

## Girlboss 681

### Chapter 681

"Quinn Ocean?! You're alive?!" Donald stared at Quinn in disbelief, more shocked to see her than Frank! "Sorry to disappoint you, but I'm alive and kicking!" Quinn laughed icily as her brow creased, and she bellowed, "You killed my father and forced off a cliff. And now, you shall pay!" Even as Quinn leapt toward him, sword in hand, Donald was clenching his jaw so hard his teeth could break.

"Fucking mooks! All of them!" he growled.

It was now obvious why his men never found Quinn's corpse! However, he was not about to just roll over and die—he promptly overturned the table and quickly leapt backward to draw the sword hung on the wall. After everything was said and done, he was still a vigor wielder! Still, Quinn was an unstoppable entity of rage, slicing through the table and clashing swords with Donald! On the other hand, Frank slowly strode inside and immediately saw the man sitting limply on the floor. "Hmm? What are you doing here, Eron?" "I, I..." Eron kept trying but could not muster a full sentence at all.

"Wait, what's this?" Frank saw the written pledges on the floor and picked them up.

"Give them back!" Eron suddenly screamed, finding strength out of nowhere—he was well aware that those pledges must never see the light of day and leapt madly at Frank.

"Buzz off!" Frank sidestepped him, leaving Eron catching nothing but air as he tumbled face-first to the floor.

Knowing that the papers were very important to Eron given how obsessed he was, Frank had even less reason to return them.

"Letsee." he murmured as he scanned through the i > and his expression was suddenly cold— even murderous—when he was done.

Frank breathed a sigh, his dark aura spilling out slightly as he leveled an impassive look at Eron. "I've really underestimated you, huh?" Eron's face turned pale, unable to muster a single word as Frank put away the pledges, his eyes flashing with endless disdain. "I'll hand this over to your daughter. I'm sure she's keen to find out what his father would do just to be restored as the head of the family." The man

would have his own daughter marry a 50-year-old geezer! "Give it back!" Eron shrieked. "T-That's my family's business! A nobody like you has no business meddling!" Smack! Watching as Eron lunged at him again, Frank slapped him across the face with the back of his palm.

He struck Eron so hard that Eron almost fainted as he looked at Eron like refuse, shaking his head in disdain.

"Actually, I do—I'm Kim's friend." While Eron was left immobile, Quinn's fight was nearing its end.

Though her abilities had diminished due to her injuries, Frank's Needles of Nine Animus mostly healed her.

And even if she used to be Birthright rank and lost her cultivation, she still had her swordcraft.

Moreover, she fought like she was ready to die, forcing Donald on the backfoot.

Clang! Sparks shot away from their swords, and the impact sent Donald slamming violently into the wall behind him.

However, he was not packing even though he was clearly vulnerable.

In fact, he was smiling savagely as he watched Quinn keep charging at him relentlessly.

"Hmm...?" Frank could sense danger even as he stood in the distance.

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Donald's left hand—kept hidden from view—suddenly pressed on a hidden depression on the wall.

Then, a black handgun popped out, landing in his hand.

As Quinn kept charging at him, sword poised, he grinned savagely as he brought the gun to bear between her eyes.

"What—" Quinn's eyes widened, not expecting Donald to have such a trick up his sleeve! Worst of all, he would shoot her through the head even before her sword reached him! Biting her lip, she closed her eyes as she resigned herself to her fate...

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Bang! Clang! The crack of a gunshot resounded, soon followed by the stifling scent of gunpowder.

Quinn opened her eyes, presuming that she had been shot. only to see Donald's gun flying out of his grasp and the bullet shot striking a vase behind her.

"Frank Lawrence!!!" Donald was glaring savagely at Frank.

He saw Frank firing a burst of his pure vigor, sending his gun flying! "Die!" Seeing her opportunity, Quinn raised her sword and sliced off Donald's hand.

"Argh!!!" Donald let out a blood-curdling scream as his hand and blood seemed to float in thin air.

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Quinn's eyes went red as she pressed her attack, slicing a left arm, and then his legs and belly! Her sword swinging wildly, she eventually hacked Donald's head off.

Even at the very end, Donald was glaring vengefully at Frank even as his head dropped to the floor, his eyes never closing.

"Frank. Lawrence." He wheezed through the blood in his mouth with the last bit of strength he had and finally died.

Quinn was panting heavily, leaning on her sword for a moment before turning toward Frank, her eyes red and welling up with tears.

"Thank you, Frank." she said and dropped to the floor, her sword clanging loudly as it landed.

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Frank stayed silent for a long while and eventually nodded. "Well done!" "Frank!" "Darling!" Frank soon heard shouts from the outside, and he went out to find several familiar figures running toward him.

Naturally, it was Helen, Vicky, Kiki, Winter, and Mona—Trevor had managed to free them from the guest room just now.

"Are you alright, Frank?" Helen cried as she ran up to Frank, holding his face and checking everywhere, only breathing a sigh of relief when she saw him unhurt.

On the other hand, Vicky was being her usual comedic self.

Instead of throwing herself into Frank's arms, she dropped to a crouch in front of Frank's crotch, staring sternly as she demanded, "Talk to me, junior. Was my darling cheating on us?" "Quit it, Vicky!" Frank snapped exasperatedly.

Curiously, the women all appeared unconcerned—even lively—despite being held hostage for an entire night.

"Frank... I-I thought | wouldn't see you again..." Winter was much more honest in contrast, tearfully throwing herself into Frank's arms and bawling.

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Mona stood nearby awkwardly, blinking.

"Hmm..." she mused as she glanced at Frank. "Should | be hugging you too, Frank?" "Quit it." Frank shoved her away even as she moved up.

Kiki was the last to arrive, clicking her tongue in wonder as she watched the other ladies chattering, pouting, flirting, or bawling around Frank.

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"What's this, Trevor?" Frank asked when he saw Trevor Zurich arrive with his men.

Trevor grinned. "It seems that they weren't subject to any abuse—Maron might have an agenda here, but it was just house arrest at best. In fact, they were kept in the guest room and not the basement."

"Yeah, don't worry, Frank—we're fine," Helen said with a smile.

"What do you mean 'fine'?" Vicky folded her arms before her chest, snapping in annoyance. "I had to sleep in the sbed with you, and you almost knockedoff! Go on a diet, Helen!" "S-Shut it!" Helen blushed, retorting loudly, "You go on a diet!" "Tut, tut. Denying it with all that flab around your belly?" Vicky reached out to pinch Helen's stomach right then.

Helen leapt away, snapping, "Stop getting all touchy! Show sdignity—you're an heiress!" "| can do whatever | like!" Vicky exclaimed as she leapt at Helen, pulling up her shirt to show the others. "See? She's gaining sbelly fat, don't you think?" "Letgo, Vicky!" Helen cried and struggled in embarrassment, pulling her shirt down since she could feel Frank's eyes on her.

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"But Helen's figure is just fine. There's no belly, is there?" Mona said solemnly just then.

"Oh, my bad. The flab is around here." Vicky kept coppin feel, while Helen struggled and flushed in frustration.

"Why so serious? You're such a killjoy," Vicky giggled.

"Well, what about you?!" Helen suddenly retaliated and groped Vicky in turn.

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As they kept tussling and exposing each other, Frank was looking on in bliss.

"Quit gawking." Winter shot him a pouting look, suddenly not crying.

"Ah." Frank scratched his head and chuckled awkwardly.

Either way, he was relieved that they were all fine.

"Leave no loose ends." Half an hour later, Frank was standing at the gates of Salazar House and instructing Trevor to deal with the rest, and he had someone send Quinn back to Sage Lake Sect.

"Oh, as for him..." Frank pointed at Eron, who sat on the ground nearby, staring stupidly into thin air. "Deliver him to the White family of Southdam, and show them these." "Yes, Mr. Lawrence." Trevor nodded respectfully, taking the written pledges.

Frank suddenly narrowed his eyes. "And send more people on protection detail. I don't want another kidnapping ever again, you hear?" Trevor could feel the frightening dark aura spilling away from Frank and quickly nodded. "Yes, Mr.

Lawrence. I'll be more careful from now on." "Good." Frank nodded and started to leave but soon paused again. "Oh, and do help look into the Leaf family of Norsedam."

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"Yes, Mr. Lawrence." Trevor agreed to it right away without asking any questions.

Frank then returned to his Maybach to find it congested, with the ladies arguing endlessly on who got to ride shotgun.

Eventually, Winter triumphed, not because Vicky or Helen actually lost, but because neither woman could stand the thought of the other riding shotgun.

"Hmph. I've ridden shotgun with my darling many times anyway," Vicky huffed, folding her arms before her chest.

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"Who's your darling? How brazen," Helen snapped, her ice-like beauty persona long forgotten.

"Oh, just stop it already..." Frank was left rubbing his brow—his days of peace were long gone.

"I won't be going back to Skywater Bay," Kiki said, standing outside the car and waving him goodbye.

"The Soranos have given up on after Hubert Sorano's death, and I can live the way I want to now." "Are you going to be alright?" Frank frowned, somehow worried.

"Don't worry. Vicky has my back!" Kiki grinned and winked at Vicky, while Vicky smiled in turn.

"Then take care." Frank nodded. "You can still give a shout if you run into trouble again." "Sure." Kiki smiled as she parted ways with them.

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Even as Frank drove back to Riverton, listening to the ladies squabble in the back, he somehow found cheer instead of annoyance.

Sage Lake Sect was no longer a threat after this. Even their sect chief Dahok Ocean made it clear that they were all at Frank's disposal if he just said the word.

As for Quinn, she was taken to the sect after avenging her father under Dahok's grooming. If there were no surprises, she might well be the next sect chief.

And then there was Silverbell...

Frank had left her at Sage Lake Sect since he was reluctant to get involved any further.

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It had been an awkward encounter from the start, and Frank was not about to forget it any time soon. - The journey back to Riverton was smooth, and things were peaceful again.

Winter and Mona were attending college, while Helen and Vicky were busy with work since they now shared a new factory and precision equipment. It was even rare for Frank to see them at times, as the partnership between Grande Pharma and Lane Holdings meant a truckload of work to be done.

As for Frank, he continued his usual routine while waiting for word from Trevor. He even made to give a lecture at Riverton University, as the week passed by in peace.

One day, Helen told him early in the morning with a dead serious look.

"Hey, bum." She smiled. "I see that you're restless from too much free time... and I have a job for you." While her smile was rare before, Frank was getting used to it recently, since she was in a perpetual good mood ever since she moved into Skywater Bay.

Shrugging, he said, "Just cut to the chase. Honestly, you talk like Vicky these days." "Huh.?" Helen's smile stiffened, and she frowned as she wondered if Frank was right.

She eventually sighed because he was indeed right—Vicky was having an influence over her since they had been hanging out a lot lately.

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Helen waved him off, smiling faintly. "Just give it a rest—I bring good tidings, as we Northstream Lanes are now completely a part of the Lane family again." "Uh huh, and?" Frank remained unaffected.

Helen was not surprised and kept smiling. "Well, that's not all. Uncle Gavin also told that I'm now a candidate for the head of the family!" "Just a candidate?" Frank snorted in disdain.

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"Hey, don't get too greedy!" Helen bumped him in the head, giggling. "Others would have to rack their brains scheming just to get the opportunity. It's already amazing that someone like me, who was only recently taken back, was chosen at all!" To be honest, Helen was as apathetic about being brought back to the main family as Frank was. They would only be a branch of relatives, having a superficial relationship with the Southstream Lanes without any meaningful exchange.

As such, becoming a candidate for the next head of the family was different! The title alone carried weight and position over the entire Lane family, unlike being mere relatives—it was a chance to turn things around! Now, Helen just had to beat her rivals and prove her ability to Mark Lane.

If she could on top, she would be the leader of a dynasty in the most genuine sense! "Oh, congratulations," Frank said without sincerity.



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He knew all too well that Helen's Uncle Gavin was smart—Gavin could see that Frank was connected to someone very important and therefore chose Helen as a potential heir just to curry Frank's favor.

However, it was virtually assured that Helen would never be the head of the Lane family.

Specifically, Mark's other heirs would never let Helen, a | x NS to stand above them, let alone one who had just returned to the family.

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If she did, they would be utterly humiliated.

"So!" Helen snorted proudly, clapping Frank on the shoulder as she grinned. "I'm going to be the head of the family! Forget about Vicky Turnbull while you can and fawn all over me. It'd be too late for regrets when | actually get my meteoric rise!" Her smug look actually left Frank laughing and nodding in amusement.

"Sure, sure. I'll be sure to fawn all over you when you be the head of your family.

His clearly half-hearted reply left Helen pouting.

"Be serious! | know | am!" she snapped unhappily, standing akimbo. "Once I'm the head of the Lane family, I'll be Vicky's equal... No, I'll even outrank her! She won't get to strut when that happens!" Though Helen reared her chin as she announced her ambitions proudly, Frank was left smiling in wry amusement. "So that's what it was all about." Helen remained motivated, however, as she was aware that Vicky always had an edge over her.

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In the end, Vicky was the heiress of an important family.

Helen certainly dulled in comparison, just as her pride could not take it.

Therefore, now that she had the chance to be the head of the Lane family and be an equal of Vicky's, she would seize it.

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As for who would cup on top, that depended entirely on their respective abilities! Ring...

Helen's phone started jingling just then, and she answered it. "Hello?" Gina was immediately snapping, "Where are you? Cback to the manor right now! Remember Madam Lang, Mark's second wife? She's here, and she's also being very specific about wanting to see you!" "She wants to see me? Why?" Helen asked even as she glanced at Frank.

Mark was brother to Henry Lane—Helen's grandfather—and had married three wives in his younger days. It also happened to be the reason Henry and Mark had parted ways in the past.

Nonetheless, Gina was at once cheerful, "Oh, don't you get it? It must be because your uncle has informed you that you're a candidate to be the next head of the family! Madam Lang must have to curry your favor! We've definitely hit the jackpot this time!" "Alright, got it." Helen raised a brow at Frank as she hung up. "See? Speak of the devil indeed." "Hehe." Frank chuckled, waving her off since he did not want to rain on her parade. "Alright. See you around." "Wait, have you already forgotten what I told you to do?" Helen snapped in annoyance at his nonchalance.

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"What was it?" a "You're coming with to see Madam Lang," Helen said happily. "You're now family, and you play a role in whether I be the next head of the family. Don't think you can run away now! Well, I don't mind granting you the honor of winning my favor before I'm actually promoted as the next head of the family. I'm going to get changed now." Since Frank was not arguing, she jogged off to her room, humming happily as she prepared to dress up nicely.

Frank looked on, shaking his head in exasperation.

Frank parked his Maybach outside Lane Manor an hour later.

He and Helen were certainly dressed to impress, as he was forced by Helen to wear a formal black suit, while Helen wore a black gown with a side slit.

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Lane Manor was seeing quite a number of guests today, with the entire drawing room filled to the brim with people.

Naturally, the most impressive among them was the elderly woman seated on the centermost couch, holding a black walking stick and wearing a ton of shimmery jewelry and elaborate makeup. Even if her hair was frizzled, she appeared spirited and her dress was trendy.

Jade Zahn was there with her daughter Luna Lane too, though they were clearly looking impatient as they sipped on their coffee.

On the other hand, Gina stood respectfully at a corner with her hand clasped, not allowed to sit but obviously worshipful toward Fleur Lang.

For season, she looked no different from a servant despite owning the manor.

"Oh, Helen! Finally! What took you so long? Madam Lang was getting impatient..." Gina hurried to Helen when she saw her, but her face fell and she snorted when she saw Frank. "Who told you to tag along, Frank Lawrence?! That cheek of yours to show up here. Fine, since you canyway, you can explain yourself! How did your father's so-called ruby turn out to be just sglass orb?!" "Glass orb?" Frank frowned. "You definitely messed up there. I never liked Fenton, but he'd never dupewith scheap counterfeit—he knows what the consequences would be if he does."

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Gina was getting more frustrated by the minute. "Hah! Still trying to fool me? Cindy had Randall Young of Square Street appraise it personally. That man is a specialist, and he said it's a glass orb worth no more than twenty bucks—or are you saying he's wrong?! Don't think you can have my daughter with a mere trinket. At least payfifty million dollars in dowry if you want to marry her!" Even as Gina pulled Helen along, glaring at Frank viciously, Helen tried to calm things down. "Did you make a mistake, Mom? Frank would never make a mistake." "A mistake?! The evidence is right there! Frank is a liar!" Gina snapped angrily. "He might even be lying about forcing Titus Lionheart to submit! Don't fall for his lies, Helen!" "Enough!" Frank snapped coolly but keeping his voice low as he could see the Southstream Lanes were watching them gleefully. "Where's Cindy? Why don't you ask her?" "C-Cindy?" Gina was suddenly stammering. "S-Something cup at her college, and she was told to return abroad." "So you're an idiot." Frank snorted.

"What did you just say to me?!" Gina strode up, ready to hit him.

Helen caught her, however, and snapped impatiently, "Stop it, Mom! Where's the ruby now?" "I-It's." Gina stammered again. "Cindy said she threw it away in frustration. It's not worth anything anyway..." "What." Seeing how stupid her mother was, Helen laughed despite herself. "Don't you know what Cindy's like? Do you think she'd tell you if she took the ruby for an appraisal and it turned out to be real?" "No way!" Gina shook her head. "It's just a ruby—she'd never lie to me." "If she didn't lie to you, where is she now?" Frank interrupted bluntly.

"What." Gina choked as if swallowing a fly.

"Also," Frank added, "that ruby was a property of Talnam royalty and worth at least ten billion dollars in cash." "Ten billion in cash?!" Gina's mouth widened into a circular shape in shock, but she soon shook her head. "No, you're definitely lying! You're a pathological liar. It's just impossible!" "Con, Mom. It's true!" Helen snapped.

Though it was the first time she heard about how much the ruby was worth, she trusted Frank unconditionally and urged, "Call Cindy already, Mom. Tell her to bring that ruby back." "Oh, dream on. If my hunch is right, Cindy's already sold it," Frank said, shaking his head—he was more than familiar with Cindy's behavior. "And right now, she'd be abroad indulging herself." "Curse you, Cindy! I'll kill you!" Gina almost jumped as she whipped out her phone, but the only response she got was static beeping.

Helen did the same. "I can't get through either, Mom." "Goddamnit..." Gina groaned.

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Gina dropped to her bottom, unable to cry no matter how she wanted to, feeling hollow inside.

How could she have known that the ruby Frank threw at her was worth that much?! "What are you doing over there?! Can't you see that Madam Lang has been waiting for so long?! Where are your manners and proper upbringing?!" On the other hand, Jade finally had enough and snapped from afar, slamming her cup on the glass table with an audible clang.

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That was especially the case for Gina, sitting on the floor like a fishwife.

"Forget it—we can save this, for later. Let's go back to business," Frank said calmly right then, knowing how important the meeting today was for Helen.

Helen realized with a start at his words. It was true—she was still thinking about the ruby, but what was at hand was more important.

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Jade then extended a hand as she introduced, "Helen, meet Madam Lang. She's your grandmother twice removed, and her words are absolute in the Southstream Lane household." As she spoke, she glanced at Gina—who was still sitting on the floor—and fumed, "What's with that scowl?! Pour Madam Lang tea already!" "It's fine, I'll do it." Helen forced a smile and quickly poured a cup of tea, offering it to Madam Lang respectfully with both hands.

However, Fleur Lang simply snorted at her and turned away. "How uncouth." Beside them, Jade pointed at Helen and snapped, "Is that how you serve tea to your elders?! Don't you know the tradition?!" "Tradition?" Helen did a double take—this was the way Berved her own grandfather tea as a child. What tradition were these people talking about? "It's alright, Madam Lang. They cfrom a hick town and wouldn't know upper-class tradition," Jade told Fleur before turning towards Helen with a sneer. "Get down on your knees and hold the teacup over your head. That's how you serve tea to your elders with sincerity." "Get down on my knees?" Helen frowned.

What kind of tradition was that? If it had existed, it must have existed over decades if not centuries...

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Did the so-called upper class maintain this horrible tradition all this while?! "What, are you refusing, Helen?" Jade folded her arms before her chest while snorting sarcastically. "Are you dissatisfied with Madam Lang, or our family's tradition?" "Start learning our tradition if you consider yourself a part of our family, brat," Fleur added just then. "If you are ignorant of something so basic, you have no right to lead us." Hearing that Helen might not be the head of the family, Gina suddenly cto her senses.

Flustered, she hurried over and took the teacup from Helen, dropping to her knees and holding it over her head.

"I'm sorry, Madam Lang. Helen is just a little slow—she'll learn it soon enough," Gina then breathed reverently like a slave.

Even Frank felt sick to the stomach as he stood aside.

That was when Fleur spoke again, "Who do you think you are, serving tea?" At the time, she was looking haughtily downward at Gina, showing no intention to take the cup.

"Oh..." Gina's smile stiffened, and she had no choice but to slowly pass the teacup to Helen, pleading, "Go on, Helen. There's nothing embarrassing about kneeling to your elders anyway." Helen frowned but eventually sighed as she dropped to her knees with a thud.

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Jade snorted coolly right then. "Could've done that earlier, but you had to drag your feet. How impudent." Beside her, Luna's eyes flashed with obvious glee, as if Helen was kneeling to her and not to Fleur.

She was clearly upset that Helen was chosen as a candidate for the next head of the Lane family, but so what if she was? In the end, Helen still had to kneel before her grandma.

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On the other hand, Frank was frowning as he watched Helen kneel.

He was already sick of such ugly tradition, and even Godwin Lawrence—the most corrupt man Frank ever knew— never maintained such tradition.

In contrast, the fact that spaltry households would maintain it made it clear they were used to bullying the younger generation.

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Still, Frank bore with it, staying silent since being a candidate for the next head of the Lane family was very important to Helen.

Meanwhile, Fleur remained apathetic as she sat there, watching Helen kneel. She waited until Helen's fingers started shaking from holding the teacup before nodding in satisfaction, and slowly took it.

However, she only took a sip when her face fell, and she spat it at Helen's face! Smashing the teacup into pieces on the floor, she pointed at Helen and snapped, "You wretch! Are you trying to burn me?!" "What the hell, Helen?" Luna exclaimed, glaring at Helen while bringing a towel to wipe Fleur's lips. "Are you trying to hurt Grandma?!" Helen scowled—Luna and Fleur's reactions were clearly scripted and meant to frighten! And the fact that Fleur spat the tea at her meant this was a barefaced insult.

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In fact, Fleur did not because she was interested in Helen as a candidate for the next head of the Lane family. Instead, she was here to assert her authority over Helen and bully her! At the time, Jade was glowering and shouting at Helen, "What's your problem? You can't even make a cup of tea?!" "She's just used to keeping company with savages," Luna gloated gleefully. "She knows nothing of the tradition of the upper class." "Oh, it's just a misunderstanding." Gina promptly cleaned up the mess on the floor, shaking her head. "I had the tea myself. It won't burn!" Fleur's face fell. "What, are you accusing of lying? That I'm harassing Helen?" "No, no, no, of course not." Gina quickly apologized, afraid of arguing at all.

Jade, Fleur, and Luna were smiling gleefully at Gina's spooked reaction—she was clearly spineless, and her daughter would not amount to much.

Someone like Helen end up as the head of the Lane family? No chance! But since they were accepted back into the family, they should properly break her so that she would understand who held the power in the family. It was the only way to make Helen and Gina understand that they should know their place and never covet what would always lie beyond their reach! "What are you spacing out for, Helen?" Luna snapped authoritatively, glaring at Helen despite her inward delight.

"Serve Grandma again, and make sure the temperature's right this time!" "You heard Luna," Jade growled, rearing her chin.

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"O-Okay, I'll do it right away," Gina exclaimed and promptly poured another cup of tea, handing it to Helen and giving her a look.

Helen clenched her knuckles, ready to refuse serving it to Fleur again, when she remembered Vicky.

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Even now, the difference between them was huge—becoming the head of the Lane family was Helen's only way to turn the tables against Vicky.

As Helen prepared to reach out and take the tea cup, Frank, who already had enough, snatched the cup off her hands.

Gina did a double take but was soon incensed. "What are you doing, Frank?!" Was he going to mess up yet another monumental opportunity for her?! If he upset Fleur, forget about Helen becoming the next head of the Lane family—they would be exiled again! "Frank..." Helen was murmuring.

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She certainly knew that Frank had enough and was saving her from further misery.

Still, just as everyone was left hesitating, Frank snorted as he briskly flung the tea at Fleur's face.

"Argh!" Fleur shrieked as the brown tea splashed all over her, melting her thick makeup instantly.

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"Have you gone crazy?!" Gina sprang to her feet as if jolted, snapping at Frank while bringing a towel to wipe Fleur's face.

On the other hand, Jade was afraid of Frank's connections but yelled at him anyway, "This is our family's business! You don't get to meddle!" "That's right!" Luna screamed as well. "You and Helen have yet to remarry, and that means you're not family! You have no place here!" [x] Frank remained perfectly calm as he put the teacup on the table, a stark contrast to the others in the room.

Sneering, he asked, "Family business? I don't know about that, but Madam Lang there was saying it burns, so I was just testing it." Turning toward Fleur even as she quivered with rage, Frank shook his head. "I guess it didn't burn, or you'd be on your feet—don't you think? It's the steam from the steapot, so I wonder who's the liar." Fleur shook in fury even as she met his cool eyes.

Her face still dripping wet, she suddenly shoved Gina away as she whipped out a document and slammed it on the table.



"Do you know what this is?!" she snapped in a frenzy, glaring viciously at Helen. "It's the proof of your candidacy that the wretched Mark Lane passed to me! Our family owns a billion-dollar investment company in Southdam, and he was going to appoint you as CEO. But now?!" Wheeling on Frank venomously, she sneered, "I changed my mind because of your dear husband! I'd rather throw it away than pass it to you!" Gina started hyperventilating at Fleur's words. "A billion-dollar investment company?!" If Helen did become CEO, Gina would become rich and powerful as she had always dreamed of! Frank's Talnam ruby certainly dulled in comparison! "Go on, Helen! Serve Madam Lang tea!" Gina exclaimed in such a thrill that she almost broke her voice.