweetly as her mood was greatly improved.

Meanwhile, in the dining room downstairs...

Matthew cast a chilly glance at Skyler. "Are you serious this time?"

Skyler continued eating breakfast with a fork. He nodded as he chewed his food. "I think so."

"Let's set aside Shirley's relationship with Roni and discuss Shirley. She's an innocent lady. You should be

mindful in your actions."

Shirley and Veronica had spent time together for two years, and they shared a bond so close that they saw themselves as sisters. Besides, Shirley had also been a great help to Matthew during that period.

He had even gifted her a car for this reason.

Matthew had interacted a lot with Shirley and found himself quite fond of the straightforward young lady because of Veronica.

Perhaps he had grown to like everything about Veronica, including those close to her.

He continued, "Shirley is unlike any other woman. Roni won't spare me if you hurt her, and I won't let you get away either!"

Matthew had made his point clear.

"What? Am I that despicable in your eyes?"

Skyler put down his fork as he was displeased.

However, Matthew paid him no attention as he poured himself a cup of tea. "You know better than I do what happened after Sofia abandoned you. I'll leave it at that."

He took a sip of the tea and changed the subject following that. "I'm here today to discuss the hunting ceremony of the hidden clan."

...

Matthew and Veronica left the One Piece Restaurant and drove to Zac's residence half an hour later.

Tanya had arranged a marvelous living space for him due to his unique status after becoming part of the hidden clan.

There was quite a crowd present today because of Zac's injury.

When they arrived, they noticed the parking lot was nearly full of cars, and the numbers on the vehicles' license plates appeared strikingly familiar to them.

They were confronted by guards left and right as soon as they exited the car and reached the courtyard entrance.

The guards immediately intervened when they saw the two of them approaching.

"Halt. Identify yourselves," they commanded in the hidden tongue.

Veronica had a translation device on but wasn't versed in the local tongue, so she only looked to Matthew.

Chapter 1265 One of Us

Then, Eleanor moved around Veronica and walked to Matthew's side before affectionately reaching out to embrace his arm.

However, Matthew swiftly withdrew his arm and stated firmly, "Please behave yourself, Princess Eleanor."

He pulled Veronica and positioned her between himself and Eleanor following that.

Veronica responded to Matthew's rejection of Eleanor with a genuine smile.

"What's so funny?" Eleanor's expression turned sour. "Are you enjoying the fact that your husband rejected me?"

Eleanor wasn't a fan of beating around the bush. She would always say what was in her mind.

Veronica only shrugged lightly. "Maybe it only happened because I'm here. How about I leave now and give you two some privacy?"

"Hmph. I, Princess Eleanor of the hidden clan, don't need your pity."

She raised an arm and wrapped it around Veronica as she continued, "I will use my own charm to win your husband over if I really like him."

"Well, I must say I admire your confidence, Princess Eleanor."

Who would have thought Veronica would say that?

She should have hated Eleanor for being her rival in love, but she didn't find herself disliking such an upfront person like her.

She couldn't help but admit that Eleanor possessed her own brand of charisma.

"Thank you. Just tell your husband not to handle me as ruthlessly as he did with Zac."

Eleanor's words surprised Veronica.

Veronica glanced at Matthew, and they exchanged a smile.

"It seems nothing escapes from you," Veronica said.

"Of course. How can I possibly lead the clan in the future if I am that ignorant?"

"Why are you still sticking so close to me now that you're about to become one of us? Aren't you afraid that I might seize the opportunity to take it out on you?"

"You would have done so long ago if you wanted to. Why would you wait until now?" Eleanor asked with a smile, "Why do you think I am fond of you two? Is it solely because you two are easy on the eyes?"

"Why is that then?" Veronica asked as her curiosity was piqued.

Eleanor only rolled her eyes up. "It's because of the charisma you two possess."

"Hehehe. You're too kind, Princess Eleanor."

Veronica chuckled.

The three of them passed the front yard guided by the servants, and they reached the backyard, where they found Zac in the main hall.

Zac was still wearing a silver suit, but his left wrist was wrapped in bandages, and he no longer had a left hand.

He stared at the Ledger Clan in the living room while seated, and he asked coldly, "I came to the hidden clan in exchange for safety as promised. Don't you have something to say to me now?"

Chapter 1266 The Missing Hand

The doctor tried to save him but was unsuccessful in recovering the severed hand, making it impossible to reattach it.

Tanya came to visit Zac as soon as she heard the news. When Zac awoke, he told her that Xavier was the one who had attacked him. Tanya immediately dispatched people to apprehend Xavier and his wife.

"Prince Zac, please take it easy. You should rest because of your injury."

"They are already on their way and will arrive shortly," Tanya added calmly.

"X-Xavier and you have always gotten along well. How could he be so brutal and suddenly turn against you? Tiffany was perplexed and couldn't help but express her doubts.

Zac gave her a cold stare right after she said that. "Shut up and get out! You have no right to speak here."

He was offended, really enraged, and wanted to slap Tiffany in the face to let out his rage.

As he said this, he gave Veronica a fierce glare.

His eyes glowed with resentment as if he wanted to rip Veronica apart.

"Zac, Tiffany is just worried about you." Hendrey tried to mediate and advised.

Tiffany, who felt wronged, was publicly reprimanded. She clenched her fists tightly, holding back her rage as her face occasionally turned pale.

Then, she realized that Zac, who was once arrogant and domineering, had lost his hand. This was what he deserved, and seeing him in this state was satisfying.

With such self-comfort, she was a lot more at ease.

Everyone looked around for chairs and sat down. Still posing as the "Iron Pillar," Matthew stood behind Veronica Murphy's back as a bodyguard.

The living room was hushed.

Everyone had their own thoughts; some were happy, some were proud, and some were secretly delighted. But those who truly cared about Zac were probably only those capable assistants brought into the hidden clan.

Approximately ten minutes later, footsteps were heard outside the living room. Everyone turned to look and saw Xavier and Antheena being pushed inside by soldiers while they were in shackles and handcuffs.

"Queen Tanya, they are here."

After the soldier finished speaking, Tanya waved her hand, and they turned and left.

Xavier and Antheena appeared unperturbed. Antheena, as a lady, didn't cry or make a fuss. She looked at everyone with her usual calmness, and her gaze fell on Tanya. "Queen Tanya, why did you capture me and Seb—Xavier?"

In Castron, Xavier went by the name Sebastian, but many still called him by his real name, so Antheena had to call him "Xavier."

"You motherf*cker, Xavier! I'm going to kill you!"

As soon as Xavier entered the room, Zac's rage flared. He couldn't hold back his rage and got to his feet, wanting to take the needle out of the back of his right hand with his left hand. However, he noticed his palm missing when he raised his hand.

Chapter 1267 They Are Merely Friends

Only Xavier remained calm and collected during the chaos. He glanced at Veronica, and then his gaze fell on Matthew. The two locked eyes for a moment.

With just one look, Veronica could feel the anger emanating from Xavier.

Zac began to settle down, and silence descended once more in the living room.

"Xavier, did you attack Prince Zac last night?" Tanya asked with the demeanor of the head of the clan.

Truthfully, Xavier responded, "Last night, I was sleeping with my wife in the hotel."

"Yes, that's right." Antheena nodded in agreement.

Last night, she and Xavier had a blissful night together, which was the happiest night of her life.

She was so worn out that she dozed off.

Antheena and Xavier were perplexed when those people arrived to capture them the following morning before dawn until they learned of Zac's predicament and realized what was happening.

Trouble did indeed appear out of nowhere, as was frequently said.

"Antheena, you are Xavier's husband. Your testimony is not sufficient proof," Tanya said with a fair and just attitude.

"The hotel has surveillance videos that can prove that we never left the hotel," Antheena added.

"The surveillance videos are located at the main entrance of the hotel. But with Xavier's skills, he can easily leave the hotel by scaling walls and rooftops," Eleanor said.

Even though Eleanor was aware that Xavier was not involved in this incident, she still wished to protect Matthew.

She thought it was best to let Xavier take the blame.

"So what Princess Eleanor is trying to say is that I have no way to prove my innocence?" Xavier's eyes turned cold, and he said each word with emphasis.

"Unless someone is willing to testify for you," Eleanor added.

"You are distorting the truth!" Antheena's eyes turned red with anger. "Xavier has no grudges against Prince Zac. Why would he target him?"

"It's simple," Eleanor said lazily, leaning back in her chair. She rested her elbow on the armrest and supported her chin with her hand.

She casually pointed her thin finger at Veronica, skipping over everyone else and landing on her. "It's because of what Prince Zac did to Veronica. Last night at the Elysium Hotel, Prince Zac made a move on her, and it was Xavier who arrived in time, fought Prince Zac, and left with Veronica in his arms."

Eleanor hit two birds with one stone with what she said.

She first made Zac's heinous deeds public, then she damaged Veronica's reputation, and finally, she sowed discord between Xavier and Antheena.

After all, it was a fact that Xavier fought Zac at the Elysium Hotel last night.

Zac's face first turned pale and then red as he was listening to Eleanor's words. He felt that she was deliberately provoking him.

Chapter 1268 Xavier's Alibi

Tiffany attempted to make things worse by adding more fuel to the fire.

Antheena lost herself in her pain, laughing at herself and not knowing what to say.

"Xavier, do you have anything else to say?" Dominik, who had been silent, asked.

On the other hand, Liam, who was standing next to him, sat back, munching on junk food and watching the situation unfold.

Xavier looked at Matthew with a meaningful look and smirked. "You're not as good as him. There's nothing more to say."

The phrase "not as good as him" captured everyone's attention.

"I'm curious as to when Zac was hurt."

Veronica calmly spoke just as everyone believed the situation was resolved.

Tanya said, "The incident happened around 2:30 a.m. After the suspect injured Prince Zac, he was surrounded by his bodyguards and fought for almost half an hour. The time was between 2:30 a.m. and 3 a.m."

"Why are you asking this?" Tiffany sneered. "Are you trying to defend Xavier?"

Every chance Tiffany had, she had to attack Veronica.

Veronica couldn't be bothered with Tiffany and took out her phone while saying, "Last night at 2:30 a.m., I happened to go to the Caritas Hotel where Xavier was staying and stayed for about ten minutes. The time clashes with the time mentioned by Queen Tanya. So, I can prove that Xavier has nothing to do with this."

Everyone in the living room gave her strange looks as soon as she finished speaking.

"You went to find Xavier in the middle of the night?"

"Didn't Xavier just say he was with his wife?"

"Oh my god. Are you putting your reputation on the line for Xavier?"

"Veronica, why were you meeting with Xavier so late at night?"

"What is your relationship with each other?"

...

Everyone was inquisitive.

Bang!

Suddenly, Zac slammed the table in anger and pointed at Veronica. "Nonsense! Are you trying to help Xavier? Let me tell you, I will kill him today!"

As he finished speaking, Zac reached for the handgun on the table and pointed it at Xavier.

Veronica and Xavier were standing very close to each other.

She moved forward at the crucial time in an attempt to pull him away, but she was too late because... Xavier was pushed aside by Matthew, who had already crossed in front of her.

Pow!

Chapter 1269 Get Lost, All of You!

Veronica sneered coldly. "I'm afraid your enemies must have targeted you, and when you couldn't identify the true perpetrator behind the scenes, you made Xavier the scapegoat and sought retribution for what happened at the Elysium Hotel yesterday."

Initially, Matthew intended to come forward and reveal his identity and then come to save Xavier.

But early in the morning, Matthew contacted the staff at One Piece Restaurant and asked them to look into the Caritas Hotel's security footage. They found the entrance and exit videos from the hotel lobby and the videos from the corridor.

The videos happened to show her and Xavier.

In other words, Matthew didn't need to reveal his identity to prove Xavier's innocence.

Since that was the case, they didn't need to go through all the trouble.

"How could this happen?"

"Who was the one who attacked Prince Zac yesterday?"

"I don't know."

"So, Xavier is really innocent."

"Who said he wasn't?"

...

Everyone was whispering to each other at this point.

Only Tiffany clenched her fists and said sarcastically to Veronica, "Veronica, you know that Xavier has a wife, yet you went to find him in the middle of the night. A woman ought to respect herself."

She was trying to sow discord and deliberately provoke Antheena's jealousy toward Veronica as she intended to use Antheena to get rid of Veronica and fulfill her deeply held desire.

Veronica walked slowly in the direction of Tiffany as she slowly raised her gaze and curled her red lips.

With a sharp gaze, she scared Tiffany into taking two steps back. "I'm just speaking the truth. Why are you staring at me like that? Are people not allowed to speak the truth anymore?"

"Fine. What else do you want to say? I'm listening," Veronica replied calmly.

Tiffany thought that Veronica wouldn't dare to do anything to her in front of everyone, so she arrogantly declared, "I'm your sister. I'm telling you all of this for your own benefit. It's normal for you to fall in love again since your 'husband' has passed away, but you should keep your distance from Xavier because he is married. Otherwise..."

She stopped halfway through her words.

"Otherwise what?" Veronica's clear and pure eyes made it almost impossible to detect any trace of anger.

"Otherwise, where does that leave Antheena? And where does Madam Hayley stand? If this gets out, people will gossip."

"Is that so? What will they say?"

"They will... Of course, they will say some unpleasant things. Like how a widow seduces a married man, how she has no morals—Ah!"

Chapter 1270 What A Missed Opportunity

"Find out for me, even if you have to dig three feet underground. I want to know who's trying to harm me!"

Zac was so furious that his eyes turned crimson. After uttering these words, he pivoted and walked away.

Without paying any attention to the unconscious Tiffany, Veronica turned on her heel and strode toward Xavier and Antheena. She addressed Tanya, the head of the hidden clan, saying, "Head of the clan, do you think an explanation and accountability should be provided to them for this matter?"

It was Tanya who had apprehended those individuals.

She was convinced of Xavier's culpability, necessitating a thorough explanation of the situation.

Eleanor shot a contemptuous glance at Veronica, as if to say, can you please maintain some dignity? Your husband is clearly the mastermind, yet you have the audacity to seek answers from my mother.

Veronica deliberately ignored Eleanor and pretended not to see her.

"Hahaha..."

Tanya rose from her seat and signaled to the guards by the door. One of them approached and swiftly unlocked the handcuffs and restraints on Antheena and Xavier.

After the restraints were removed, the two of them flexed their wrists.

Antheena gazed at Veronica with profound and inscrutable eyes, yet ultimately remained silent.

She didn't know what had transpired, nor was she aware of Zac's injuries from the previous night. She

believed Veronica's effort to clarify things on their behalf was a favor.

As for Veronica, Antheena felt a mix of envy and admiration for her perceived perfection, which all women coveted.

"Mr. Crawford, Miss Antheena, I take full responsibility for today's incident due to my oversight. It was truly my mistake. Nevertheless, I hope you can understand. Given Zac's repeated claims of Xavier's guilt, I had to apprehend him. In any case, as the head of the secretive clan, this incident is on me."

Standing before them, Tanya slightly bowed and apologized, "I deeply apologize."

Then, she straightened up and continued, "I'd like to invite both of you, and Miss Murphy as well, to the palace for a banquet. I will personally host you as a gesture of goodwill. Additionally, as compensation, I will ensure it's delivered to your place of residence."

Having said that, Tanya turned to Dominik and instructed, "Dom, prepare the guest quarters at Jacquelyn immediately and accommodate Xavier and his wife there. Since they're here in the hidden clan, we must extend our hospitality."

"Yes, Mother."

Dominik nodded in agreement.

"Queen Tanya, I understand your intentions. Thank you."

Xavier thanked her and left.

Antheena didn't say anything, but she felt aggrieved in her heart, so she followed Xavier and left.