

## **Dauntless 171**

### **Dauntless God Of War**

#### **Chapter 171**

Harold smiled faintly as he spoke to Isabella.

Once he was done speaking, he turned around and walked over to both Pauline and Benson.

“Dad, Mom, how long do you plan on tucking it away in hiding? Hurry to your room and bring out the God of War's calligraphy artwork!” Harold dragged Pauline and Benson out of the crowd.

Needless to say, they were dumbfounded.

“Young man, perhaps you don't know this, but there is a reason why the God of War's calligraphy artwork was inflated to a sky-high price of five million. It's because his calligraphy emanates a certain murderous aura. At the same time, there's a pervasive sense of justice in his writing. No one in this entire world could mimic him. If you admit your mistakes now, I'll give you the chance to apologize.” Just as Harold was hauling Benson and Pauline out of the crowd, Yuvan's voice called out from behind him.

Nonetheless, Harold did not stop in his tracks upon hearing Yuvan's taunts. He continued pulling Benson and Pauline out of the hall.

Once they had exited the hall, Benson looked around and found that there was no one else around. He then tugged on Harold and asked dubiously, “Harold, why are you so sure that the artwork is fake when you haven't even assessed it?”

“That artwork is real. I wrote it back when I was on the battlefield. I have no idea how it ended up in the hands of Yuvan, though,” Harold answered honestly.

The older couple who had lost their composure finally calmed down. With perplexed looks, they asked, “It's real? So that means... You will be writing a new one now?”

Harold nodded in response. He then immediately instructed his parents-in-law, “That's right. Mom, you're familiar with Newcove. Please help me buy a piece of paper that is exactly like the one used in that artwork. Remember to choose an aged paper. Dad, please get me some ink and a calligraphy pen.”

The duo then rushed to purchase the materials necessary for calligraphy, knowing that time was of the essence.

Along the way, Pauline thought things over but remained confused. She then asked her husband, “Hubby, if Harold dares to rewrite a new artwork, that means that he's undoubtedly the true God of

War. But why doesn't he reveal his identity back there instead? Won't we be able to resolve everything then?"

"Oh, you fool. Someone is pretending to be him right now, and he's active on the world stage. The imitator is even trending in various countries. If Harold claims to be the God of War now, do you think people would believe him? It is only by showing off a 'Loyalty to the Country' written by him that we may get out of this mess. Let us hurry. Otherwise, we'll raise the others' suspicions." As Benson spoke, he hailed a cab to the nearest bookstore.

However, the scene of the couple stepping into the bookstore was witnessed by Vivian.

She had gone to the pharmacy to purchase some ointment for her face, which was red and swollen after being slapped by Harold twice.

Then, as she was making her way home, she coincidentally saw Isabella's parents entering the bookstore to purchase the calligraphy materials. Out of curiosity, Vivian sneakily followed behind them for some time.

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Some of the people remaining in the hall began to joke.

Vivian applied the ointment she had bought, then returned to the hall.

She then told her husband, Yulian, what she had seen not too long ago.

"Is what you're telling me true?" Yulian asked in surprise after hearing what Vivian said.

She nodded her head in response.

In that instant, he finally knew why Isabella's parents and Harold were taking such a long time to retrieve their calligraphy artwork. His lips curved into a smirk before he left the living room immediately to make a call. He rang Max Brady, the chairman of Newcove Antiques Association.

Just as everyone in the room was running out of patience, Benson and Pauline returned with Harold in the lead.

Yuvan leered at Harold, his face full of hostility as he asked, "Where's your calligraphy artwork?"

"It's here!" Harold spun around and took the artwork from Benson's hands.

He brought the new calligraphy artwork over to the coffee table. As for the other calligraphy artwork on

the table that had been torn into two, he crumpled it into a ball and tossed it into the rubbish bin.

Then and only then, he unveiled the Loyalty to the Country he had just written.

When Yuvan saw how Harold treated his torn calligraphy artwork as rubbish and simply threw it away, he became so infuriated that he nearly got a stroke. “Y-Y-You!”

But before he could burst out in rage, Isabella's grandparents had already descended from their sovereign seats with the support of their canes.

The rest of the people hastily crowded around the coffee table.

The moment Victor arrived by the coffee table, he swept a glance across the calligraphy. In an instant, he was thunderstruck by the murderous aura pouring from the very words. With all his heart, he praised, “Well written! Very well written!”

By then, Yuvan had been pushed back by the others, but his interest was piqued by Victor's compliments. With a face full of doubt, Yuvan squeezed his way to the coffee table.

As soon as he laid his eyes upon the artwork that Harold had procured, he was awestruck.

His expertise in assessing antique calligraphy was rather good. Otherwise, he would not have attained the position of vice-chairman of the Newcove Antiques Association.

If Victor could notice the ferociousness in the calligraphy at a glimpse, so could Yuvan.

That was the second time he had ever felt such a bloodthirsty presence from a work of calligraphy.

The other calligraphy artwork had been crumpled into a ball and thrown into the wastepaper basket.

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Everyone turned to look at Harold, Isabella, and her parents upon hearing what Yulian had just said.

Benson and Pauline took a few steps back unwittingly, their faces paling to a ghastly white.

Only Harold managed to remain unfazed. He even gestured for Isabella to comfort her parents.

Victor directed his gaze to Isabella's parents and asked, “What's going on?”

Nevertheless, as he caught sight of his daughter's panicked look, he already knew the answer.

“We—”

Pauline didn't know how to explain themselves at that moment.

“Yulian, you said that you saw my in-laws going into a book store to get calligraphy materials, but do you have proof?” queried Harold in a calm manner.

“I—”

Yulian was stumped for words. Turning around, he looked at his wife. “Darling, when you saw them going inside the book store, did you record a video or take any photo as evidence?”

Vivian shook her head in lieu of an answer.

“You silly woman! Why didn't you take a video recording or at least a photo as evidence?” yelled Yulian.

He was disappointed in his wife.

The latter, in turn, felt indignant and retorted, “How the hell would I have thought about that? I didn't even know what happened here back then!”

Harold then shot them a question leisurely. “Since you have no proof, does that mean you're falsely accusing them and spreading rumors?”

“You! Don't be too full of yourself yet. I've already called the chairman of Newcove Antiques Association over. He can tell the authenticity of this,” said Yulian smugly.

His words shocked the crowd once more.

The chairman of Newcove Antiques Association, Max Brady, was the most internationally acclaimed expert appraiser.

His name was highly regarded worldwide when it came to antiques and artifacts.

Never had he misjudged a treasure before.

“Oh, really? What if Mr. Brady appraises this writing as a genuine masterpiece by the God of War himself? What would you do, then?” asked Harold.

He was grinning from ear to ear.

Even so, his tranquil expression was merely an act in Yulian's eyes.

That was because both Benson and Pauline weren't portraying a calm demeanor at all.

"Hmph! If this piece of art turns out to be authentic, I'll kneel down in front of all our guests and beg for your pardon!"

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Max walked up to Victor and gifted him a one-hundred-year-old ginseng.

"You didn't have to bring me a present, Max. I'm already very happy that you're here. You're really being too polite."

Victor was all smiles.

The two of them seemed to be around the same age, but they didn't have much in common with each other because of their different field of expertise. Still, they were old friends.

"Don't mention it, Victor. It'll be my eightieth birthday in two months' time, so you'll just have to return me this gift then!"

Max was in a very good mood, so much so that he began pulling Victor's leg.

"Hahaha!"

Not only did Victor burst into laughter, but the guests were all tickled pink too.

After the duo exchanged pleasantries, Max cut straight to the point and said, "I heard that someone here has an original calligraphy masterpiece that came from the God of War himself. Where's it? Quick! I need to see it!"

The reason he accepted Yulian's invitation was to feast his eyes on the God of War's original work.

Upon hearing Max's words, Yulian sneered at Harold and Isabella's family. Immediately afterward, he pointed toward the Loyalty to the Country on the coffee table and uttered, "Max, that piece of calligraphy is on the coffee table. Take a look and see if it's real."

"Wow!"

Max followed the direction Yulian pointed at and spotted the calligraphy artwork written by Harold. In a flash, he was mesmerized.

He had merely taken a quick glance, but he could already feel an overwhelmingly ominous aura wafting toward him.

Instantly, he fished out the magnifier that he had always brought along with him from his pocket.

“Mr. Brady! You're not young anymore, so I don't think it's suitable for you to scrutinize the God of War's artwork. You could be in danger, you know!”

All of a sudden, Harold spoke up to stop Max.

“Why? What's wrong? Are you feeling guilty now that an expert's here? Isn't it a bit too late?” scoffed Yulian when he heard Harold.

Even Isabella's parents were uncertain about what was happening.

Don't tell me Harold's actually not the God of War, and that's why he's afraid of Max seeing through him?

Harold couldn't be bothered about those looks on Yulian's and the guests' faces. Instead, he was very worried as he fixed his gaze on Max.

When Harold was creating Loyalty to the Country, he had poured all his emotions on the battlefield into it along with his murderous intent toward his enemies.

If an ordinary person were to immerse themselves in it, they would be intimidated by the vibe it gave off.

They might even injure themselves in the process.

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In less than thirty seconds, Max had his head twisted to the side and was spitting out blood.

His originally flushed face turned deathly pale almost immediately.

“Mr. Brady!”

“Quick, call an ambulance!”

The sight of Max suddenly vomiting blood startled everyone, and in a split second, the entire scene descended into chaos.

Harold was the first person to help Max up after the latter threw up blood.

He had known that Max's flushed face meant something was about to happen. Therefore, he had stood by Max beforehand and was ready.

After a while, the color returned to Max's cheeks. He then turned to the crowd and waved his hand in dismissal. "I'm fine. Everyone, don't panic!"

However, the others were taken aback by how Max seemed to be even more energized than before.

"Hey, Max, are you okay?" Victor asked anxiously.

It was his eightieth birthday that day, and so he hoped that it would not end up becoming a tragedy instead of a celebration.

Frankly, Victor wanted to blame Max. The latter was already nearly eighty. Even still, he refused to retire.

"I was stunned by the murderous aura of the piece. This is the work of the God of War, I'm certain of it. No one else in this world could create such a piece!" exclaimed Max excitedly.

His words rendered Yulian, who was standing beside him, speechless.

"That's impossible, Mr. Brady. They only recently wrote this. How is it possible that the God of War wrote it? Could you be mistaken?" Yulian agitatedly questioned.

"I've been appraising antiques and collectibles for almost sixty years! I've never made a mistake. Do you think that I'm trying to trick you?" Max asked, displeased.

Yulian immediately explained himself, "No. You've misunderstood the meaning of my words, Mr. Brady. What I meant was that you've only seen one of the words. Why not you try looking at the rest of the words?"

Yulian knew that the Loyalty to the Country presented before him was written by Harold at the last minute. Therefore, it could not have been the penmanship of Harold, the God of War himself.

Unless Harold was, in fact, the actual God of War.

But is it really possible? The fact that they share the same names does not mean that he is the God of War. The real God of War is still doing things all around the world.

After hearing Yulian's words, Max paused. "Well..."

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The loyalty seemed to be seeping from the bones of the soldiers.

Max was deeply astonished by the feeling that he was experiencing.

Then, as Max moved on to the third word, he felt as if he was still on the battlefield. However, what he previously experienced were things that happened before the battle started.

This time, he was in the middle of the battle.

Despite being outnumbered, the soldiers did not give up; they did not care if they had to sacrifice their lives. Stopping their enemies so that their families could be safe was their shared objective.

His heart was once again deeply touched by the blood, sweat, and tears that were expended for the benefit of one's family and nation.

It's true. There's no such thing as an age of peace. It's merely an illusion created due to people having already shouldered the burden for us.

Tears began to slowly flow from Max's already murky eyes when he suddenly recalled those words.

The people nearby were perplexed by the drastic turn of events when they saw him crying.

He threw up blood earlier, and now he's crying! What on earth is going on?

Meanwhile, when Max finally focused on the last word and read the entire phrase, "Loyalty to the Country," he realized he was staring at the back of a heroic figure.

Somehow, the back that was facing him exuded a sense of hopelessness. However, for the sake of the greater good, the person had no choice but to depart silently.

Max only managed to snap out of the mysterious sensation after the back of the person was out of his sight.

"Was that Harold, the God of War?" Max muttered to himself as he placed the magnifying glass down.

Yulian looked anxious as he asked, "Did you see anything weird, Mr. Brady?"

Yuvan and the others, too, were staring at Max curiously.

"After appraising this, I'm confident that Harold, the God of War, wrote it. However, I'm slightly



confused now. These words shouldn't have evoked such feelings,” Max said. His words contradicted himself.

“But that makes no sense! If this is the real piece, does that mean that Mr. Jennings' piece is a counterfeit?” Yulian turned around to face Yuvan. He was enraged while questioning the latter, “How dare you use a counterfeit to fool my dad!”

Yuvan was embarrassed as he attempted to explain himself, “I-I had no idea it was a counterfeit! I bought it from a well-known international antiques and collectibles auction house. I didn't expect to find counterfeits in such a location!”

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Harold did not fall for Yulian's lies. Benson and Pauline had already told him what had happened.

Harold suddenly became louder toward the end, making Yulian jump in fright.

“You... I guess this was all a setup. You went to buy ink and paper from the stationery shop and even pretended to return to the room for more than half an hour to retrieve the calligraphy painting. It was all an act to make me lower my guard. You planned all this to take revenge on me for making you the scapegoat for the damaged calligraphy painting last night. Am I right?” Yulian asked Isabella and her family through gritted teeth.

He was shocked by Harold and did not think things through before speaking.

Only after his wife tugged him did he come to his senses.

However, it was already too late. All the guests had heard what he said.

“Well, you've admitted it yourself. Aren't you going to apologize? What are you waiting for?” Harold asked icily.

In no time, all the guests started to gossip about Yulian and his wife.

The crowd finally believed the explanation that Isabella's parents had given previously.

“Hmph! I won't apologize to someone who did something as shameful as having a child out of wedlock. It's impossible!” declared Yulian.

He saw how everyone had started to gossip about him. His face became red instantly, and he deeply regretted what he had said earlier.

However, he could not understand why he had said those words just now.

He would never apologize to a shameful person who had been kicked out of the family for twenty years. He turned around and left the living room after leaving those cruel words.

Seeing this, Victor became pale from anger.

Yulian, that idiot, has just dragged the Rivera family's name through the mud at my birthday banquet. As the saying goes, good news doesn't travel, but bad news spreads like wildfire! With so many guests present today, it will not take more than two days before the Rivera family becomes the laughingstock of the high society in Newcove!

Victor almost fainted from thinking about this.

The paramedics, which Max had called for earlier, ended up sending both of them to the hospital.

What was supposed to be a joyous celebration thus ended abruptly.

Fortunately, the two elderly people only had minor issues with nothing serious.

It was five o'clock in the afternoon.

The two older people who had undergone a thorough examination were lying on the hospital beds in a VIP ward of Newcove General Hospital.

They started discussing what had happened earlier. The others waited outside the ward, not wanting to disturb their rest.

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Victor asked Max concernedly after hearing the latter exclaim and seeing his expression, which was full of shock.

Max, however, ignored him and continued examining the next word.

At that moment, Max's expression became full of emotions. He looked surprised, amazed, but more so, filled with doubt.

It was because he vividly felt that the two calligraphy paintings were made by the same person.

However, the two calligraphy paintings did not give him the same feeling.

The calligraphy painting before him was not as complicated. The four words only conveyed one main

feeling—the soldiers should march forward bravely without retreat for the sake of their homes and country.

After finishing his examination of the torn calligraphy, Max put down the magnifying glass in his hand and looked at Victor with an unfathomable expression. “Victor, I think we've all wronged Yuvan. He did not bring a counterfeit to make a fool of you. This piece is also by the God of War!”

“What? This, too, is a piece by the God of War? It's impossible! According to rumors, Loyalty to the Country was a piece written by the God of War before that great battle. At that time, the enemy forces were great. We only had a paltry thirty thousand soldiers, while the enemy had a strong force of a million soldiers.

“The God of War had written the words 'Loyalty to the Country' before the war began to encourage his soldiers to not retreat even in the face of death. The soldiers were enraptured by those words and the God of War's fighting spirit. It was as though all of them had been possessed by martial—” Victor recounted the history of how Loyalty to the Country came about in disbelief.

“Wait! Are you telling me that Loyalty to the Country was written before the war to encourage the soldiers?” Max suddenly cut Victor off.

“That's right. A lot of people know this!” Victor was not upset at being cut off and nodded affirmatively.

“I understand what's going on, then. Hahaha...” Max mumbled to himself and repeated what Victor had said twice.

He had finally found the cause of his confusion.

He sprung up from the hospital bed and started talking excitedly, which made Max feel puzzled.

“No wonder. Even though I can see that both pieces are by the God of War, save for the first word, the feeling that the last three words give is completely different. It turns out that Loyalty to the Country was a piece written by the God of War before that great battle. He could not have known how the battle would have turned out then.

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“I think he's called Harold Campbell. I don't know his actual identity. When I get back, I'll ask my daughter about it,” answered Victor after pondering for a while.

Hearing the name, Max exclaimed again, “Harold Campbell!”

“Yeah, his name is Harold Campbell. What's wrong with the name?”

Victor was baffled by Max's startled reaction.

“Harold Campbell! The God of War! He wrote Loyalty to the Country. Before this, your daughter-in-law said that she saw your daughter and her husband go to a stationery shop to buy some stationeries. Try piecing them together.”

Instead of answering Victor directly, Max provided him with some clues.

“D-Do you mean that calligraphy painting was written by them? My grandson-in-law is the famous God of War?”

Victor was an astute man, as he was already eighty years old. He instantly grasped the meaning of Max's words.

“That's right! He's the God of War who stunned the world, but no one has ever seen his face! The Loyalty to the Country calligraphy painting I assessed before was undoubtedly written by him today!” said Max with certainty.

Victor was dumbfounded by Max's conclusion. After giving it some thought, he said, “This is impossible! The news reported that the God of War is now traveling around the world and raising funds to establish a veteran fund!”

“B-But...” Max hesitated because he had also seen the news that the God of War was traveling all around the globe.

Moreover, his source of information was not only from the trending posts online.

Upon deliberation, Victor slapped his head and said, “I'm so dumb! Why am I thinking so much? I'll know everything once I call my daughter over and ask her!”

Then he called Pauline and asked her to come inside.

Pauline, who was outside the ward, entered and asked nervously, “Dad, do you need me for something?”

“I need to ask you something. Is the Loyalty to the Country calligraphy painting you brought written at the last minute?” Victor did not beat around the bush.

The two old men stared at her.

“Dad, I'm sorry. We lied to you! Actually, Loyalty to the Country by Yuvan is real. The one we brought over was written today by Bella's lover, Harold Campbell.”

Pauline panicked. Facing her father's stern gaze, she did not even dare to lie.

Hearing his daughter's explanation, Victor looked uncertain.

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He kneeled in front of Pauline and Benson as soon as he came out of the room.

Dragging his wife with him, he begged, "Pauline, I'm sorry! Vivian and I were wrong! I have lost my mind. Please forgive us this time. I promise something like this will never happen again!"

Isabella and her family were stunned by the sight.

Pauline reckoned it was probably her father who had asked Yulian to apologize to her after knowing Harold's identity.

"Yulian, please get up first."

Pauline was astonished, but at the same time, she was also excited.

My family is finally willing to accept me this time. It is all thanks to Harold.

Isabella was delighted to see Pauline reconcile with her family.

As Pauline was chatting with Yulian and his family in the corridor, Isabella pulled Harold to a corner.

Looking at Harold curiously, Isabella asked, "Harold, how did you manage to bribe Mr. Brady? He's not someone who can be bought off easily!"

When Max had mentioned that Loyalty to the Country was an authentic piece by the God of War, the first thought that had come into her mind was that Harold could be the God of War.

However, she only came to a realization when Yulian said that—all of that was a trap set up by Harold and her parents.

They had deliberately let Vivian see them go to a stationery shop to buy stationeries. It was also intentional that he completed the calligraphy painting in half an hour and that they left her at the scene to stall the others.

Isabella also thought that Harold had instructed Max to say those words because there was no way one would cough up blood after looking at a calligraphy painting. It must be an act they had prepared beforehand.

She had examined the calligraphy painting. Aside from feeling that it looked slightly imposing, she did not detect anything else.

She did not believe in the so-called theory that only experts could understand calligraphy.

Nevertheless, Isabella had many questions she could not figure out.