

## Chapter 2526

The two of them were collecting spiritual water, but Zeke could figure out with one glance that was not their true aim.

The sun was high up in the sky, and there was definitely no spiritual water around.

Hence, Zeke worked out that the brothers must be waiting for him to ask about Hawkeye.

The moment Zeke cleared his throat, Yannick and Yoshua rose to their feet with a smile. "Mr. Williams, you're back."

"What are the two of you doing here?"

Yannick answered, "Well, we're collecting spiritual water. We didn't want you to be the only one working hard to collect spiritual water, so we tried to help out."

"The sun is bright now. You know there will be no spiritual water at this time."

An awkward smile grew on Yoshua's lips. "I... Who knows? Maybe there are spiritual water droplets around."

"That's enough. Stop with the riddles. You want to ask me how I dealt with Hawkeye, don't you?"

Immediately, the brothers widened their eyes, clearly nervous. However, they tried their best to look calm as they said, "Please don't misunderstand us, Mr. Williams. We're not trying to stop you from going anywhere... But since you've mentioned it, may we know how you're planning to deal with Hawkeye? Although Hawkeye is the murderer of our father, we won't make things difficult for you if you want to keep him around."

Zeke reassured them by saying, "Be at ease. He'll die after five days. Indeed, he's useful to me, but only for these five days. Five days. later, his usefulness will run out, and I won't keep him alive."

At that, the Lewis brothers let out a sigh of relief. "Thank you for that, Great Marshal."

"Come on. Let's go back."

The brothers then each took a spot beside Zeke, and the trio returned.

On their way back, exclamations and sounds of laughter could be heard.

Yoshua wondered out loud, "What's going on at the base? Why is it so lively all of a sudden?"

Yannick responded, "What else? Minerva must have come back after exchanging for meat."

"It's just a bit of meat, but these people are going mad at the sight of it. Life here is like hell."

"And I thought that believing in Theos Sect and coming to Theos Island meant living a life like a god. Who knew this place is worse than hell? I'd rather die than live an awful life like this."

Yoshua turned to Zeke nervously and asked, "Uh... Mr. Williams, you'll take us away from this place, right?" Zeke nodded in affirmation. "Theos Sect has committed an unforgivable sin. I'll destroy the entire sect."

His reassurance made the brothers sigh in relief. Both were sure that Zeke would succeed in his plan.

After all, the man was the Great Marshal. What could the Great Marshal possibly not do?

Not long after, they arrived at the base.

Everyone was snatching the meat like starving wolves.

It had been a while since Yannick and Yoshua had eaten any meat, so they, too, could not help but lunge forward to get some as well.

At that moment, Minerva was pacing outside the crowd, seemingly in search of someone.

Zeke called out to her, "Minerva, what are you doing?"

Minerva jogged over to him when she saw him. "Mr. Williams, I've finally found you."

"Oh, you were looking for me?"

"The Chieftain is looking for you. He told me to convey the message to you."

Hmm?

Zeke was surprised by that. "Why is the Chieftain looking for me?"

Minerva speculated, "I'm guessing that the Chieftain has a favor to ask of you because he tried to give me free meat. There's no such thing as a free lunch in this world. He must be up to no good."

Zeke hummed, contemplating. "All right, I'll go and meet him."

Even if Johan did not come to him, Zeke was going to look for him.

The moment Zeke laid eyes on the Chieftain, he had sensed something familiar about the man, and that sense of familiarity made him relax.

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His instincts told him that Johan was not an enemy.

"Mr. Williams, can you promise me something?" Minerva asked.

"What is it?"

"If what the Chieftain asks you to do endangers your life, you have to reject him, okay? W-We can't afford to lose you."

Zeke nodded. "Don't worry. Thus far, no one in this world poses any threat to my life."

With that, Zeke turned to leave.

Minerva caught up with him and added, "Mr. Williams, why don't I come with you? It'll be better if you have someone else by your side."

Zeke patted her shoulders. "Stay. I swear to you I'll be fine."

Zeke knew it was highly likely that the Chieftain had asked to meet him to discuss secrets. Therefore, no outsiders should be there.

"All right..." Minerva muttered in disappointment and concern.

However, when Zeke walked away from her, he felt something warm seep into his heart.

Minerva was worried about me just now! It looks like the people here aren't completely hopeless. There's a chance they can be human again if I save them from this place.

Shortly after, Zeke arrived at the Chieftain's manor.

When he arrived, Johan was watering the plants, seemingly having all the time in the world.

Zeke was the first to speak. "What a surprise that you can have a hobby in a place like this, Chieftain. I'm impressed."

Johan turned around and gave Zeke a small smile. "You must be joking, Mr. Williams. Come in and have a seat. I've prepared some good tea in preparation for your arrival."

"Let's go."

Johan then led Zeke into his house.

The house was simple but clean.

Johan poured a cup of tea for Zeke, but instead of trying it, Zeke said, "Chieftain, why were you looking for me?"

Johan, who was in the middle of pouring tea, froze for a while before he lowered his hands.

He then rose to his feet and went to close the door and the windows. After that, he came back to his seat and whispered, "Mr. Williams, have you gotten used to this place yet?"

Zeke cast a curious look at Johan. "Should I say I've gotten used to it, or should I not?"

Johan chuckled bitterly. "You can speak the truth, Mr. Williams." "Sort of, I guess."

"Oh, if you've gotten used to it... then never mind."

"What if I say I'm not used to it?"

Johan hesitated.

"It's fine. Just tell me. I swear I won't say a word about anything we talk about today."

Only then did Johan utter cautiously, "What I mean is that, if you're not used to this place, perhaps you can choose to leave."

Leave?

Zeke's expression turned solemn. "Chieftain, you have a way to get the people off this island?"

Instead of answering his question, Johan asked, "Mr. Williams, why did you come to Theos Island?"

"I came to look for someone. My wife... is probably on this island."

"Oh?" Johan raised a brow. "Have you found your wife yet?"

Zeke shook his head. "I haven't."

The Chieftain was silent for a while. "If I manage to find your wife, will you leave the island with your wife?"

Zeke nodded without hesitation. "Of course. Chieftain, do you have a way to get me off this d\*mn place?"

"I do, but you have to help me out a little before you leave."

"What is it?"

"Promise me you'll bring all those members in the outer district out."

Zeke fixed his burning gaze on Johan. "Why? Aren't you scared that Theos Sect will come for you once I bring them away?"

Johan sighed. "I'm but old bones now. It doesn't matter if I die. If I get to save a group of people before I die, I'll get to die in peace."

Zeke took a deep breath. "Why do you want to save them?"

Johan gave Zeke a small smile. "Young man, if my guess is right, you've spent time in the Military District in the North of Eurasia, am I right?"

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"How do you know?" Zeke asked.

"I can sense your aura. You carry the air of a soldier from the North. This is a quality that cannot be masqueraded. Besides, your aura is very intense, so I suppose you have stayed in the Military District in the North for a long time."

Zeke nodded. "That's right. If you can sense the air of a soldier from the North on me, I assume you must've served in the Military District in the North as a soldier too."

Johan flashed a bitter smile. "Mr. Williams, have you heard of Cygnus Room?"

Zeke bobbed his head. "Of course." Not only have I heard of Cygnus Room, but I'm also the one who established it.

"Strictly speaking, we are considered comrade-in-arms. Actually, I am from Cygnus Room, and Cygnus Room is a subsidiary body of the Military District in the North."

"Oh?" Zeke was surprised. "I did not expect you to be from the Cygnus Room. All the soldiers from the North are extremely loyal to the Great Marshall, so why did you betray Cygnus Room and join Theos Sect in the past?"

Johan was slightly infuriated. "Mr. Williams, you shouldn't go around spewing nonsense. How can you associate a soldier from the North like me with committing a betrayal?"

"Oh? In that case, I would like to ask why you have joined Theos Sect."

Johan let out a long sigh. "It's a long story. In fact, Cygnus Room noticed signs of Theos Sect's activity in Eurasia a few years ago. However, due to Theos' over-secretive nature, we failed to grasp much information about the sect. In order to get a better understanding of Theos Sect and eliminate them once and for all, Cygnus Room assigned me to sneak into the sect to carry out an investigation and obtain evidence. In the end, my investigation led me all the way to Theos Island. Then, I realized there was no way for me to leave this place, and I lost all means of communicating with Cygnus Room's headquarters. After that, I had no choice but to stay on Theos Island and spend the rest of my life pretending to be one of their followers."

"Unintentionally, I climbed the ranks and became a Chieftain of Theos Sect. All these years, I've never stopped investigating Theos. I've finally found a way to leave Theos Island recently, but the method is too harsh and cruel, not to mention it will inflict a heavy toll on my body. I'm already very old now, so I cannot withstand these torments anymore. I planned to give up, but your appearance reignited my hopes. I want you to lead the worshippers in the outer district to leave this hellhole."

Zeke regarded Johan with a faint smile. "Why do you trust me? Aren't you afraid that I will reveal your secret to Theos?"

Johan responded, "There's already no way out for me, so I can only risk it all and place all my hopes on you. Moreover, I can tell you're a man of honor and justice, so it is unlikely you will do anything detrimental to the North Regiment."

He paused briefly before continuing, "Alas, I'm also suffering from lung cancer, so I don't have much longer to live. If I don't hurry and find someone who can bring these believers and the information I collected out of here, I'm afraid there won't be a chance for me to do so in the future."

"Oh?" Zeke glanced at Johan. "Lung cancer?"

Johan nodded.

Zeke casually grabbed Johan's hand, wanting to take his pulse.

Taken aback, Johan attempted to retract his hand. "Stop that! What are you trying to do?"

"Stay still. I'm checking your pulse."

"You're adept at medicine too?" Johan asked curiously.

"Of course."

Johan was in disbelief. "If that's the case, you must be a military doctor in the North. As far as I'm concerned, military doctors never engage with enemies in frontline battles, nor do they need to learn to protect themselves. However, your combat prowess is exceptional... Did you hold an important position in the army? Only the higher-ups are proficient in both medical and combat skills."

Zeke chuckled inwardly. I'm the Great Marshal. I wonder if you will consider me one of the North's higher-ups.

Soon, Zeke was done checking Johan's pulse. "There is a disease spreading in your chest due to the accumulation of negative energy in your body. You are indeed suffering from lung cancer. However, there is still a way to cure your condition."

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Johan burst out laughing. "Young man, are you making fun of me? There's no way to cure cancer. Besides, I have late-stage lung cancer, so it is almost impossible for me to live for another one or two years, perhaps not even a few more months."

Zeke remained silent and merely took out his Ammo Needle. Then, he said to Johan, "Lie down."

Johan was stunned. "What do you mean?"

"Lie down. I'm going to treat your illness now."

Johan was rendered speechless. "That's enough, young man. Cygnus Room is the most advanced medical facility in Eurasia. I picked up some medical skills when I stayed in Cygnus

Room in the past under the influence of the healthcare-oriented environment there. I've already diagnosed my condition as late-stage lung cancer, and there is nothing you can do to save me. Your futile attempt will only worsen my disease."

Sensing Johan's reluctance to cooperate, Zeke straightaway pushed him down and poked him with the silver needles.

"What are you doing?" Johan roared furiously.

Still, Zeke's movements were too quick as he was done applying all the needles on Johan in the blink of an eye.

By the time Johan wanted to get up and put up a resistance, Zeke had already completed the treatment session using his Ammo Needle.

Johan widened his eyes and stared intently at Zeke. "W-What have you done to me? WWhere are you trying to harm me? It seems that I've misjudged you."

Zeke smiled. "How do you feel now?"

"I-"

Before Johan could finish the rest of his sentence, he felt a burning and tightening sensation in his chest as if a ball of gas was churning and ricocheting within him.

The next second, he opened his mouth and spat out mouthfuls of contaminated blood uncontrollably, expelling the negative energy in his chest cavity, too, in the process.

Subsequently, Johan felt his breathing improved significantly, and his terrible lung cancer symptoms had also reduced.

"T-This..."

Johan was too excited to utter any words. Is there really a cure for my condition? So, this young man was saving me instead of hurting me?

He took in deep breaths of fresh air and realized that not only was he feeling better physically, but he also felt more relieved emotionally.

Nevertheless, his facial expression swiftly turned somber again following the fleeting moment of joy.



Johan was very confident that he suffered from late-stage lung cancer. Under normal circumstances, there shouldn't be any cure for that condition. However, this young man was able to nurse me back to health using a few silver needles. How did he treat me using those silver needles, and why is this therapy so effective?

To the best of Johan's knowledge, the only acupuncture technique that could achieve such tremendous results was Ammo Needle, the acupuncture technique invented by the Great Marshal. What is this young man's relationship with the Great Marshal?

Johan bored his eyes into Zeke. "T-Tell me the truth. Did you use Ammo Needle on me just now? Tell me about your relationship with the Great Marshal. From what I know, aside from the Great Marshal, only a few of his trusted aids practice Ammo Needle, and even their knowledge on this subject is superficial."

Zeke took out a piece of jade from his pocket.

It was none other than the jade seal. When Johan saw the jade seal, tears streamed down his face instantaneously, and he fell to his knees before Zeke with a thud.

His voice shook due to the waves of emotions overwhelming him at that moment. "The jade seal! The Great Marshal's jade seal. You're the Great Marshal! It's an honor to meet you, Great Marshal!"

Zeke knitted his brows. He immediately released a stream of energy to form a small barrier around the Chieftain's manor to prevent others from hearing Johan addressing him as the Great Marshal.

If Zeke's identity were exposed, his effort thus far would be in vain, and that setback would affect his master plan.

He said, "Get up."

However, Johan did not get up. Instead, he uttered emotionally, "Great Marshal, I've been trapped on Theos Island for decades. I've been thinking of my home and comrades in the North all these years. I even dreamed about reuniting with my comrades in my sleep, but little did I anticipate the Great Marshal's advent... Haha! I can die without regret now!"

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Zeke said, "Get up. Your place isn't safe. If others find out my identity as the Great Marshal, you won't be able to bear the consequences."

It was only then Johan realized the seriousness of the situation. He quickly got up. "Great Marshal, please forgive me. I was too worked up."

Zeke replied, "All right. Do you know the geographical location of Theos Island?"

Johan shook his head in response. "I'm sorry, Great Marshal. I've been investigating it for several years, but I still can't find out where it is. Theos Island is... Ah, I'm afraid it's not in the same space or dimension as the world we came from. Otherwise, there's no way I shouldn't be able to determine its geographical location."

"But you just said that you have a way to send hundreds of people from the outer district out. Do you mind explaining that?" Zeke inquired.

"Although I don't know where this place is, I know that there's a space passage that leads directly to Eurasia, and a talisman of space is the key to the passage. Over the years, I've accumulated countless drops of spiritual water to nourish a talisman of space. Now, this talisman of space has become extremely powerful, so it's theoretically possible for it to transport hundreds of people at the same time."

Zeke fell into deep thought. "Then do you have a way to transport large quantities of people from the outside in?"

Johan shook his head. "This can't be done. for the time being because there are two types of talisman of space. One sends people from Theos Island to the outside while the other sends people from the outside to Eurasia, and the talisman of space I've nurtured for decades is the former type. It can only transport people to the outside, but it can't bring people from the outside here to Theos Island."

"If I now ask you to nourish a talisman of space that sends people from the outside to here, can you do it?" Zeke asked.

Johan replied, "Yes, it's possible, but it will take several years! No matter how much spiritual water I have, it's useless; it takes time to nourish talismans of space."

Zeke shook his head in disappointment. It seems like this way can't work. I can't wait for several years.

He then asked Johan, "Have you ever seen the so-called 'Theos'? Is there a way for me to find him?"

Johan shook his head. "No. Ever since I came to Theos Island, Theos has never shown himself. On the entire island, only two people have ever seen Theos. They are the Camp Masters from

the north and south. There's a ritual held every five years, and the two Camp Masters can communicate with Theos in person then."

"Great Marshal, if you wish to meet Theos, it's not impossible," Johan added meaningfully.

"Oh? Elaborate."

"The first option is to create chaos. By stirring immense trouble on Theos Island, you can interrupt the ritual offering of spiritual objects to Theos. With that, he will appear. Or you can compete for the position of Camp Master. Coincidentally, the ritual is next month. If you become a Camp Master, you can talk face-to-face with Theos."

Zeke responded, "We can't go with the first option."

"Why?" Johan asked.

With the Great Marshal's abilities, it's not a problem for him to kill everyone on Theos Island. Besides, after forcing Theos to appear, he's probably no match for the Great Marshal either.

In Johan's heart, the Great Marshal was the strongest martial artist in the world, whom no one could surpass. Thus, he had full confidence in Zeke.

Zeke explained, "My wife, Lacey, is in Theos' hands. If I make a huge public disturbance and alert the enemy, I'm afraid that Theos will use my wife to threaten me. That's why I can only conceal my identity to meet him and ambush him while he's caught off guard. Only then can I save my wife."

Johan hurriedly queried, "Was Mrs. Williams personally abducted by Theos?"

Zeke nodded in response.

Johan's curiosity was piqued. "That's odd. Ever since I came to Theos Island, I've never seen Theos make a move. This time, Theos actually came out in person to capture Mrs. Williams... Great Marshal, may I know if there's anything about Mrs. Williams that makes her different from others and worthy for Theos to act personally?"

Wearing a thoughtful expression, Zeke stated, "Lacey is an ultra female."

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Johan voiced, "An ultra female is indeed rare, but that shouldn't be enough to attract Theos' attention. There must be something else unusual about Mrs. Williams."

Zeke bobbed his head. "Yeah. In any case, no matter the cost, I must save my wife."

"Judging from the current situation, the most appropriate way would be for you to become a Camp Master and hide your identity to meet Theos. With your abilities, Great Marshal, becoming a Camp Master is as easy as pie. Leave this matter to me. I'll arrange for you to challenge a Centurion first, then a Legatus. As long as you win, you'll be able to become the Camp Master. A month later, you can meet Theos during the island's ritual."

"Sure. Success is the only option this time." Zeke nodded.

"Understood!"

"Theos is a blight on the country and the people. He even robbed Eurasia's Fortuna and abducted my wife. For committing such serious crimes, I will bring him to justice," Zeke remarked. "Relax and survive in this place. I will bring you out of here safely."

"Yes, sir!"

"Do you have any family in Eurasia?"

Johan nodded. "I have a wife, a daughter, and my eighty-year-old mother."

"All right. Eurasia will definitely not mistreat its heroes and their families. After you escape safely, you'll be rewarded handsomely!" Zeke promised.

Again, Johan was so worked up that he got down on his knees. "Thank you, Great Marshal!"

With that, Zeke left.

Long after he was gone, Johan still couldn't calm down.

What Johan had never dared to dream about in the past had actually happened.

He finally saw a ray of hope.

Without further ado, he stopped dwelling on it and headed to Centuria's district to select an opponent for the Great Marshal.

Only when the Great Marshal successfully challenges a Centurion can he enter Centuria's district and become a Centurion.

After much consideration, Johan finally decided to let the Great Marshal challenge the leader of Calixion, whose name was Calix.

Calix was the weakest among all Centurions, and Calixion was also the weakest group.

Having the Great Marshal challenge an insignificant Centurion would not attract much attention from others.

Before long, Johan arrived at Calixion's base.

Calixion's base was several times larger and stronger than the base of Apollyon's Archfiends.

Calixion had at least a few hundred members, and each of them was extremely skilled.

Otherwise, they wouldn't have made it into Centuria's district.

Just as Johan walked through the rock gate of Calixion, two burly men with weapons in their hands suddenly appeared on both of his sides, stopping him. "Stop. Who the f\*ck let you enter!"

Although Johan was prominent in Contubernium's district and was respected by people there, he was a target of bullying in the Centurion's district.

Even the guards of Calixion dared to disrespect him.

Despite that, Johan was not vexed as he was used to it. "Please inform your Centurion, Calix, that I wish to talk to him."

Oh? The guard looked at him and said, "Why? The Centurion is very busy. He has no time to see you."

Johan replied, "Is it because Calix has heard something? That's why he doesn't have the guts to meet me? Since Calix is scared, forget it then."

"B\*stard!"

A low roar came from a luxurious stone house, which sounded as though it was a roar from a beast.

Upon hearing that voice, the guards were terrified. They quickly bowed in the direction of the door. "Centurion, please calm down. We will chase this d\*mned guy out of this place!" As they spoke, they were about to kick Johan out. "Scram, \*sshole! Are you waiting for our leader to come out and kill you?"

"Hold on!" That baritone voice sounded again. "Since you're here, come and have a seat then."

With that, a burly man stepped out of the stone house.

The chest guard on his chest was bigger than the face of an adult, and murderous intent was written all over his face, causing other people to shudder.

That person was none other than Calixion's Centurion, Calix, who was called "Bloodthirsty Monster" simply because he liked to drink human blood.

## Chapter 2532

With a frosty countenance, Calix stared at Johan. "Old man, you said I was scared just now, and that was why I didn't dare to come out and meet you in person. What do you mean by that?"

Johan looked back at Calix somberly. "Calix, you really don't know?"

Calix became even more perplexed. "Know about what?"

"Oh, I thought you didn't dare to come out because you were scared of the provocation by an insignificant Decanus in the outer district."

Everyone burst out laughing.

"What the h\*ll? Did I hear him correctly? Did this old geezer just say Mr. Calix is afraid of a Decanus from the outer district?"

"So that old geezer is saying that Decanus wants to have a duel with Mr. Calix?" "How dare he do that? If he really challenges Mr. Calix to a duel, Mr. Calix will surely end his life with ease!"

"Mr. Calix, we haven't eaten human flesh for a while. Killing that Decanus can provide us a sumptuous meal."

Calix also scoffed, "Old man, tell me what's going on. In the past five years, no Decanus has dared to challenge the Centurions. Why would a Decanus provoke us all of a sudden? I basically know all those Decani. Tell me his name."

Johan responded, "The outer district is buzzing with the news, so I didn't expect you to not know about it! A newcomer just arrived a few days ago, yet he defeated Megahead and became a Decanus. After that, with his own ability, he gathered the other nine teams. These nine teams are all among the top ten, including Apollyon's Archfiends. That person is no longer satisfied

with being a small Decanus as he wants to challenge a Centurion to a duel and enter the Centurion's district."

Oh?

Everyone was shocked when they heard that.

They didn't expect someone so powerful to appear in the outer district. That warrior not only defeated Megahead but also conquered nine teams that were from the conquered nine teams that were from the top ten teams.

It looks like that guy is not bad.

Nevertheless, Calix still looked down on the other party.

"Haha! He's indeed something else, but in front of me, he can only bow to me. He wants to challenge my position as a Centurion? Sure, I'll grant his wish. Arrange an appointment with him. I'm available at any time. I can finish him off at any moment."

Johan nodded. "Okay. He wants it as soon as possible. I'll ask him when he is available. After he tells me, I'll inform you right away."

"Go ahead!"

Calix waved his hand arrogantly. After Johan was gone, Calix laughed out loud. "Guys, I've noticed that you all seem pretty bored recently. Well, this time, I will personally fight a duel to bring you some entertainment. What do you think?"

The crowd guffawed, responding to him enthusiastically.

"Yeah, it's been boring recently. Mr. Calix, it's an honor to see you fight."

"Mr. Calix, I still remember that you fought a duel about five or six years ago. It was also a Decanus who challenged you. In the end, he was hammered to death."

"Haha. I can still recall that fight vividly. Mr. Calix drank every drop of his blood!"

"Mr. Calix, keep it up! Suck the blood of the ignorant Decanus dry as well this time!"

The air was filled with laughter and cheers instantly as everyone was looking forward to the upcoming battle.

In their hearts, Calix would win for sure. Although there was no suspense at all, they couldn't help but look forward to it too.

Zeke gathered all ten of the Decani.

To make Theos Island fall, he had to understand the terrain of the island.

And who are the people who know the outer areas of Theos Island the most? Surely, it's these Decani.

Zeke planned to work with the ten decani in drawing a map of the outer district of Theos Island.

While they were drawing the map, a figure stopped at the door and blocked the light, causing the narrow room to become dimmer significantly.

What's happening?

## Chapter 2533

Who is it?

Several people glanced at the door. impatiently, only to find that it was Johan, so the expressions of the Decani turned solemn and courteous at once.

They stood up straight and greeted Johan.

"Chieftain, what brings you here?"

"Please have a seat!"

However, Johan ignored them, walking straight to Zeke.

When he reached Zeke, Johan wanted to kneel subconsciously and call Zeke "Great Marshal." However, before he could do that, Zeke cleared his throat, causing Johan to snap back to his senses.

The Great Marshal can't reveal his identity for now. If I spill the beans and ruin his plan, even my death can't make up for my wrongdoing.

Johan hurriedly changed the way he addressed Zeke. "Mr. Williams, I went to ask Calix, a Centurion. He expressed his intention to accept your challenge! Pick a time, and I shall inform Calix about it."



Zeke took a deep breath before replying, "It's going to happen sooner or later, so there's no need to drag things on. Let's get it over with tomorrow."

Johan nodded. "Sure. I'll inform him now."

"Okay, go ahead!"

Johan then wheeled around to leave, but Apollyon stopped him. "Excuse me, Chieftain. Please wait a second."

Johan looked at Apollyon in curiosity. "Yes, is there anything else?"

Apollyon stated. "Chieftain, regarding the challenge to the Centurion, I think we need to reevaluate the matter. Let me discuss this with my fellow Decani first. After that, I'll give you an answer."

Johan could surmise that Apollyon was worried that Zeke would be beaten to death by Calix, so Apollyon didn't want Zeke to challenge the Centurion.

However, his worry for Zeke was completely unnecessary.

Johan had a friendly relationship with Apollyon before. As Apollyon had forced Johan to stay, the latter didn't insist on leaving.

"All right. Go and discuss it then. I'll wait for your reply."

Apollyon glanced toward Zeke. "Mr. Williams, do you really want to challenge the Centurion?"

Zeke answered, "Of course."

"Mr. Williams, I think... it'd be better for you to give up on challenging him." Apollyon sounded concerned.

"Why?"

"Because I'm worried that you're no match for Calix! Since he can be a Centurion, he must have considerable strength and ability. Mr. Williams, do you know his true strength?"

Zeke inquired, "Oh, how strong is he?"

"He's at least an Archduke warrior. There was a Half-Archduke who challenged Calix in the past. And guess what? Calix only made one move and beat him to death."

Besides, Calix even sucked his blood dry like a barbarian. Only an Archduke warrior can take down a Half-Archduke in one move. Besides, after so many years of training, his strength must have improved. immensely. Unless you're an Archduke warrior, you won't survive the fight with him."

Other Decani also chimed in.

"I can confirm that what Apollyon says is true. If I've lied, I'll be struck by lightning!"

"Mr. Williams, you just came here recently, and your status here is not stable yet. Challenging a Centurion now is a reckless move."

"I agree to that. We should calm down and discuss it."

Zeke eyed Johan. "You should go. Tell him I'll fight him tomorrow."

"Okay."

Johan turned on his heel and left, causing the others to smile bitterly.

We might as well not have dissuaded him. The more we try to convince him not to do it, the more determined he becomes.

After Johan was gone, Zeke uttered in a cold tone, "Why are you guys begging for mercy on Calix's behalf and stopping me from fighting him? Do you all have a good relationship with him?"

I...

The Decani didn't know how to respond to that.

We begged you on Calix's behalf? Did that sound as though we did that for Calix? We are just worried that you might be hammered to death!

Apollyon was the first to answer Zeke. "Mr. Williams, we were just doing it for your own good! Frankly, I wish nothing more than for you to finish Calix off. He and I have a deadly feud between us."

## Chapter 2534

Huh?

Zeke asked curiously, "What grudges are there between both of you? Tell us."

When he mentioned that, fury raged in Apollyon's eyes. "Mr. Williams, I might seem like a joke to you, but Calix's current wife is actually mine! He snatched her away from my side forcefully back then. I yearn to take revenge, but since I'm no match for him, I have no choice but to endure this humiliation."

Sighing, he continued, "I can't even be considered a man."

Zeke nodded in agreement. "Indeed, you can't be considered a man."

Apollyon was at a loss for words.

That's too much, Mr. Williams. That's simply too much! Instead of taking pity on me or consoling me, you mock me. That's quite a hurtful blow to my pride, don't you think?

Zeke suddenly asked, "Apollyon, do you want to take revenge personally?"

Gritting his teeth, Apollyon replied, "Of course I want to! I even think about it in my dreams."

Zeke continued, "Very well. Take my place in fighting Calix then."

Apollyon asked, "What do you mean, Mr. Williams?"

"I'm giving you a chance to take revenge. Isn't it obvious?"

"Mr. Williams, you know very well that I'm not Calix's opponent. If I enter the battlefield, I'll be beaten to death by him."

Zeke assured him, "That doesn't matter. I'll advise you accordingly. If you still manage to be defeated by Calix, even with my help, it'll just prove that you're so useless to the point you're beyond hope."

Everyone did not know how to respond to that.

Isn't Mr. Williams over-exaggerating? He probably can't even defeat Calix. However, he's planning on guiding a subordinate to win Calix on his behalf... How much self-confidence does he have to even utter such words?

Minerva assumed that Zeke wanted his subordinate to fight on his behalf because he was too scared.

Giving Apollyon a chance to take revenge was merely a ruse.

That doesn't matter. I'd rather Apollyon die than let Zeke get injured.

Zeke ordered, "To the ten Decani, come to my room tonight. I'll guide you."

"But..."

The moment Apollyon spoke, Zeke interrupted him, "This is a command! Those who refuse to obey may leave immediately."

Apollyon had no choice but to hold his tongue.

After Zeke left, the ten Decani started discussing among themselves.

"Why do you think Mr. Williams is doing this?"

"Is he really thinking on behalf of Apollyon and giving him a chance to take revenge? I don't believe it!"

"I think that he's gathering us together to discuss a strategy."

"Yeah! I'd rather believe that explanation."

"Well, we'll naturally find out after meeting Mr. Williams tonight."

"If Zeke insists on sending Apollyon to his death, I'll be the first to object."

To be honest, although the ten Decani were subservient to Zeke, they were still quite unconvinced about him leading them.

They still treated Apollyon as their main leader and would approach him whenever something happened.

If Zeke forced Apollyon to die on his behalf, they would certainly oppose the decision.

Within the blink of an eye, night arrived.

The ten Decani walked toward Zeke's room nervously.

"What do you think Mr. Williams' going to do?"

"After pondering about it during the day, I think that Mr. Williams wants us to kill Calix secretly tonight."

"Even if we join forces, we might not be able to defeat Calix. After all, he's an Archduke!"

"Do you think it's possible Mr. Williams wants us to flee with him?"

"That doesn't make sense. We don't even know where we are, so it's impossible for us to escape."

Unknowingly, they had already arrived at Zeke's door.

Having shifted their base of operations to Apollyon's headquarters, Zeke was now living in the luxurious stone house where Apollyon used to live.

After entering, the men bowed slightly toward Zeke. "We're here, Mr. Williams."

## Chapter 2535

Zeke nodded. "Are you ready?"

Ready for what?

They were taken aback.

"Obviously, I'm asking if you're ready to accept my guidance. You might go through a torturous experience later, so you'd better prepare yourself mentally," warned Zeke.

Their hearts skipped a beat. "Mr. Williams, a-are you really going to guide us on making Apollyon fight on your behalf?"

Zeke asked, "What's wrong with that?"

A Decanus who was on good terms with Apollyon panicked. "Mr. Williams, please reconsider your decision! The gap between us and Calix is enormous. We can't possibly close the gap between us in a day... No, in a night! By forcing Apollyon to join the battle, you're sending him to his death!"

Zeke glanced at Apollyon. "Don't you want to take revenge for your wife?"

After thinking about it for a while, Apollyon clenched his jaw and declared, "Fine! I'll listen to you and take revenge for my wife! Even if I die in the fight, I'll be left with no regrets."

The other Decani quickly persuaded him against it. All in all, they did not wish for Apollyon to join the battle.

Zeke lamented, "Looks like you still don't believe me. Why don't we do this? I'll guide you for a bit. After that, you can join the battle if you're willing to. Otherwise, we'll just cast this matter aside. How's that?"

Now that they had a choice, everyone felt relieved. Naturally, they would choose not to join the battle.

After that, Zeke threw a set of punches in front of them and asked, "Do you remember all the moves?"

Everyone nodded.

"Follow my previous moves and see how it feels."

The Decani felt slightly disdainful, for Zeke's moves were so simple that they posed no threat at all.

Techniques like that were everywhere. Even if they were taught it for free, they could not be bothered to learn it.

After all, it was pointless even if they mastered the technique to its full potential.

Despite that, they still repeated Zeke's movements according to what he had shown them.

However, as they went through the moves, Megahead suddenly lost all strength in his legs and collapsed to the ground.

The other Decani stared at him in surprise. "What's wrong, Megahead?"

Megahead exclaimed, "I don't know what happened just now! Suddenly, my blood stopped flowing smoothly before my legs turned numb. It's like all the strength had left my body."

Apollyon teased, "You always ignore my advice to stop fooling around with women. You're finally facing the consequences now, huh?"

"Hahaha!"

Everyone thought that Megahead was just suffering from the outcomes of his sleeping around.

However, Zeke said, "It's not because he's weak. Let's ignore him for now, Continue!"

The other Decani resumed their training.

However, as the training continued, more Decani collapsed one after the other, with Apollyon being the last to fall.

Even so, he was still unable to finish the set of moves that Zeke had taught them.

Everyone was confused.

"Mr. Williams, w-what's wrong with us?"

"There's something strange about your technique! I've never experienced such fatigue before!"

"Yeah! What technique is this? It's simply too odd."

Zeke explained, "The reason's really simple. This technique can stimulate your blood flow and channel them toward your acupoints. However, since your acupoints are still shut, they're hindering the blood flow and causing an insufficient supply of blood. Naturally, you'd feel weak and dizzy."

Acupoints? What's that?

As it was their first time hearing the term "acupoint," the Decani felt even more confused.

Zeke explained patiently, "There are eight major acupoints in a human body that determine one's physical limits. Normal martial artists like you would usually only train your physical strength. If you don't actively try to stimulate your acupoints, your powers will be limited by these eight major acupoints. As a result, you won't be able to unleash your full powers and surpass the limits of your body. If you can unlock these acupoints-even if it's just then you can transcend the constraints of your physical self. In other words, you can reach the rank of an Archduke. Today, I'm going to help you stimulate your acupoints and become an Archduke."

The few Decani immediately became motivated.

Considering how Zeke's words were backed with evidence and sounded logical, it was highly possible that he was telling the truth.

## Chapter 2536

The Decani might actually become Archdukes that night and reach the peak of their glory.

Apollyon was the most excited out of them all.

Taking revenge was his greatest desire. Now that he could finally fulfill his dream, he was all fired up and clenched his fists tightly.

Megahead asked carefully, "Mr. Williams, how can you be so sure that we'll successfully unlock our acupoints and become Archdukes tonight?"

Zeke replied, "I've already checked your strengths. All of you are only a step away from the Archduke class. Logically speaking, you should've entered it a long time ago. However, no one taught you how to unlock your acupoints, so your powers are constantly stuck in the class of an average warrior."

"Mr. Williams, if what you said is true, those Centurions who are in the Archduke class actually know that we can't reach that class precisely because we didn't unlock our acupoints! Did they not tell us that on purpose?" asked Apollyon.

Zeke nodded. "Of course."

B\*stards!

Apollyon gritted his teeth and spat, "I gave them so much spiritual water every year and begged them to teach me. Never did I expect them to be so shameless! Hmph! After I reach the Archduke class, I'll definitely make them pay me back what I've given them."

Zeke said, "Work hard! All of you have very strong foundations. You've been stuck within your non-corporeal limits for far too long. Once you enter the Archduke class, your powers will slowly accumulate and surpass even that of an average Archduke!"

Apollyon immediately knelt in front of Zeke. "We will remember your teachings, Mr. Williams!"

The other Decani also knelt in front of Zeke, who merely waved his hand. "Continue training. Once you've managed to unlock the acupoints, tell me."

With that, he left the room, leaving Apollyon and the rest behind to train.

The moment Zeke exited his room, everyone outside immediately glanced at him.

They had witnessed the ten Decani walking into Zeke's room earlier.

Soon after, they heard the Decani's wails of agony before Zeke left the room.

Did something happen to the ten Decani? What did Mr. Williams do to them?



Ignoring everyone's curious gazes on him, Zeke sat underneath a huge tree, closed his eyes, and rested.

However, he was not genuinely resting. Instead, he was discussing with Ossa Dei the uses of spiritual water.

Zeke asked, "Ossa Dei, we've been here for a while already. Have you discovered the functions of spiritual water?"

Shaking his head and sighing, Ossa Dei replied, "I haven't found anything yet. I tried absorbing the spiritual water, but it didn't have much of an effect on me. It won't be of much help to you either."

"That's strange. Why is that so-called Theos spending so much effort collecting spiritual water then?" questioned Zeke.

Ossa Dei said, "Let's interrogate him after you capture him."

Zeke insulted Ossa Dei secretly, How useless and dumb! You can't even find out what's going on with the spiritual water, so what's the point of me having you?

Ossa Dei immediately revealed an unhappy look. "Are you scolding me? If you aren't useless or dumb, why don't you investigate it yourself?"

Zeke was stunned. "Huh? How do you know what I'm thinking?"

When Zeke had scolded Ossa Dei earlier, it had been just a passing thought in his mind.

He was not intending to communicate with Ossa Dei, so logically speaking, the latter was not supposed to have heard it.

Ossa Dei panicked. "Um... Nothing! Nothing! It's just a wild guess. There's no need to overthink."

Something's wrong!

There was no way Zeke would believe Ossa Dei's excuse. "Ossa Dei, let me ask you this. Don't you respect the Dragon Bloodline a lot? Why aren't you looking for the Dragon Bloodline then?"

Ossa Dei exclaimed, "Nonsense! Do you think it's so easy to absorb the Dragon Bloodline? I've been waiting for the right timing all along."

"That doesn't sound right. Waiting for the right timing? Nonsense! They are all excuses!" rebuked Zeke. "Ossa Dei, you can read my thoughts because our minds can communicate with

each other, right? Could it be that you've merged into my body and become one with me? Otherwise, you can't possibly explain why you can read my thoughts!"

## Chapter 2537

Ossa Dei immediately cursed, "Nonsense! As the mighty Ossa Dei, the remnants of an ancient God's bones, how can I possibly be absorbed by your mortal body? You aren't worthy enough!"

Zeke replied, "No. You must have been absorbed into my body! Otherwise, there's no way to explain this."

"Get lost! You don't deserve me," spat Ossa Dei.

Zeke rebuked, "Then, you should leave."

Ossa Dei was left speechless.

"Don't you understand what I'm saying? I'm tired and want to rest..."

Zeke said, "Don't rest in my body."

Ossa Dei fell silent.

Feeling exasperated, it decided to stop talking to Zeke.

It did not want to admit that it had actually been absorbed by Zeke, for it would be utterly humiliating to the ancient Gods.

In no time, night passed.

Just when the sky brightened, the base was so silent that it seemed eerie.

All of a sudden, a resounding yell penetrated the silence.

"Thank you, Mr. Williams, for enlightening us!"

The voice was so loud that it jolted everyone awake from their sleep.

They glanced toward the voice and witnessed the scene of the ten Decani kneeling in front of Zeke.

Everyone was stunned.

Although the ten Decani had already deferred to Zeke's authority, they normally acted like equals. There was no way they would kneel to Zeke, yet that was what just happened in reality.

What did Mr. Williams do to them?

Zeke opened his eyes slowly, casting his gaze across the ten Decani. "You've succeeded?"

Apollyon replied excitedly, "Thanks to your guidance, we've all leveled up!"

I see.

Zeke nodded. "Let's talk in the room."

"Okay!"

The group followed Zeke respectfully, their eyes filled with admiration.

The moment they successfully unlocked their acupoints and entered the Archduke class, Zeke had gained an almost divine position in their hearts.

Not only did they owe him a massive favor, but he was also extremely skilled. Just with some simple guidance, he managed to help the ten Decani rise up to the rank of Archduke. If that was the case, he was definitely above that class.

Zeke was a genuine warrior who was worthy of their respect.

Glancing at them, Zeke instructed, "Tell me how many acupoints you've unlocked."

Ten Decani immediately reported to him.

"Five for me."

"Four."

"I've unlocked six."

"I've only unlocked two, which is the least."

Apollyon was the last to speak. "I've unlocked seven acupoints!"

Nodding, Zeke explained, "The Archduke class is also divided into a few ranks-from the First Archduke, the Second Archduke, all the way to the Seventh Archduke. The more acupoints you unlock, the more powerful you become. Apollyon, you managed to unlock seven right from the

start. Well done! Megahead, although you've only unlocked two acupoints, you're still more powerful than the average Archduke!"

Apollyon asked curiously, "Mr. Zeke, didn't you say that we have eight major acupoints? Why isn't there an Eighth Archduke?"

"After you've unlocked all eight acupoints, you'll be upgraded to King Class," explained Zeke.

The Decani exclaimed, "Mr. Zeke, you must've already unlocked the eight acupoints and become a King Class warrior, right?"

Zeke smiled. "A King Class warrior is as insignificant as an ant to me. If I were to put it in your standards, they're only as powerful as babies."

What the f\*ck?

The ten Decani's eyes bulged in disbelief and surprise.

If Zeke had not revealed his true abilities previously, they would have dismissed his words as empty boasts.

If King Class warriors were as weak as babies to him, as Archdukes, they could not even compare to babies!

Those Archdukes, who were initially feeling proud of their achievements, were once again aware of their profound insignificance.

Zeke continued, "Apollyon, you probably have a seventy percent chance of defeating Calix now!"

Apollyon asked curiously, "Why are you so sure, Mr. Williams?"

## Chapter 2538

"Calix has only unlocked five acupoints. You, a Seventh Archduke, will be up against a Fifth Archduke. If you still lose, you should join the ranks of trash," said Zeke.

Frowning, Apollyon asked, "Have you met Calix, Mr. Williams?"

Zeke shook his head.

"How do you know that he's only a Fifth Archduke?" asked Apollyon.

Zeke scoffed disdainfully. "Is it difficult to find out someone's strength from a distance?"

By simply unleashing some energy, he had managed to discern Calix's powers without the latter noticing anything.

It was a piece of cake.

Apollyon and the others became even more in awe of Zeke. Look at him! He's a true warrior.

Something that was practically impossible to them was nothing but a simple gesture to Zeke.

It was impossible not to admire a person like him.

Zeke continued, "There's still some time till the actual battle. Continue training and strengthen your skills. We'll set off after dawn."

"Got it!"

The rest continued with their training till the sky completely brightened two hours later.

By then, their powers were already firmly grounded in the Archduke class.

Zeke nodded in satisfaction. "Not bad! Let's go."

However, Apollyon asked quickly, "Mr. Williams, can we ask our troops to come with us?"  
"Why?" asked Zeke in confusion.

"To be honest, we've got a very messy bunch in our troops. There are some people who aren't willing to accept your authority.. They think that you are an incapable man who only managed to unite the troops through petty schemes," explained Apollyon.

"If we bring them to watch the battle, they can witness how powerful we are. After that, we'll address you as our master and make them realize that you're the one who helped us cultivate our skills. No one would dare to question you again," he continued.

"Well, it's up to you," replied Zeke casually.

Zeke was not bothered about whether the troops obeyed him or were accepting of his leadership.

After all, it did not matter to him at all.

Glancing at the time, he instructed, "Let's go. It's almost time."

"Let's go!" After gathering the hundreds of men in the troop, the ten Decani marched off grandly with Zeke.

A noisy commotion had broken out among the group as everyone discussed the upcoming battle.

## Chapter 2538

"Do you think that the newbie can be a match for Calix?"

"That's gonna be tough. Look at how impressive Calix is! All of you know very well that even our boss, Apollyon, can't endure one blow from Calix."

"If that newbie loses to Calix, he'd definitely die."

"D\*mn it! After following him, our lives improved slightly. But he's sending himself to his death right now... Looks like our good days are coming to an end."

"I don't think so. Considering the newbie's vicious scheme to make Apollyon fight on his behalf, he's probably planning to sacrifice Apollyon to save his own hide."

"I'd rather sacrifice the newbie than Apollyon. Following Apollyon pays off much better!"

Now that Apollyon and the other Decani were Archdukes, they had surpassed their physical limits. Their hearing, sight, and other senses were multiple times better than the average person's.

Hence, they could hear others' conversations clearly.

When the ten Decani heard the rest looking down on Zeke like that, fury surged through them.

Upon glancing at Zeke, they discovered that he was still calm and collected, not betraying any reactions at all.

If the Archdukes could overhear the conversation, it was obvious that Zeke could hear what the soldiers were saying too.

Apollyon asked cautiously, "Mr. Williams, do you want me to teach those brats a lesson?"

Zeke shook his head. "It's fine."

"Mr. Williams, aren't you angry that these b\*stards are defaming you like that?" questioned Apollyon.

Zeke rebuked, "Let me ask you this. If an ant bites you, are you going to bite the ant back?"

His words left Decani speechless.

Mr. Williams' right! To him, the soldiers are nothing but mere ants. If he doesn't even care about them, why would he be bothered by their comments?

## Chapter 2539

It was they who had viewed the situation on a superficial level.

Zeke said, "Remember this. From now on, your enemies are Calix, those who hold the rank of Centurion and Legatus, and even the Camp Masters. Don't waste your time and energy on such trivial matters."

The others chorused, "Got it."

"Understood!"

On Theos Island, there was a dedicated field for when a Decanus wanted to challenge the Centurions.

It was located behind the Chieftain's manor, and the Chieftain was in charge of its maintenance.

However, it had been many years since a Decanus had challenged a Centurion. Hence, the field had gradually turned into a deserted area and was overgrown with weeds.

When Zeke and the others arrived, Calix was not there yet.

Johan was the only person there, pulling the weeds out and tidying up the field.

Seeing that Zeke had arrived, Johan quickly stopped what he was doing. He hurried over to the former and gave a slight bow. "Mr. Williams, you're here! Please have a seat."

The man had already prepared tables and benches. There was also tea for Zeke to partake of.

Zeke made no protest and sat down.

Filled with doubt, the members of the Contubernium began whispering among themselves.

"How do you think this Williams guy managed to befuddle the Chieftain to the point that the Chieftain treats him with so much respect?" one of them asked.

"Even a Centurion probably doesn't receive such treatment, never mind our former leader, Apollyon. Right?"

"Maybe he knows how to bewitch others and has the Chieftain under his spell," another suggested.

Meanwhile, the ten Decani were shocked.

Judging by how skilled Mr. Williams is and how the Chieftain treats him with so much respect, he must be no ordinary person.

In their hearts, Zeke was becoming a more mysterious and noble figure.

"Please wait here for a moment. I'll go and clean up the field for you," said Johan.

Zeke could not bear to see the elderly man breaking his back on such manual labor.

After all, he was part of the Cygnus Room and is a national hero of Eurasia.

Hence, he patted Johan on the shoulder. "Sit down and have a cup of tea with me. Let the subordinates take care of the cleaning."

Catching on, Apollyon turned to the soldiers and said, "Go and clean up the field."

The others rushed toward the field immediately and got to work.

Johan was surprised by the gesture. How could I dare to sit next to the Great Marshal as though I were his equal?

Nonetheless, Zeke shot Johan a look that indicated what the former just said was a command.

Not daring to disobey the order, Johan quickly sat down and poured Zeke some tea.

After taking a few sips of tea, he uttered, "Mr. Williams, Calix still isn't here yet. It's outrageous!



I'll go and hurry them up."

How could a nobody like Calix keep the Great Marshal waiting?

However, Zeke shook his head. "Forget it. I can't be bothered to pay any attention to him. The beautiful scenery makes this an excellent place to have a cup of tea. Quietly enjoying a cup of tea sounds like a good idea. I won't be disturbed by others."

Right. Of course!

The soldiers began discussing among themselves again.

"Hahaha! Even now, he's still trying to act all cool. Enjoy his tea quietly, he says. It's clear he doesn't have the guts to face Calix."

"I agree. He's probably thinking about how the later Calix is, the better. In fact, it'll be even better if Calix doesn't show up at all. That way, he'll live to see another day."

Someone sighed and added, "I just feel sorry for Apollyon. How unlucky can one get?"

After hearing those comments, the ten Decani were so furious that smoke was practically coming out of their ears. They could not help thinking what an injustice it was to Zeke.

However, upon looking toward Zeke, they saw he was indeed calmly sipping his tea with an expression of contentment.

An unbidden sense of admiration toward Zeke swelled within them. Someone like him must've weathered numerous storms. That's why he doesn't take such things to heart.

After waiting for a while, they suddenly heard a commotion in the distance.

"Mr. Calix, wouldn't it be akin to using a sledgehammer to crack a nut for you to deal with that newcomer personally?"

"He's right. Any one of your subordinates can take down a small fry like him. There's no need for you to do it yourself."

"Why don't we let Black Bear handle it? I believe Black Bear will be able to finish him off without breaking a sweat," another person called out.

Black Bear piped up, "I'd like to volunteer to fight on your behalf. Please grant my request, Mr. Calix."

In a tone dripping with disdain, Calix responded, "I never think much of people like that, so I

wasn't planning on taking action myself. I just thought that the other party might fall to his knees and beg for mercy when he sees me, in which case I'd spare his life."

After a pause, he continued, "However, since Black Bear has expressed interest in taking that man's life, I'll let him have that opportunity. Understood, Black Bear?"

## Chapter 2540

"Understood!" Black Bear answered.

"Kill the newcomer and drain him of his blood!" Calix commanded.

"Got it!"

Johan was irate when he heard their conversation and clenched his jaw.

What a bunch of fools! How dare they insult Eurasia's Great Marshal? They're just asking for trouble!

Johan wished he could fight them and obliterate them for Zeke, but the latter gave the former a look that signaled him not to do anything rash.

Hence, Johan had no choice but to sigh and give up on the idea.

I simply can't understand why the Great Marshal wants to take on a mere Centurion personally. After all, I think I can kill the other party even with my eyes shut. Oh well. The Great Marshal's thoughts and plans aren't something I can fathom.

Soon, Calix approached with his Centuria, accompanied by their noisy clamoring.

The Centuria's presence was a hundred times more intimidating than that of the team led by Zeke, which seemed to give off the impression of a motley crew versus a troop of seasoned soldiers.

As soon as the Centuria arrived, Zeke's motley crew felt a pressure weigh on them. Some dared not even meet the Centuria's eyes, and that caused the latter to become even more arrogant.

Calix swept his gaze over the crowd, then asked Johan, "Tell me, you old geezer. Who wants to challenge me to a fight?"

Johan glanced toward Zeke and replied, "It's Mr. Williams."

Calix looked Zeke up and down with a taunting gaze. Chuckling, he remarked, "Why, your skin looks as smooth as a baby's bottom. I'm sure your blood must taste like nectar. If you give me half of your blood and submit to me now, I'll spare your life!"

When Zeke opened his mouth to respond, what he said left everyone utterly astonished.

"You've no right to stand there and talk to me "

W-What? This new Decanus actually dares humiliate a Centurion and declare that the latter has no right to talk to him! How impudent! How... domineering!

Calix was so infuriated that he nearly exploded with rage on the spot. He had never suffered such humiliation since becoming a Centurion.

"You're dead meat! You're going to die today!"

Mid-sentence, he suddenly let out an agonized scream, then sank to his knees.

There were no two ways about it.

Calix's knees bent, and he was now kneeling in front of Zeke!

There was an uproar as everything descended into chaos. The voices of people debating what just happened, shrieks, and murmurs filled the air.

"What the heck? Something must be wrong with my eyes. I'm definitely seeing things," someone insisted.

"Mr. Calix is kneeling to another? What the f\*ck! What on earth is going on? We're definitely hallucinating!"

"Tell me. Hurry up and tell me this is an illusion! Why is he kneeling in front of that guy?"

"Is he already admitting defeat before even fighting? That's not the Mr. Calix I know."

"Get up, Mr. Calix!"

Meanwhile, Calix was also utterly bewildered.

He had felt his knees suddenly go numb just now. Then, in the blink of an eye, the strength left his legs, and he could not help but fall into a kneeling position.

However, he did not have the faintest idea why that had happened.

Was it something that guy did? But that's ridiculous! There's no way he's capable of doing that from such a distance. It must be a coincidence. That's what it is. It was my rheumatism acting up again.

In truth, it was all Zeke's doing.

He had used his energy to manifest Ammo Needle and aimed it straight at Calix's knees.

As for why nobody realized what he had done, that was because his energy had moved at supersonic speed. Hence, there was no way anyone would have noticed it.

The ten Decani glanced at Zeke with puzzled expressions, then looks of shock appeared in their eyes.

Although none of them saw the silver needle, their gut instincts told them Calix falling to his knees was no doubt Zeke's handiwork.

What exactly is the extent of his capabilities?

Calix did not hurry to get to his feet after kneeling. Instead, he proceeded to sit on the ground. "Why the hell are all of you looking at me like that?"

Black Bear asked cautiously, "Did you just... kneel to your opponent?"

Slap!

Calix struck Black Bear across the cheek without hesitation. "F\*ck you! When did you see me do such a thing? That's just the pose I do before meditating. I'm preparing to receive his worship and adoration. Only an idiot would think I'm bowing the knee to my opponent."

## Chapter 2541

"I misunderstood! It was my mistake! It's my fault!" Black Bear replied hurriedly.

However, judging from the crowd's expressions, it was evident not many believed Calix's explanation.

Quickly changing the subject, Calix said to Zeke, "Are you sure you're not going to kneel before me, brat? Very well, then. Since you prefer death, I'll grant your wish. However, I'll still drain you of all your blood. Hahaha!"

Zeke glanced at Apollyon before saying, "That's enough. Cut the cr\*p, and let's begin."

Apollyon stepped forth from among the crowd and gazed at Calix coldly. "Come on, then. Prepare to meet your end."

Wait a minute.

Calix frowned. "Aren't you Apollyon? What the f\*ck do you mean by this?"

"You're not worth my leader's time. Hence, I decided to deal with you myself and teach you a good lesson," Apollyon responded.

What the... F\*ck you!

Calix flew into a rage at once.

That greenhorn dared to say that I'm no match for him! How utterly insulting and humiliating! This b\*stard has gone too far. He has crossed the line and must die. He has to die!

Calix was so enraged that he started becoming a little unhinged. "Ah, Apollyon. The opponent I defeated back then with just one strike. I can still vividly recall how you got on your knees and begged me. That scene... Hahaha! I can't wait to witness it once again! However, you're no longer worthy as my opponent. Black Bear, kill him."

The burly Black Bear stepped forward and fixed Apollyon with a scornful gaze. "It has been a while since we last met. Do you know that all your wife talks about since Mr. Calix took her away? It's about time we got rid of you so she can give up all hope on you and be with Mr. Calix wholeheartedly."

At the mention of Calix stealing his wife away, Apollyon's eyes reddened, and his blood rushed to his face.

For him, that was a painful past that would haunt him forever.

Die! He must die! Go to hell, you b\*stard!

Apollyon charged toward Black Bear as though he were in a frenzy.

Not to be outdone, Black Bear also dashed toward Apollyon.

Black Bear's advantage lay in his well-built body and explosive strength.

He planned to kill Apollyon by ramming his body into the latter, so he did not have any other offensive moves.

However, what surprised everyone was that Apollyon would also decide to attack Black Bear head-on.

Apollyon was thin, so ramming into someone was not his strong suit.

Isn't pitting one's weakness against another's strength a recipe for disaster?

The two men finally collided into each other.

A dull thud rang out, reverberating in the crowd's ears.

Then, a second later, something truly unbelievable happened.

Black Bear, the person with the incredible explosive force, was sent flying backward through the air by the impact. His body got stuck on a tree branch where it swayed in mid-air.

His chest was sunken in, and the air pressure forced out from his chest drove his eyeballs to bulge and his tongue to protrude. It was a truly gruesome sight.

As for Apollyon, he remained where he had been standing, unscathed and with an ugly smile on his lips.

Everything turned quiet as a deathly silence fell over the entire place.

Everyone could not believe their eyes.

After all, Black Bear was one of Calix's strongest subordinates. In fact, his capabilities were only second to Calix's.

However, he didn't even survive one of Apollyon's attacks. Was Black Bear too weak or Apollyon too powerful? Even a fool can tell it was because Apollyon was too powerful. How could an ordinary person possibly knock Black Bear into the air and even cause his eyes and tongue to stick out?

Calix's eyes widened, and he finally turned to face Apollyon squarely.

It hasn't been that long since we last met, yet this b\*stard has gotten so much stronger.

Noticing that the Centuria appeared uneasy and shaken, Calix knew the only way to resolve the crisis was to take action himself. He stood up slowly and gazed at Apollyon with a malicious expression. Then, he said with a chuckle, "I underestimated you. Indeed, you're a little stronger than you were. Alas, that's about as much as you can do. You're still no match for me. You'll die today!"

## Chapter 2542

With that, Calix stretched his body and stared at his opponent menacingly. "Apollyon, prepare to meet your end!"

Apollyon responded, "Calix, do you know I've been dreaming of killing you even in my sleep all these years? I will end your life to avenge my wife and me! I've waited five years for this day to come. Today, I can finally fulfill my wish, and I'll make sure to treasure this opportunity!"

"Die!" Calix bellowed and launched himself at Apollyon.

Similarly, Apollyon sprang forward in Calix's direction too.

Boom!

They crashed in midair, causing a shockwave to ripple outward to the surroundings.

The force of the impact was comparable to that of a head-on car collision.

Everyone was shocked to their cores. How can the clash of two people produce an impact similar to a car crash? Is this supposed to be the power exhibited by a mortal's body? This is ridiculous. They've already exceeded the limits of human bodies!

Both Calix and Apollyon flew backward following the collision.

Apollyon staggered ten steps backward and almost fell to the ground, while Calix merely took five steps back before steadying himself in an upright position.

Calix stared at Apollyon in utter bewilderment. "D-Did you just display the strength of an Archduke? I-I can't believe you're already an Archduke! D\*mn it! How did you achieve this breakthrough? There's no way you could've accomplished this without any proper guidance."

Apollyon flashed him a malicious smile. "Do you think you're the only Archduke in this world and that there is no one else available to guide me?"

"Who is it?" Calix gazed at Apollyon in astonishment.

Apollyon merely grinned at him in silence.

Suddenly, Calix seemed to realize something and jerked his head around to look at Zeke. "It's you!"

Zeke ignored Calix and continued to sip on his tea calmly.

Calix gritted his teeth. "Ha! It seems like I've underestimated you all. You've indeed lived up to your position as a Decanus. However, that's already your limit. You can never defeat me to become a Centurion, not even in your wildest dream! Come on, brat! Let me show you just how powerful I am!"

Once again, Apollyon charged at Calix ferociously.

Calix unleashed his power and dashed forward like a bolt of lightning.

Boom!

Their collision stirred up another gust of strong wind that blew in all directions.

The gale hurt some of the weaker onlookers as they sustained internal and external injuries.

Thud! Thud! Thud!

Apollyon was swiftly thrown ten meters backward and nearly fell to the ground as he barely regained his balance.

In truth, his condition was worse than what the others saw on the surface. A metallic taste rose in the back of Apollyon's mouth, and he felt like coughing out blood. However, he managed to suppress the urge. I'm representing Mr. Williams now, so I must not embarrass him!

On the other hand, Calix merely fell four meters to the back before coming to a firm halt.

Despite his disdainful facial expression, he was actually slightly startled by the turn of events. I can't believe Apollyon is already a Seventh Archduke right after his breakthrough. He's considered a gifted fighter for achieving this feat. If I had realized this in the past, I would've kept Apollyon as my subordinate to serve me, but it seems like this is an unrealistic idea now. Apollyon will never betray that newcomer.

Calix sneered, "Apollyon, your feeble capabilities are insignificant to me. I advise you to end your own life if you seek a quick and painless death. Otherwise, you'll have to suffer greatly as I



beat you to death."

"B\*stard!" Apollyon was reluctant to admit defeat.

He stood up with difficulty and launched himself at Calix again.

"Fool!" Calix chided before rushing in Apollyon's direction.

Boom!

Both of them released their full power this time. The whirlwind evolved into a raging tornado, sending sand and rocks flying everywhere and reducing the crowd's visibility of the ongoing fight.

After a long while, when the dust and wind finally died down, everyone turned to look at the battlefield again.

This time, Apollyon was sent over twenty meters backward while Calix remained rooted to his spot.

Apollyon had also spewed out a pool of blood.

Blood trickled out from his eyes, nostrils, and even ears as he coughed violently due to his severe injuries.

## Chapter 2543

'D\*mn it! I absolutely refuse to accept this!' Apollyon screamed in his heart.

However, his mental shouts could not change the fact that there was simply a vast difference between his and Calix's abilities.

Apollyon could not fight anymore.

Nonetheless, everyone was deeply amazed by his performance and thought it was a miracle that he had lasted so long in the duel.

After all, they knew Apollyon had failed to endure even one hit from Calix five years ago.

Yet, at that moment, Apollyon had survived even after withstanding three attacks from Calix.

What could that be if not a miracle?

Zeke looked at Calix and smiled faintly. Interesting. Calix clearly exhibited the strength of a Seventh-and-a-half Archduke earlier, and he's merely one step away from achieving King Class. At his current level, he can already be considered a Half-King Class. Surprisingly, he's capable enough to escape my detection. I reckon he must have utilized a unique technique.

Zeke's interest was piqued by that special ability capable of escaping the probe of a Celestial Class warrior.

Zeke knew there was no way Apollyon could defeat Calix at his current level.

Just as Zeke was about to tell Apollyon to retreat, he saw the latter standing up again.

At that instant, Apollyon was mustering all the strength he had just to get back on his feet.

He approached Calix step by step and croaked, "Duel... to the... death!"

Calix laughed out loud. "All right! I shall entertain you!"

Zeke frowned and immediately yelled, "Apollyon, stand down. You are not his match!"

"But-" Reluctant to admit defeat, Apollyon gazed at Zeke.

Zeke uttered, "This is an order!"

Apollyon sighed. When he was about to retreat, however, Calix hurled a stone at him without warning. The rock smashed right against Apollyon's head.

Apollyon let out an agonized scream before falling to the ground on his back. He lay motionless afterward, seemingly having been knocked out cold.

"Hah! How dare you dream of backing out of this fight alive? You should've asked for my permission before you did that!"

D\*mn it! Zeke immediately released a stream of energy to check Apollyon's condition. Fortunately, the latter was still alive. How dare this jerk hurt the people under my protection? I'll make him pay the price today!

A split second before Zeke could make his move, someone suddenly burst forth from among the Centuria.

That person was a woman, and she was making a beeline toward Apollyon, who had fainted on

the floor.

"Apollyon, wake up! Hurry up and wake up! You cannot die. Please don't die. How do you expect me to live if something terrible happens to you? Hurry up and wake up, Apollyon. Open your eyes and look at me!"

Zeke furrowed his eyebrows at the woman.

Megahead, standing next to Zeke, hurriedly explained, "Mr. Williams, she's Floretta, the woman who used to be together with Apollyon. She was forcefully taken away from Apollyon by Calix. I did not anticipate her to be here too."

Clarity washed over Zeke upon listening to Megahead's elaboration.

When Calix saw Floretta, he commanded, "Halt her."

His subordinates immediately stopped her from moving forward.

Floretta wanted to plow ahead by sidestepping Calix's men, but one of them grabbed her and tossed her to the ground over his shoulder.

Even then, she continued calling out Apollyon's name.

"Apollyon, wake up! Open your eyes and look at me."

Hm?

Amidst his comatose state, Apollyon heard a familiar voice that instantaneously stimulated his nerves. This voice sounds so familiar. It's Floretta. This voice belongs to Floretta! Floretta is here! My wife, Floretta, is here to look for me!

Apollyon woke up the next second. He lifted his head with difficulty and glanced around.

Finally, he caught sight of Floretta.

She appeared as beautiful and captivating as ever, but her worried and sorrowful facial expression stirred a pang of pain within him.

"Floretta, this is great... I can finally meet you again..."

Floretta struggled mightily but to no avail as her attempt to break free from the few burly men's restraint was in vain.

She yelled hysterically, "Apollyon, don't mind me. You need to hurry up and leave!"

Apollyon gritted his teeth. "Floretta, wait for me. I'll save you. I'll definitely rescue you!"

Calix roared with laughter. "Haha! I'd like to see how you can save her today."

Floretta begged Calix, "Mr. Calix, please show him mercy! If you're willing to spare his life, I'll comply with your every wish in the future."

## Chapter 2544

Calix glared at Floretta. "F\*ck! How dare you plead mercy for him! Hmph! If you hadn't done this, I might've chosen to spare his life, but I can't believe you're begging me for his sake today when you've never yielded to me before. I'm jealous now, so he must die!"

"Ah!" Floretta shut her eyes in despair. "Calix, if you dare lay a finger on him, I'll die in front of you!"

"Haha!" Calix laughed like a maniac. "Die? Sure, you can go ahead and do that. I'm getting bored of you anyway. Don't worry. I'll make sure to maximize your contributions to our cause even after your death. Guys, weren't all of you yearning to get a taste of Floretta's body? I don't suppose you will get to fulfill your wish while she's alive, but I wouldn't mind rewarding you all with her corpse."

"Hahaha!"

Members of the Centuria laughed wildly.

"Thank you for your generosity, Mr. Calix."

"I think it's more enjoyable and exciting to vent my desires on a corpse than a living woman. Hey, b\*tch. Why don't you hurry up and die? I can't wait any longer!"

"You..."

Floretta was frightened by Calix's ruthlessness and the desperate gazes of those men from his Centuria.

In the end, she clenched her teeth and decided to take Calix down with her, "If I'm going to die, I'll drag him down to hell with me!"

Floretta suddenly brandished a dagger from her pocket and lunged at Calix.

However, she was an ordinary person, not to mention a weak and helpless woman, so there was no way she could win against a Half-King Class warrior.

Calix slapped Floretta, sending the latter flying backward.

After falling to the ground, she felt dizzy and disoriented. She struggled to get back to her feet but failed miserably.

Blood streamed down all her orifices, forming an unsightly scene. Still, even in that condition, she was worried about Apollyon. "Go... Hurry up and leave. Don't mind me..."

"Ahhh!"

Apollyon lost his mind and suffered from a total mental breakdown when he saw the love of his life getting humiliated and beaten before him.

Anger consumed every last bit of his rationale, and his only desire at that moment was to kill Calix.

He mustered the little strength he had left and launched himself at Calix.

Even if his action would cost him his life, he wanted to avenge his wife, Floretta.

Zeke hastily shouted, "Apollyon, stop!"

Apollyon was not Calix's match even in his peak condition, much less in his current pathetic state as multiple grave injuries weighed him down.

Although there was only a difference of half an acupoint between the two, the significance of unlocking one extra acupoint was immense. That gap in abilities could not be surpassed by mere determination.

Apollyon wailed, "D\*mn it! D\*mn it! I refuse to accept this! Mr. Williams, I beg you. Let me go all out. Otherwise, I'll regret this for the rest of my life!"

Zeke could not help but sympathize with Apollyon after taking in the latter's piteous appearance.

Zeke said coldly, "Are you sure you want to take revenge against him personally?"

Apollyon nodded firmly. "Of course."

"All right. Come here."

Although Apollyon could not fathom Zeke's intention, he strode forward obediently anyway.

Zeke patted Apollyon's shoulder and said, "Continue cultivating the fist technique I taught you yesterday and open up your final acupoint."

Seizing the opportunity when his palm made contact with Apollyon's shoulder, Zeke infused a stream of pure energy into Apollyon to help the latter unlock his final acupoint.

Only by activating his final acupoint, or at least another half acupoint, could Apollyon stand a chance to defeat Calix.

Nevertheless, Zeke's method merely provided Apollyon with the possibility of winning.

The final outcome was beyond Zeke and rested entirely upon Apollyon's shoulders.

"This..." Apollyon gazed at Zeke in bafflement.

When Zeke had touched his shoulder earlier, Apollyon clearly felt a unique energy pass through his arm and flow into his body.

That chilly energy comforted him and seemed to have healing properties as the pain in Apollyon's body instantaneously reduced.

Zeke uttered, "Seize this opportunity to unlock your final acupoint."

"Thank you, Mr. Williams!"

Even though Apollyon was unsure what the surge of energy Zeke had channeled into him was, he was confident the latter was assisting him.

Feeling beyond grateful toward Zeke, Apollyon immediately began practicing the fist technique.

Right then, something miraculous happened.

## Chapter 2545

Apollyon realized he was having an easier time breaking through the final acupoint than unlocking it yesterday, and that was because he received assistance from that surge of pure

energy.

The pure energy was simply too potent, carrying even more intensity than the portion of his own power he was using to break through the acupoint.

If Apollyon could successfully unlock his final acupoint, the sliver of pure energy channeled into him by Zeke would be the major contributor to the accomplishment.

Finally, after only five minutes, Apollyon distinctly sensed he had activated half of the final acupoint.

The process of unlocking an acupoint was similar to how a flood breached a dam. In that analogy, power and energy were equivalent to the flood.

The power and energy gushed out from the half-activated acupoint, rapidly coursing through his body and limbs, filling up his every nerve and bone.

Moreover, the overflowing energy quickly nullified his pain and injuries until they ultimately vanished without a trace.

At that instant, limitless energy surged within him, causing him to feel as if his body was going to explode from being over-inflated with power.

Apollyon sensed that he was now twice as powerful as before, perhaps even more.

He was subconsciously aware that his current abilities were comparable to Calix's, and the possible slight disadvantage he might have against Calix was the lack of combat experience.

This is the real capability of a warrior! Mr. Williams is indeed exceptionally mighty. He managed to train and produce a great warrior using just a single night's time.

Apollyon looked at Zeke gratefully. "Thank you for your guidance, Mr. Williams."

Zeke nodded slightly in response.

When his subordinates witnessed that scene, they suddenly realized something. Complex emotions churned within their chests as the word "guidance" surfaced in their minds.

Last night, when Zeke said he would provide Apollyon with some guidance to prepare the latter for his battle against Calix, the others were initially in disbelief and merely assumed Zeke was bluffing.

Unexpectedly, after one night, Apollyon's capabilities had improved drastically. He was now ten times-perhaps even a few hundred times-stronger than before.

At that moment, after receiving a piece of simple advice from Zeke, not only was Apollyon alleviated of his injuries, but the latter's temperament also underwent significant changes as his aura grew more intense.

Don't tell me Mr. Williams is truly capable of guiding someone to become a super-powerful warrior using just one night? If that's the case, are we able to become extraordinarily formidable too?

That thought prompted many of the team members to feel excited.

Most of them were even getting restless and impatient to become Zeke's apprentice.

They approached Zeke furtively and pleaded with him in an undertone, "Mr. Williams, may I know if you're still accepting disciples? On second thought, I'm willing to serve you as your slave in the future and do all your bidding as long as you provide me with some guidance."

"To be honest, Mr. Williams, I'm actually very talented in martial arts. Regrettably, I've yet to encounter my benefactor thus far. However, I have a very strong feeling now that you are my benefactor."

Zeke glanced at them and said, "We'll discuss this matter another time."

The others immediately shut their mouths and did not dare to utter another word. The look Zeke had given them was too terrifying, prompting all of them to yield in cowardice.

Zeke had no plan of accepting them as his disciples, and the reason was that they lacked the qualifications.

The ten Decani, including Apollyon, were able to attain drastic improvements under my guidance because their daily cultivation had honed their capabilities to a critical point. I merely taught them how to unlock their acupoints, resulting in the boost of their abilities. On the other hand, most of the team members here are not even considered martial artists, so it would be almost impossible for them to gain any significant improvement.

Of course, this is not entirely unachievable. If they were to consume large amounts of precious herbs or undergo modifications at Cygnus Room, they could still accomplish a similar outcome. However, these methods will incur a very expensive cost. Hence, no one would bother wasting time and resources on these people.

Apollyon took a deep breath and looked at Floretta affectionately. "Floretta, trust me. I will save you today, and I'll never leave your side ever again."



Floretta gazed at him while wearing a tear stricken face. Then, she nodded.

At that moment, she could sense a different aura enveloping Apollyon's body.

## Chapter 2546

She could sense a warrior's aura from him, one that was enough to give her a sense of security.

Can Apollyon turn the tide today?

Anticipation began to swell within her.

If he wins, we can live out our lives in peace. If he loses, it's no big deal. Failing to be together in life, we can still be a couple in death.

Apollyon approached Calix step by step.

With his face filled with disdain, Calix mocked, "Haha, your last-minute efforts are not going to save you. Today, your life will end one way or another. Now die!"

With no time to waste on Apollyon, Calix decided to end the battle quickly.

As he dashed toward Apollyon, the latter responded head-on with an equally ferocious charge. With that, both of them clashed in the most primordial manner.

Boom!

At the crack of a thunderous sound, Apollyon was thrown back by ten steps while Calix, too, backpedaled the same distance.

Gasp!

The sound of the crowd catching their breaths echoed in every direction.

Within the span of a few minutes, Apollyon was capable of holding his ground against Calix after the latter was given guidance by Zeke.

The turn of events filled everyone with disbelief. Even Calix couldn't help but give due respect.

"Good! Wonderful! Apollyon, you truly are a rare and talented martial artist. After just reaching

the level of an Archduke, you have managed to unlock seven and a half acupoints. I don't deny that it's an impressive feat, but you're still no match for me due to your inferior technique. Now, let's go again!"

Calix was already raring to launch another attack as he couldn't wait to eradicate Apollyon any longer.

Apollyon is more talented than me when it comes to martial arts. Note that his skill is fast approaching mine, it's a matter of time before he surpasses me. When that happens, there's no way he's going to let me live. Hence, I have to kill him before that day arrives.

As for Apollyon, he, too, had resolved to end Calix's life.

Over the last five years, nary a moment went by without him thinking of killing the latter. Therefore, now that the opportunity had presented itself, there was no way he would pass it up.

With that, both of them engaged in further battle.

But this time, instead of attacking his opponent head-on, Calix chose a more technical approach.

Since his physical advantage wasn't significant, he had to leverage his rich battle experience and knowledge of techniques.

A factor that influenced his decision was that Apollyon had just achieved the rank of an Archduke and hadn't had the opportunity to train in the corresponding techniques. Consequently, the latter would suffer when in a competition of fighting techniques.

Just as expected, Apollyon was put at a disadvantage the moment the battle began.

In spite of that, the intensity of the battle wasn't diminished at all.

As the brutal battle raged on, it stirred up so much sand and gravel that both men were engulfed in a cloud of dust, hiding them from the spectators' view.

Just when everyone marveled at how fierce the battle was, a figure was suddenly thrown out of the battleground.

When the anxious crowd took a closer look, they realized it was none other than Apollyon.

Upon crashing onto the ground, the pale looking Apollyon threw up a mouthful of blood, a sign that he was injured again.

The cloud of dust gradually dissipated.

Standing still at the center of the field, Calix exuded a domineering aura.

With an icy look in his eyes, he threw Apollyon a glance. "Ha! You're just too weak. Today will be the day you breathe your last!"

Just like an angry beast, the furious Apollyon roared, "I'm not dead yet, nor have I been defeated, Let's continue!"

Driven by a surge of energy that came out of nowhere, Apollyon leaped into the air to attack Calix:

However, Calix-with a disdainful scoff, unleashed a palm strike to send Apollyon flying.

Little did he expect Apollyon to have no intention of counterattacking. Instead, the latter allowed his palm to land heavily on the shoulder.

Seizing upon the opportunity, Apollyon grabbed Calix by the waist to anchor himself from being sent flying.

F\*ck!

With Apollyon clinging onto him, the infuriated Calix raised his hand to strike again.

Despite vomiting another mouthful of blood, Apollyon desperately endured the pain and used the opening to bite Calix.

"Argh!"

Calix cried out in agonized pain. "You f\*cking dog, let go of me!"

What was meant to be a battle between Archdukes had descended into a biting match, shocking the spectators.

## Chapter 2547

Nonetheless, Apollyon was focused on killing Calix and didn't care about how crude his method was.

He was willing to do anything to snuff out the life of his enemy.

Bang! Thud! Bam!

Despite the punches and kicks Calix rained down upon Apollyon, the latter refused to let go and tore through Calix with his teeth.

Due to his living conditions, Apollyon was forced to eat dried food often, which happened to be exceedingly tough. As a result, this had inadvertently given him strong jaws with devastating bite force, and it ended up as the most powerful part of his body.

Meanwhile, Calix-repeatedly bitten-was overwhelmed by the excruciating pain.

In an act of desperation, he smashed his fist into his opponent's shoulder.

Crack!

Apollyon's shoulder dislocated instantaneously from the impact.

Despite that, he refused to give up. Holding onto his dislocated arm, Apollyon maintained a tight hug on Calix.

Lunatic! He's a f\*cking lunatic!

While the hysterical Calix continued to rain blows upon Apollyon, the latter saw an opening and bit down on Calix's neck.

The next moment, blood spewed out from the latter's neck, just like water gushing out of a tap.

Calix's carotid artery had been torn apart by Apollyon's teeth.

"Argh!"

The unbearable pain threw Calix's brain into shock.

Pressing his advantage, Apollyon chomped down on Calix's ear next.

"Die!"

Utterly enraged, Calix struck Apollyon with all his might and finally sent the exhaust Apollyon flying with his ear still between the latter's teeth.

With his neck and ear spraying blood in every direction, Calix attempted to speak. Instead, blood rushed into his windpipe and caused him to puke mouthfuls of it.

Despite reaching out his hand to cover his wound, it didn't help matters at all. Now that his artery was severed, there was no doubt his death was imminent unless he was brought to the hospital.

"Save me... Save me...." Finally, Calix managed to painstakingly cry out.

As for the crowd, everyone was still gripped by shock.

This is too f\*cking terrifying. Just a moment ago, Apollyon transformed into the devil incarnate and bit off another man's flesh!

In fact, those with sharp eyes even noticed Apollyon chewing on the flesh after biting some off.

If Calix hadn't sent Apollyon flying, the latter looked as if he would even swallow the flesh.

This is just too f\*cking brutal. Just how much does Apollyon hate him to go to such extremes?

"Save me... Cough... Cough... Save me..." Calix's pleas continued.

It was only then that the Calixion men regained their senses and rushed forward to save Calix.

"Stop right there!" Megahead stepped forward and blocked their way. "This battle is between Calix and Apollyon. No one else is allowed to interfere! Whoever dares to do so will die by my hand!"

A scarred-face man sneered, "Hmph, those are some brazen words, Megahead. As someone who has been defeated by me before, who gave you the right to act with such impunity? Do you still remember our fight to determine who would take on the role of Decanus? I beat you to a pulp back then with just three moves. If not for the fact that I had no interest in the role, this position would never have been yours."

Megahead retorted, "My words are backed up by my fists."

The man burst into laughter. "Haha, in that case, I look forward to finding out who has the stronger fist between the two of us!"

No sooner had the scarred-face man spoken than he charged at Megahead.

Nevertheless, the calm Megahead maintained his stance.

It wasn't until his opponent launched a punch that Megahead languidly intercepted it with one of his own.

As the two fists smashed against each other, the sound of cracking bones filled the air, sending a chill down everyone's spine.

That's it. Megahead's arm is done for.

Everyone expected Megahead to be no match for the scarred-face man. Thus, he had to be the one to suffer the fractures.

Hence, it came as a shock when Megahead stood his ground and didn't show any signs of pain.

Instead, his opponent let out an agonized cry before rolling on the ground while holding his hand.

## Chapter 2548

What's going on? The scarred-face man's arm is broken instead of Megahead's! However, all Megahead did was casually wave his arm. Hence, did he cripple his opponent without going at full strength? Oh my God, Megahead's power has significantly increased too! It must be due to Mr. Williams' guidance. He really is amazing. Long live Mr. Williams!

One by one, the rest of the Decani came up to Megahead's side and formed a defensive perimeter. "Whoever dares to interfere in the battle between Apollyon and Calix will swiftly meet their end!"

Standing together, the nine Decani looked like an imposing and impregnable wall.

In that instant, the crowd could be forgiven to think that there was a ten-thousand strong army right in front of them instead of just nine men.

Soon, the soldiers began speculating amongst themselves.

"Did you notice that our nine Decani have grown significantly stronger than before?"

"I did. Since their aura has increased by tenfold, I'm sure their strength has made similarly explosive progress overnight."

"Mr. Williams' guidance last night must be the reason for their dramatic increase in power."

"Oh my God! I can't imagine how powerful he is to be able to help others improve so much within a single night!"

"Mr. Williams does live up to his reputation as Chief Decanus."

"Looks like we have chosen the right side."

With the nine Decani acting as a deterrent, the members of Calixion didn't dare cause any further trouble.

When one or two fearless members tried to break through the perimeter, they were slaughtered by the Decani with ease.

"Argh!"

Calix let out a deafening roar at the turn of events.

'I can't die just like that. I'll be utterly humiliated if I, a Centurion, was to be defeated by a lowly Decanus who had previously lost to me. I'll definitely become the laughingstock of Theos Island.'

However, with his carotid artery severed, he had lost the ability to save himself.

Consequently, his only choice was to drag Apollyon to the depths of hell together with him. Only then could he redeem what was left of his honor.

Despite him covering the wound on his neck with his hand, blood continued to ooze out through the gaps of his fingers.

After losing an excessive amount of blood, he was so weak that he could barely stand.

Gritting his teeth, he stumbled toward Apollyon. "You do not deserve to take my life! Even in death, I'll make sure you join me!"

Unfazed by the impending danger, Apollyon attempted to stand up to resist.

Unfortunately, his injuries were too debilitating for him to do so. With two broken ribs, he struggled to get back on his feet but failed.

By then, Calix had dashed up to him and unleashed a kick.

However, instead of dodging, Apollyon focused intently on the incoming kick.

Upon impact, he let out a harrowing howl from the pain but seized upon the opportunity to grab

his opponent's leg and tore into it with his teeth.

"Argh!"

Calix's anguished scream echoed out before he collapsed to the ground with blood spurting out of his leg.

Evidently, the artery in his leg had been severed by Apollyon's bite.

In the blink of an eye, Calix's body was drenched in blood, making for a pathetic sight.

Despite his attempts to get back on his feet, he failed miserably each time.

"Argh!"

In his defiance, he let out a deafening roar.

Meanwhile, Apollyon, staring at his enemy, curled his lips into a smile. The action revealed the blood staining his teeth.

After struggling for a few more minutes, Calix's body lay lifeless except for the occasional twitch.

Evidently, he was as dead as one could possibly be.

As a chilly breeze blew past, the crowd couldn't help but feel their hair stand on end.

They were filled with disbelief at the gripping yet gruesome scene before them.

Now that Calix was dead, the tension within Apollyon eased accordingly.

The moment he relaxed, he felt a wave of blood surging out of his chest, causing him to vomit another mouthful.

With his organs suffering from blunt trauma, it would be a miracle if he didn't throw up blood.

"Apollyon, Apollyon...." When she saw how beaten up he looked, the teary-eyed Floretta cried at the top of her lungs.

However, pinned down by Calix's men, she -despite struggling desperately-failed to free herself.

Megahead glared at them. "Why aren't you letting her go? Are you waiting for me to kill all of you?"

Shocked, the men released Floretta immediately.



Running up to Apollyon's side, Floretta dropped to her knees and held his hand tightly. "Apollyon," she sobbed, "wake up. Don't you die on me!"

## Chapter 2549

As the weak Apollyon opened his eyes, he painstakingly raised his hand to stroke Floretta's cheek. "Floretta, I-I finally got to see you."

She scolded him, "You fool, why did you have to risk your life like that? How am I going to continue living if you die? You're really selfish..."

She continued sobbing.

Apollyon simply responded with a smile. "As long as I can save you, I'm more than willing to sacrifice my life."

That was the power of love!

At that moment, Zeke came forward and took Apollyon's pulse. It was extremely faint, an indication that Apollyon was in a life-threatening condition.

Without any delay, Zeke whipped out his Ammo Needle and treated him with the Life Extension Needle, preserving Apollyon's life for the time being.

"Apollyon, rest now, for your injuries are debilitating. Don't worry. When I move to the Centuria's district, I'll definitely take you along."

The grateful Apollyon nodded. No sooner had he wanted to get up and bow in thanks than Zeke stopped him. "Just rest."

Instead, it was Floretta who stood up and without any hesitation-dropped to her knees in front of Zeke.

"Mr. Williams, please accept my bow as thanks since I don't know how else we can repay our debt of gratitude to you. Going forward, Apollyon and I will be your humble servants, fulfilling your every command without question."

Zeke replied, "All right, stay here and take care of Apollyon."

Meanwhile, Johan exclaimed, "The battle is now over, and Mr. Williams' faction has emerged

victorious! Congratulations, Mr. Williams, for attaining the rank of Centurion. Please move to the Centuria's district within three days and continue your service to the Theos Sect."

"Hurray!" his men cheered.

As for the Calixion men, they exchanged clueless glances with each other, not knowing what to do.

Zeke stared at them coldly. "Now that your leader, Calix, is dead, I have replaced him as the new Centurion. Therefore, I'll give all of you this one chance to join me. The choice is yours."

The crowd began to discuss among themselves.

"Now that our leader is dead, what are we going to do?"

"Shall we join them? Considering how strong Apollyon has become, this Chief Decanus must be even more powerful. Besides, on Theos Island, might is right."

"I don't think joining them is a good idea."

"Oh? Why? Tell us."

"Think about it. How is the relationship between Calix and the other Centurions in the Centuria's district?"

"It goes without saying that they're very close."

"That's right. Now that Calix is dead, don't you think the other Centurions will seek revenge on his behalf? When the time comes, they'll definitely target Mr. Williams. Therefore, if we follow him, wouldn't we be making enemies of the rest of the Centurions?"

"Exactly. That's why it's better to have this new Centurion as our enemy than the rest of them combined."

"Come on, let's join the other Centurions. I'm sure they'll take us in."

"Let's go!"

The defeated soldiers quickly fled back to the Centuria's district.

With that, Megahead turned toward Zeke and inquired, "Mr. Williams, should we...."

Zeke shook his head. "No, it's their decision whether they want to stay or leave. There's no need

for us to interfere. Come now, let's return to base and move whatever we need to the Centuria's district."

When Calix's panting men arrived at their base, they didn't stop to rest. Instead, they hurriedly packed up but didn't know where to go next.

Carrying worried expressions, they began to discuss among themselves. "With Calix dead, there's no way we can continue staying here. Hence, who should we join?"

"Now that all the Centurias are recruiting, we'll definitely be highly sought after given how big our group is."

"Why don't we join Ms. Phoenix?"

"Why? Phoenixion, led by Ms. Phoenix, isn't particularly strong."

"There are two reasons. Firstly, Ms. Phoenix has always been on good terms with Mr. Calix. Therefore, she would definitely welcome us with open arms. Secondly, she is inherently fair and treats her

subordinates well. To be honest, the benefits she provides her men are twice what Mr. Calix has given us."

"All right then. I agree that joining Ms. Phoenix is a wise choice."

"Come, let's all go there now."

## Chapter 2550

With that, the group set off enthusiastically to where Phoenixion was based.

Phoenixion was considered a small Centuria that lived in a small village.

Their village comprised two rows of bamboo buildings that were surrounded by a bamboo wall. Moreover, there were patrols keeping watch twenty-four hours a day.

No sooner had the guards seen the approaching troop than they blew a whistle as a form of precaution.

The sound of the whistle stirred up the village. Everyone surged out of their homes and ran toward the main entrance.

In fact, some didn't even have time to put on their pants.

The guards demanded, "Who are you? Why have you come to Phoenixion?"

One of the men from Calixion frantically explained, "Sir, this is a misunderstanding. We're from Calixion."

"That's right. Before Mr. Calix's death, he instructed us to join Ms. Phoenix. He told us that he is on good terms with the latter and that she would definitely take us in."

"We bear you no ill will, so there's nothing to worry about."

"Oh?"

The guard asked in surprise, "You're from Calixion? Did you just mention that Calix is dead?"

The sorrowful members of Calixion replied, "Yes, we did. Calix was challenged by a Decanus and killed."

"What?" the shocked guard exclaimed.

Many years had passed since a Decanus challenged a Centurion.

All this while, the outer district had always been peaceful. As for the few Decani there, they were weak and never stirred up any trouble.

Thus, they had not heard of any Decanus with the capability to challenge a Centurion.

The guard inquired further, "Who is the Decanus who challenged Calix?"

The Calixion men replied, "It was Apollyon!"

Apollyon!

The guard's shock intensified. "Wasn't he defeated by Calix before? Back then, Calix crippled him in a single move. Are you telling me now that Calix has died at the hands of Apollyon? How is that f\*cking possible?"

"Do we look like we would be joking about something like that? Anyway, please inform Ms. Phoenix about this and tell her to take us in."

As the gravity of the situation dawned upon the guard, he agreed immediately, "All right. Just wait there. I'll report this to Ms. Phoenix right away."

With that, the guard hurried off.

Meanwhile, members of Phoenixion had already blocked the entrance and were giving the visitors murderous glares.

However, some of the men from Phoenixion began to recognize those from Calixion.

"Hey, aren't those men from Calixion? Why have they come?"

"Calixion? F\*ck, they really are!"

"What are all of you blocking our main entrance for? Ms. Phoenix and Mr. Calix are close, so you had better not try and sow discord!"

"Back off at once. Otherwise, Ms. Phoenix will not let you off."

The Calixion men had no choice but to explain, "Please don't misunderstand. We're here to join you and have no hostile intentions." Join us?

The Phoenixion men were taken by surprise. "Join us? What about Mr. Calix?"

The Calixion men proceeded to relate what had happened.

Upon learning what had transpired, the Phoenixion men were left dumbfounded.

"Oh my God! A Centurion has been killed. This is something unheard of."

"Which Decanus is it, who possesses power?"

"Oh no, after decades of peace in the Centuria's district, it looks like chaos is brewing again."

"Nevertheless, we probably don't need to worry. If they join us, Phoenixion will grow even more powerful."

"Make way. Coming through."

Soon, a melodious yet authoritative female voice rang out from behind the crowd. At the sound of the voice, the Phoenixion members opened up a path at once.

Soon, a sexy lady in a tight leather outfit walked hurriedly to the front.

Despite living in such barren conditions, she stood out from the crowd with her fair skin and exquisite features.

The lady was none other than the Centurion of Phoenixion-Phoenix!

## Chapter 2551

Phoenix scanned her surroundings before her gaze landed on Scar Face.

Besides Calix, Scar Face was considered the most powerful in Calixion. He was known as the second-in-command.

Since Calix was not present, she could only converse with Scar Face.

Scar Face was in a miserable state, seeing that his hand was broken by Megahead.

With a stern expression, Phoenix asked, "Scar Face, tell me. Is Calix really dead?"

Scar Face was overcome with grief as he wept. "Ms. Phoenix, do you think we would use our Centurion's life as a joke? Mr. Calix's really dead. You have to avenge him for us." He continued sobbing.

Phoenix took a deep breath and scanned the surroundings once more. She replied uneasily, "Come in and explain the entirety of the situation to me."

"Of course!"

Phoenix brought Scar Face into a small office which was beside them.

She quickly located a medical kit to clean up Scar Face's wounds before asking, "Tell me how all of this happened."

Therefore, Scar Face told her about the situation in detail.

After hearing that, Phoenix was dazed for a long moment. "Apollyon from Archfiends? How did he reach Archduke without anyone helping him? Did a Centurion give him pointers? However, that's not possible. In order to prevent any Contubernia in the outer district from challenging our authority, we have agreed to keep the technique a secret from them."

Scar Face immediately replied, "Oh, right. Ms. Phoenix, Apollyon is no longer Decanus. Someone else has taken over him."

Oh?

Phoenix cast a curious glance at Scar Face. "Didn't you say that Apollyon was the strongest

Decanus in the outer district? How did someone replace him?"

Scar Face answered hastily, "Ms. Phoenix, a newcomer defeated Apollyon, so the latter willingly resigned from his position as Decanus for him. Oh, right. Apollyon must have been insinuating that it was the newcomer who had assisted him in improving his abilities. I suspect the newcomer must be a warrior!"

Phoenix was instantly intrigued by the newcomer. "A newcomer! What is he like? How long has he been here? Has he done anything special or shocking?"

Scar Face answered, "I'm not sure. I only found out about him just now, as I have never heard of him before."

Phoenix nodded. "All right. I understand. The key to this matter lies in this

newcomer. I'll send someone to look into this."

Scar Face sobbed and said miserably, "Ms. Phoenix, you must seek revenge for Mr. Calix. He died a horrible death."

Avenge?

Phoenix could not help but sneer inwardly.

Why would I offend a living person for a dead person? You must be insane. Don't try to claim the moral ground with me. I won't be affected.

However, she did not outrightly reject him. She asked gently, "Scar Face, let me ask you. Who is more powerful, Calix or me?"

Scar Face contemplated it for a while before answering, "I guess you guys have your own strengths."

Okay.

Phoenix nodded. "Then, you mentioned that the visitor assisted Apollyon in strengthening his skills. So, do you think the newcomer or Apollyon is stronger?"

Scar Face replied, "Logically speaking, the newcomer should be stronger."

"That's right. It's because Apollyon killed Calix. Do you think I can win against Apollyon and the newcomer, then?" Phoenix remarked.

This...

Scar Face hesitated.

Phoenix sighed and continued, "To be completely honest with you, Scar Face, I yearn to avenge Calix much more than you do. However, if I do it, I'll undoubtedly die or suffer grave injuries. This battle may potentially result in Phoenixion's demise. You won't even have a place to stay at that point. I can't stand by as my comrades perish pointlessly. Therefore, I can only restrain myself from exacting revenge on Calix for the sake of Phoenixion. Of course, I'll support you entirely in your efforts to exact revenge on Calix. However, there would be only the two of us. We won't drag Phoenixion into this. What do you think?"

## Chapter 2552

Although Scar Face was smiling, he was cursing inwardly.

Are you insane? Why would I avenge a dead person? Stop dreaming. Why would I do that when I can just pledge my allegiance to another?

Of course, he did not utter his thoughts out.

He pretended to think about it before sighing. "Even though I feel awful for Mr. Calix, what you said makes perfect sense. We shouldn't keep living for the dead. That's not loyalty. That's being reckless. I believe that's not what Mr. Calix wants for us, either. Also, if we go through with it, it might get our comrades in Phoenixion involved. That would be unfair to them. I'll do as you say."

Phoenix nodded in satisfaction. "Okay. I'm glad you understand my intentions. All right. I'll accept all your men. We can discuss how to get them to settle down here."

Scar Face said gratefully, "Thank you, Ms. Phoenix. We're in debt to you, so we're willing to do anything you ask for without hesitation."

With that, he turned and left.

Phoenix called for her four guards.

These four guards were her trusted aides and usually executed her extremely confidential tasks.

The leader of the guards was Declan Cook.

The four guards noticed Phoenix's worried expression and realized she must have encountered a bothersome matter.



Declan broke the silence first. "Ms. Phoenix, please feel free to share your worries with us."

Phoenix replied, "It's not a worry. It's just that I feel slightly uneasy."

Oh?

Declan asked curiously, "Ms. Phoenix, why do you feel uneasy?"

Phoenix sighed. "I don't think the newcomer is a simple character. I feel he might become a threat."

Declan replied, "Isn't that easy? We can just kill him."

The other three guards agreed with him and nodded in unison.

Phoenix laughed in resignation.

Her four guards were talented in everything, except they were not very intelligent. They always preferred using brute force to solve problems.

This meant that they would never be suited to become a leader. They could only be subordinates.

Phoenix stated, "Don't be reckless. Although I feel uneasy about the newcomer, my sixth sense is telling me he's not our enemy."

The four guards were confused.

Didn't she say she felt uneasy about the newcomer? Then, why isn't the newcomer our enemy? This sounds ridiculous!

Phoenix continued, "I have a mission for you guys."

As soon as the four guards heard that, their expressions immediately became solemn. "Ms. Phoenix, please give the order!"

Phoenix stated, "Investigate the newcomer. Check his background. Also, they will come into Centuria's district soon. When that happens, you guys will act as my representative and send my greetings to

Declan was slightly displeased upon hearing that and said, "Ms. Phoenix, isn't this ruining our reputation? They are the newcomers and should be the ones sending their greetings. However, it's the opposite now. You're the one sending your greetings first..."

Phoenix answered, "Just follow my instructions. Don't worry. I know what I'm doing!"

Hearing that, Declan did not have anything else to say. He nodded his head stiffly. "Okay!"

Three days passed quickly.

Zeke's Contubernium was ready to enter Centuria's district at any moment.

Apollyon's injuries had almost recovered.

The self-healing ability of an Archduke warrior, especially one who was already a Half-King Class warrior, was still very fast, almost a hundred times more than an average person.

Apollyon could already walk normally.

Once he could walk, he immediately brought Floretta to Zeke.

"Mr. Williams, I have almost fully recovered. When are we entering Centuria's district?"

## Chapter 2553

He was worried that Zeke would miss the time to enter Centuria's district because of him, so he hurriedly came over to look for the latter.

Gazing at Apollyon and his wife, Floretta, Zeke said, "Apollyon, are you two sure you want to follow me into Centuria's district? If you stay here, you'll be able to live a regular and peaceful life. However, once you enter Centuria's district, you'll always face perilous battles like this. If one of you dies, you won't be able to see one another again."

Apollyon replied firmly, "Mr. Williams, you saved my life, so I wouldn't mind risking my life for you. Besides, people should always strive for greatness. I can't allow my woman to suffer alongside me in this shabby place."

Zeke glanced at Floretta. "What about you?"

Her eyes shone with determination like his husband's. "I'm staying by Apollyon's side for the rest of my life, and I'll follow him wherever he goes."

Zeke nodded. A pang of emotion surged within him because the couple's unwavering love for each other made him miss Lacey suddenly.

Lacey had told him the same thing in the past, but now, he didn't even know where she was or how to rescue her.

Theos. D\*mn Theos. I won't let you off easy!

Zeke got up and said, "Let's go. We're entering Centuria's district!"

"Let's go!"

The party marched toward Centuria's district under Zeke's lead.

Soon, they arrived at the border.

Just when they were about to step into Centuria's district, Zeke stretched out his hand to halt the party. "Stop. Everybody stop!"

His subordinates immediately ceased their forward motion and waited for his instruction.

Zeke uttered, "We'll be entering Centuria's district after this. Since we've eliminated a Centurion, the other Centurions might treat us as their enemy, so there may be other Centuria waiting to ambush us on the way to our destination. Everyone needs to stay extra vigilant, and whoever senses something is off must notify me at once."

"Understood!"

"Got it!"

The party waited for Zeke to finish giving the orders before they continued to advance.

Zeke took the lead as usual while the other nine Decani positioned themselves on the left and right flanks as they guarded the wings.

Johan had already given the map to the location of Calix's base to Zeke, so Zeke guided his men as they rushed in the base's direction.

Fortunately, they weren't ambushed by other Centurias en route to the base or stumbled into any trouble. Their journey was too smooth to the extent of being a little unusual.

Calix's base had already been emptied, leaving only a vacated building behind.

Even so, that place was much more luxurious than Apollyon's.

Zeke ordered his ten Decani, "All of you can direct the troops to settle in. I'll scout around the

area."

"Yes, Mr. Williams!"

Zeke was worried that other Centurias might set up traps nearby the base, so he decided to look around to be safe.

Subsequently, everyone began working on their tasks in high spirits.

Suddenly, the four people assigned to guard the doors shouted, "Be careful! Someone is coming. Stay alert, everyone!"

Everyone fathomed outsiders who would visit the base at that time were most likely unfriendly, so they had their guards up.

The ten Decani took the lead as they stared warily ahead at the incoming party.

The approaching group was none other than the four bodyguards from Phoenixion, tasked to send Phoenixion's regards to Zeke's troops.

Apollyon bellowed, "Stop right there! Don't blame us for being unmerciful if you take another step forward."

The four guardians were momentarily dazed before they became infuriated. D\*mn you! We are here to send our regards, yet this is how you welcome us? Putting aside our prominent status on Theos Island, you all should've treated us with more respect simply because we arrived here earlier than you did, as we're considered your seniors.

Just as the four bodyguards were about to unleash their rage, they recalled Phoenix's reminder. Ultimately, they had no choice but to suppress their anger and come to a halt.

The leader of the bodyguards, Declan uttered coldly, " I suppose you're all the newcomers? "

Apollyon replied, " That's right. "

" Tell your boss to come out and meet with me. I have something to discuss with him. "

" Who are you? Why do you want to meet with our boss? "

" We are from Phoenixion, Ms. Phoenix's four bodyguards. Please inform your boss to show himself at once because I need to talk to him."

## Chapter 2554

Declan implied that Apollyon and the others were not qualified to speak with him.

Apollyon said, "I'm sorry. Our boss is not here at the moment."

Zeke had indeed just gone out, but Declan didn't believe that to be the case.

He was under the assumption that Apollyon was deliberately preventing them from meeting with Zeke.

If Phoenix had not repeatedly reminded them not to stir any trouble, the four bodyguards would've inflicted their wrath on Apollyon and the others.

In the end, Declan managed to contain his fury with much difficulty. "Fine. You can pass this message along to your boss then. Our Centurion, Ms. Phoenix, would like to welcome you to this district and hope you can get used to Centuria's lifestyle. Also, since we'll be neighbors in the future, please feel free to let us know if you need any assistance. Phoenixion will help out as long as it is within our abilities. Phoenixion intends to foster an amicable relationship with you instead of becoming your enemy."

Apollyon heaved a sigh of relief after knowing that they meant no harm. "Okay. I will relay this message to our Centurion."

"Let's go!" Declan left with the other three bodyguards after they fulfilled their duty.

Following their departure, the members at the base began discussing among themselves.

"Hmph! What's with their attitude? They were clearly looking down on us."

"I can't believe they even told us to feel free to ask for their help. Ha! We should consider ourselves lucky if they don't try to kick us when we're down."

"We should steer clear of people like them because they may just be the ones to target us in the future."

"That's right. Anyone who offers to help us for no reason is definitely up to no good!"

Meanwhile, Declan and the other bodyguards were also complaining among themselves.

"D\*mn those stupid people. Do you reckon they've suffered some form of brain damage on their way here?"

"How dare a group of newbies like them disrespect more experienced seniors like us. They must be clueless about our status on Theos Island."

"Hmph! They're just a bunch of ignorant fools. We shouldn't stoop to their level."

"Declan, their terrible attitude has illustrated many potential problems that may arise should we ally with them. Hence, we'll count on you to persuade Ms. Phoenix to reconsider this decision."

Declan didn't assent. Instead, he suddenly stretched out his hand to halt the other three bodyguards.

"What's the matter?"

They gazed at Declan in bafflement.

Declan replied, "Someone's coming."

Someone's here?

The quartet instantly tensed up. They swiftly positioned themselves with their backs touching and observed their surroundings.

Their lives were constantly in danger when they were in Centuria's district, especially when the traveling party consisted of merely three to four people, so they had to take that situation seriously.

Soon, a white figure dashed out from the nearby bamboo forest. "Declan, don't panic. It's me!"

When the four bodyguards realized the identity of the white figure, they let out a sigh of relief. "It's you, Platinum. Why are you here alone?"

That man, dressed in a white outfit, was the Centurion of Platinumion, Platinum. The bodyguards usually addressed him as Platinum.

It was a well-known fact that Platinum was interested in Phoenix. He had pursued her relentlessly, but she remained unfazed.

After that, he got under her skin, prompting her to commence a war between the two Centurias. Both parties suffered great losses in that battle. Following that, Platinum learned his lesson and toned down the intensity of his effort to win Phoenix's affection.

Of course, he hadn't given up on his goal all those years, so he would occasionally visit Phoenix to harass her.

Platinum uttered halfheartedly. "I'm in a bad mood, so I came out to take a walk."

After listening to his answer, the quartet was amused because they knew Platinum was obviously missing Phoenix, so he chose to loiter near Phoenixion's territory.

Platinum didn't dare to enter Phoenixion, fearing Phoenix might initiate another allout battle between the two groups.

"By the way, what are you guys doing?" Platinum asked curiously.

Declan uttered, "Ah, I don't want to talk about it. I'm not sure if you've heard the news, but a newly-promoted Centurion has replaced Calix."

"Yes. I got wind of that matter."

"We received an order from Ms. Phoenix to meet with that new Centurion. I can't fathom Ms. Phoenix's intention for wanting to form an alliance with him."

"Alas. How is a newbie like him qualified to gain Ms. Phoenix's favor? Ms. Phoenix is being reckless this time."

## Chapter 2555

Oh? How interesting.

Curiosity got the better of Platinum. "Is the new kid on the block really that impressive? Even Phoenix thought that highly of him, huh," he blurted out.

Truth be told, not many could gain favor with Phoenix, and she hadn't even clapped eyes on Platinum thus far.

A snort then escaped from Declan's lips. "Nonsense. Putting on an aloof, snobbish look is what he does best!"

Hearing that sarcastic remark, Platinum returned a rueful smile. "Ah... It seems that Phoenix still has much to learn before she can bring her observation to perfection. By the way, I'm here today because of that newcomer as well."

"Oh?" The group's interest was roused. "Platinum, what do you need him for?"

Platinum flashed them a mysterious grin on that note. "Come nearer. We need to be discreet. Walls have ears, you know."

The four of them were pumped up in an instant. Without a second thought, they sidled up to Platinum.

Then came the latter's utterance, "I have a plan, but I need your help.

"We're all ears, Platinum, and we'll assist you however we can. You've been good to us, so we naturally will reciprocate your kindness." was Declan's reply.

"Splendid. I need you guys to-

Just when Platinum was halfway through his sentence, he shook his arm to reveal a cleaver right under his sleeve.

With a swing of the cleaver, he accurately slashed the throats of all three guards except Declan's.

Swoosh!

As the cleaver danced through the air, their necks split in half on the spot. Blood began gushing out with nothing to hold it back.

The trio widened their eyes in shock, fixating their gazes on Platinum. Their mouths were agape with incredulity, but sadly, not a sound could be picked up from them.

Immediately afterward, they tumbled to the ground altogether.

Even at the brink of death, their eyes refused to shut.

The sole survivor was none other than Declan.

Still and all, Platinum had already readied his cleaver up at Declan's throat. The latter dared not budge an inch.

After wiping off the blood that had been splattered all over his face, Platinum finally went on, "I need you guys to meet your maker! Only your deaths would have offered me the help that I needed."

"Help! A murderer!" yelled Declan with all his might as he jolted himself out of terror and back to reality.

"Shut up!" Blood started seeping out from Declan's neck as Platinum cut the former's skin with



the cleaver still in his hand. "Scream again, and it'll be your last."

Having been threatened like that, Declan trembled in fear. All he could think of was hurriedly beg for mercy. "P-Please spare me, Platinum. I..... I can't die yet. My family needs me. If I'm gone, what will become of them?"

A sneer marred Platinum's face. "Do you really wish to live?"

Declan bobbed his head frantically at once. "Y-Yes, I do! Give me a chance, Platinum. I'll do anything you ask for without hesitation from now on."

Platinum nodded. "All right, then. I'll give you a chance right now. Let me ask you, who finished off these three mates of yours?"

Wearing a dubious mien, Declan gawked at Platinum and answered, "Y-You..."

What the f\*ck?

Platinum flew off the handle straightaway. "Since when did you see me lay a hand on them? You clearly saw the new guy did it to them, didn't you?"

Comprehension dawned on Declan then and there.

He reckoned that Platinum must be trying to fan the flames of conflict out of jealousy because Phoenix took a liking to the newcomer.

In a flash, Declan inclined his head. "Yes, yes. The newcomer is the killer, not you."

Platinum asked again. "So, why did he take their lives?"

Huh? What's he trying to pull?

His question stumped Declan. "Uh... CCould you enlighten me, if I may ask?"

What a load of cr\*p! How on earth would I know the reason behind this massacre?

Platinum parted his lips and shared what was on his mind. "Because he thinks that you, Phoenixions, are never worthy of them. The act of you people sending ambassadors to form an alliance with them was basically a humiliation through and through. And so, he went on a killing spree due to anger."

Declan nodded even more fervently. "TThat's it! You're right. The newcomer is so conceited, constantly looking down on us. He even spoke ill of Ms. Phoenix, saying how unbecoming of higher status she is."

It was then Platinum began to approve of Declan. "Good, good. Now that's more like it. Oh, I almost forgot. How's it so that your fellow companions died at his hands, but you managed to stay alive to tell the tale?"

## Chapter 2556

"I-I ran with lightning speed. He couldn't catch up, and that was how I survived," was Declan's response.

Platinum was bereft of speech the second he heard that kind of feedback.

This Declan must've damaged his brain somehow. Ugh! What a fool. I should've sent him to his grave and used the other guard to pass the message.

He couldn't help but be worried that Declan might slip up and botch his grand scheme.

"Answer me this-if Calix wants to take your life, do you think you can escape him?" Platinum threw yet another question out.

As Declan contemplated it, he eventually shook his head and said, "Most probably not."

"Should that be your findings, what makes you think that you can get away from that new guy? Since he was able to get rid of Calix, he's obviously much stronger than Calix."

"Uh..."

Alas, Declan couldn't provide a viable answer to that.

Ideas continued to be set forth by Platinum. "He let you off on purpose because he required you to relay his words to Phoenix. He even commanded Phoenix to submit to him within three days, or he'd spearhead an all-out attack to exterminate Phoenixion."

Declan swatted his own forehead and agreed, "Oh, right! That's an excellent way to put it! I'll say just that."

With a nod, Platinum prompted, "That's quite enough. You should go. If you dare to betray me, I'll make sure to send every single one of your family members to six feet under. I mean it."

Declan bobbed his head as though his life depended on it. "Rest assured, Platinum. I wouldn't dare to, not even in a million years."

Only then was Platinum satisfied with the outcome. He inclined his head and ordered, "Go now."

With that, Declan scurried off fearfully.

After walking quite some distance away, he, at long last, stopped to take a deep breath before collapsing to the ground and panting heavily.

At that juncture, he was already drenched in sweat.

What should I do... What in the world should I do?

It was as if nothing could ever help to calm his nerves down.

He was torn between going along with Platinum's plot and divulging the whole truth to avenge his teammates.

If he were to heed Platinum's terms, he'd be instigating a war between two groups of Centuria, and his companions' passing would've been for nothing.

However, should he choose to go against Platinum, the latter would surely come after his loved ones.

Even if they somehow managed to stay alive for the time being, their lives would never be peaceful again once they got a Centurion's eye on them.

After mulling over the circumstance, Declan gritted his teeth and muttered to himself, "Forgive me, my friends. Please bear with me for a while more. The day I rise to power will be the day I eliminate Platinum and avenge you all, so don't you worry."

After making up his mind, he quickened his pace as he made a beeline for Phoenixion's base.

Upon setting foot inside the base, he started to bellow, "Somebody! Come, quick! Bad news! Something... Something terrible. happened."

The members of Phoenixion all stepped out of their rooms, probing ever so curiously, "What's wrong? What happened, Declan? I've never seen you so terrified like this."

Panic-stricken, Declan revealed, "My... MMy members were killed."

What? Seriously?

The audience was astonished to the core. They couldn't believe their ears as they hurled a stare back at him. "What did you just say? All three of them are dead? Who murdered them?"

Deaths were pretty common in Centuria's district, yet those who had been gone with the wind were all ordinary folks.

Nevertheless, Declan and his gang weren't simply any average Joe. They were the symbolic representation of Phoenixion, boasting a stature that was second to none but Phoenix alone.

Claiming the life of any one of them would already automatically mean a war declaration with Phoenixion.

What made it worse was that three of them were cut down just like that, not one.

The onlookers lost their patience and pressed the matter further. "Tell us! Who's the killer?"

"Who else? Of course, it's that Centurion who has recently risen through the ranks." Declan had no choice but to lie.

"B\*stard!"

The entire crowd erupted into an uproar, discussing and reprimanding the newcomer.

"This is too much! He's really crossed the line!"

"What an arrogant bunch of newcomers! Some nerve they have to take us veterans so lightly. I'll tolerate them no more!"

"To think that we haven't even asserted our dominance yet, and here they're trying to strike fear into us first. D\*mn it! I won't let this matter slide."

"We must seek justice for our fallen comrades!"

"Ms. Phoenix, I demand that we crusade against them."

"Count us in!"

## Chapter 2557

Phoenix finally arrived.

She could briefly deduce what had happened from everyone's discussion.

Her expression was grim, and her face was contorted with rage. "Declan, come with me."

"Sure, sure!"

Declan immediately followed behind. Phoenix, and he entered her room.

Phoenix closed the door, and her smoldering gaze fell on him. "Tell me, Declan. Were those three guards really killed by the newcomer?"

Declan tried to appear calm even though his heart was racing. "Of course, it's true, Ms. Phoenix. How can I joke about this?"

Phoenix asked suspiciously, "Why would they do that? Isn't that digging their own grave?"

Declan answered, "Those people were extremely arrogant. What's stopping them from anything?"

Phoenix inquired, "Could it be that you guys provoked them recklessly?"

Phoenix was clear about the temper of Declan and the others. They had the ability to cause trouble even if there were none.

I shouldn't have let the four of them go on this mission.

Declan declared, "We're innocent, Ms. Phoenix! We spoke to them politely, but they felt we were beneath them and unworthy to talk to them. They insisted on speaking to you directly. I told them I would convey their message to you when I got back. But they insisted that we were looking down on them by sending the four of us, and they wanted to make us pay the price. They killed three of my comrades after that. Boohooohoo... Ms. Phoenix, you have to avenge them!"

Phoenix lifted her hand. "Don't worry. Our people will never die in vain!"

Declan added, "They also said they would spearhead an all-out attack to exterminate Phoenixion if we don't submit to him within three days. Ms. Phoenix, we don't have much time."

Phoenix nodded. "This is too much! I have misjudged this newcomer's ambition. Declan, you can leave and rest first. I will come up with a plan. I won't let this go easily!"

"Sure, sure!"

With that, Declan took his leave.

Doubt was etched across her face after Declan left.

It didn't seem likely that a newcomer would act so mercilessly. Declan shouldn't be deceiving me, much less using the lives of his comrades to lie to me.

Phoenix did not know what to do at that current moment.

After giving it some thought, Phoenix summoned Scar Face, who had just submitted to her.

When Scar Face entered, he bowed and said obsequiously, "Ms. Phoenix, how can I help you?"

Phoenix inquired, "Scar Face, how did that happen? newcomer unify the ten Contubernia? Did he use violent means?"

ScarFace responded sincerely, "According to what we know, Zeke Williams didn't resort to violent means."

Zeke Williams?

Phoenix asked doubtfully, "Is Zeke Williams the name of that newcomer?"

ScarFace nodded. "That's right."

Phoenix stated, "I don't know about this guy's character, but he has a good name that sounds righteous. Go on."

Scar Face continued, "After Zeke replaced Megahead as Decanus, Megahead conspired with the other nine Decani to take him down. However, Zeke had used a large amount of spiritual water to exchange for quite a number of meat. He used the food to tempt the Decani and their men to join hands with him. Ultimately, they all submitted to Zeke after failing to withstand the temptation. We miscalculated the opponent's strength because Zeke did not resort to violent means. This caused Mr. Calix to die in their hands."

Phoenix fell into deep thought and nodded. "With Zeke's capabilities, he could easily unite the teams through violence, but he chose to use a gentler approach. He shouldn't be an aggressive person, and he has no reason to kill our people. There's something fishy about this."

Scar Face was astonished. "Ms. Phoenix, you're suspecting Declan?"

Phoenix responded, "I'm not sure. It's just a suspicion for now. I'll conduct a thorough investigation into this matter! Scar Face, I have a task for you."

## Chapter 2558

ScarFace answered respectfully, "How can I be of help, Ms. Phoenix? I will expend my utmost effort to complete the task you have given me."

Phoenix uttered, "Get close to Declan and observe him secretly. Let me know right away if he meets with any suspicious people or does anything else unusual."

ScarFace nodded. "Okay, Ms. Phoenix! I will surely complete my task!"

He was in high spirits. I didn't expect to receive such an important task so soon after joining. I might get to replace Declan as Phoenix's trusted aide if I successfully complete this task.

Phoenix said, "Mhm. Go ahead. Don't disappoint me."

Scar Face left.

There was a reason why Phoenix selected Scar Face to carry out this mission.

Since Scar Face was an outsider and had no devotion to Phoenixion, Declan's defenses against him should be at the lowest.

Phoenix kept herself busy. She summoned two of her man to accompany her to Zeke's Centuria to find out the truth.

At the same time, the people in Zeke's base had almost cleaned up the abandoned base. They all found a spot to rest and sleep, leaving only over twenty people stationed for guarding.

In the southwestern direction, three of the guards yawned relentlessly.

A tall, thin guard stated, "I can take watch while you two get some rest. You guys can take over me later."

"All right!"

The other two guards did not turn down his offer, and they lay down and closed their eyes to get some rest.

A figure in white, however, came from above and landed in front of the two guards who just began resting on the ground.

The saber in his hand slashed a flurry of strikes before his feet touched the ground.

The two guards' necks were severed immediately. Blood was splattering profusely, and not a sound was made.

The figure in white struck the back of the head of the awake guard. The guard's vision turned dark, and he passed out.

In the blink of an eye, the figure in white disappeared into thin air while carrying the unconscious guard.

The movements of the figure in white were too quick. Everything had happened in a flash of lightning, and the awake guard did not even have time to react.

The figure in white was none other than Platinum.

Naturally, Platinum would sow discord. between both sides, and not just one.

The unconscious guard vaguely felt an icy cold sensation burning his face.

In shock, he opened his eyes to see a figure in white dumping cold water over his face from a basin.

He shouted out in terror, "Help! Help me!"

The figure in white chuckled coldly. "Shut your mouth. I will kill you now if you shout again."

The guard hastily zipped his mouth.

This man really dares to kill people, and he killed my two colleagues just now. He's not only ruthless but also quick and super-powerful. I'm not his match.

As the guard was unable to escape, he could only grovel on the ground and beg the man to let him go.

"Please, I beg you. Please spare me. My child can't lose me as he's still little. Please..."

Platinum snorted coldly. "Do you want to live?"

The guard nodded instantly. "Yes! I want to live."

Platinum responded, "You must follow my instructions if you want to live."

"Yes. Yes. Yes!"



The guard replied immediately. "I can do anything you want me to do as long as you spare my life."

Platinum asked. "Okay. Who killed your two comrades?"

The guard thought for a moment before replying, "T-They... ended their lives. themselves!"

Platinum stated, "You're wrong. They were killed by a lady clad in tight-fitting black leather attire."

A woman in a tight-fitting black suit?

The guard questioned, "Who's that?"

Platinum stated, "You don't have to know who it is. You just have to follow my instructions."

## Chapter 2559

The guard replied, "All right, I understand. A lady clad in a tight-fitting black leather attire cruelly killed them."

Platinum asked, "Why didn't you die?"

The guard stammered, "I- I ran fast enough, so she wasn't able to catch me..."

Platinum shook his head in disappointment. Yet another fool!

Platinum said, "You were in the toilet at that time. The murderer did not notice you, but you saw her killing everyone while you were in the toilet."

The guard nodded immediately. "I understand."

Platinum inclined his head. "Yes. Go on. You should follow my advice and say it as I have taught you. Otherwise, you'll definitely die!"

The guard said, "I understand. I'll obey you for sure."

Before the guard left, Platinum did not forget to let him see the bronze plate that he carried with him.

The word "Centurion" was written on it.

The guard was extremely shocked.

He did not expect that Platinum would be a Centurion.

If I betray a Centurion one day, will my children and I be able to continue surviving? Definitely not!

The Centurion could kill them in many ways.

I have no choice but to deceive Mr. Williams this time.

With a restless heart, the guard nervously returned to the crime scene.

Thankfully, no one realized that the two guards had died.

All of a sudden, he knelt on the ground and yelled, "Help! Something bad has happened! Someone got killed!"

What?

A commotion immediately broke out in the camp that had been quiet just a moment ago.

Everyone rushed toward him.

"What? What's going on?"

"Oh my goodness! The smell of blood is so strong!"

"Someone's dead!"

Apollyon was the first to rush over.

When he saw the two corpses on the ground, a myriad of expressions flashed across his face.

He raised his voice and shouted, "Get ready! Everyone, get ready! Be prepared to start fighting anytime! An enemy has attacked us. I repeat, an enemy has attacked us!"

The crowd jumped into action and formed a circular formation swiftly. They circled the crime scene and were on guard.

Apollyon looked at the lucky survivor and said, "Tell me what happened!"

The guard's heart pounded in trepidation. "Just now, I was in the toilet. My comrades were

guarding here. When I was halfway done, I heard a commotion, so I hurriedly looked toward the source of the sound. Then, I saw a woman wearing a tight-fitting black suit killing them! She is really powerful. The two men did not stand a chance against her. I had wanted to rush over, but... I knew that even if I rushed over, I would die. So... I could only wait for that woman to leave before calling for help!"

A woman in a tight-fitting black suit? Who's that? Everyone was perplexed.

No one suspected the guard. The guard's anxious heart finally grew at ease.

At that moment, a commotion broke out at the entrance of the camp. "Come over! Someone is approaching our camp! Their identity is unclear!"

"Sh\*t!" Apollyon cursed. "Before we can even settle this, another problem pops up again. Come! Let's go to the entrance."

The crowd immediately dashed to the entrance.

There were three people standing at the entrance of the camp.

A woman stood in the middle.

When everyone saw the woman, they inhaled sharply.

The woman was beautiful and had fair skin. She did not fit into the group of men and was like a swan standing amongst a flock of chickens.

The most important thing was that she was wearing a black body-hugging leather suit.

Few people could afford to wear a black leather suit in such a place.

Furthermore, she arrived at the camp around the time of the incident. She was very suspicious!

She just killed two of our men, yet she dares to come here boldly to challenge us! What an intolerable bully!

Apollyon and the rest had already decided that the woman was the murderer.

## Chapter 2560

Apollyon commanded, "Surround them!"

Apollyon and his men had confidence in numbers, and they were not afraid of the three people. They immediately surrounded Phoenix and the two other people.

Meanwhile, Phoenix and her subordinates were shocked.

They had just arrived, but the soldiers surrounded them without saying anything. It was a serious display of provocation.

Were the men there so violent and unreasonable? Phoenix felt that if that was the case, the possibility of three of her guards being killed by them was very high.

At that moment, Phoenix's view of Zeke's character worsened considerably.

Phoenix sighed. "It looks like I have overrated Zeke's character. From the looks of it, my subordinates have been killed by you."

Apollyon replied angrily, "Ha! We have not said anything yet, but you've accused us of doing what you have done."

"Accused you of doing what we have done? I don't know what you're trying to say."

Apollyon said, "We have a witness. Are you still not going to admit it?"

Phoenix was confused. "Admit what?"

Apollyon replied, "You really know how to put on an act. Come, see if she was the one who killed our comrades!"

The remaining survivor walked forward and scrutinized Phoenix.

He did not recognize Phoenix and did not know if the person that Platinum wanted to slander was the woman standing in front of him.

He said vaguely, "I didn't manage to catch a glimpse of her face, but her attire and figure

Apollyon chuckled coldly. "There shouldn't be another woman dressed like you on Theos Island. Are you still going to deny that you are the murderer?"

B\*llsh\*t!

Phoenix retorted through gritted teeth, "I have just arrived here! How can I kill anyone?"

Her subordinate hurriedly rushed over and asked, "When were your comrades killed?"

Apollyon replied, "Just ten minutes ago."

Phoenix's comrade replied, "Then you have wrongly accused Ms. Phoenix. We have been walking together for half an hour and have just arrived. We did not separate during that time."

Apollyon said, "You are her subordinate. Naturally, you'll speak up for her."

Ha! How interesting!

Phoenix's smile did not reach her eyes. "The perpetrator often accuses others first. Let's put this matter aside first. Do you have an explanation for killing my people?"

Apollyon replied, "Killed your people? Who are you? I don't recognize you. How can I kill your people?"

Phoenix replied, "I'm the Centurion of Phoenixion. My name is Phoenix!"

Apollyon's wife, Floretta, immediately whispered, "Phoenixion had a good relationship with Calixion in the past. She's probably here because of Calix's death."

Apollyon came to a sudden realization. "I see. I was wondering why you would create trouble for us for no reason. Phoenix, we had challenged Calix fairly. His abilities were too weak, and he died. He only has himself to blame. Furthermore, he held my wife captive for so many years. I have already shown him mercy by just taking his life."

Phoenix replied, "Don't put on an act. I'm not referring to Calix but my three subordinates."

"Your three subordinates? Are you referring to the four guards that had previously come over?" Apollyon asked.

"Of course," Phoenix said.

Apollyon replied, "What nonsense are you talking about? Although their attitude was bad, and I was a little displeased, they came over to 'greet' us. Even if we are dissatisfied with them, we have no reason to kill them. You are truly unreasonable!"

"Ha!" Phoenix laughed frostily.

"Unreasonable? What a bunch of troublemakers. Forget it. Since this is the case, let's stop wasting our breaths. From now on, we'll be on opposing ends. Let's go!"

Thereafter, Phoenix turned around and wanted to lead her subordinates away.

"Please hold on!" Suddenly, a mature and low voice called out to them.

## Chapter 2561

Everyone turned toward the voice, which was Zeke returning after a reconnaissance of the neighboring terrain.

Phoenix gave him a curious glance. "Who are you? Are you talking to us?"

He nodded. "I'm their Centurion-Zeke Williams."

Zeke Williams?

Phoenix's eyes raked over him.

Earlier, she thought Apollyon was their Centurion.

Truth be told, she was a little disappointed when she first saw Apollyon. She thought his rugged looks didn't suit such an elegant appearance. However, the unease in her heart was allayed once she finally met the real Zeke Williams.

Mhm, this is the appearance that the name should have.

Phoenix asked coldly, "Why did you call out to us?"

"I just want to say that you and my people are equally dimwitted," he responded.

"What the.." Anger rose in Phoenix's gut.

My first impression of you was favorable, but your first words were to refer to me as "dimwitted." All right, I'll show you what a real dimwit looks like.

She bore holes through him with her glare. "I'll show you which one of us is the moron!"

"Do it, then!"

Zeke said, "You use your fists rather than your wits when problems arise. You are a bigger dimwit than I expected."

I-I'll make you pay for that! I have never been insulted like this in my life.

"I have a general idea of what happened. Phoenix, don't you think someone is trying to drive a

wedge between us?" he continued.

Her eyes lit up at the words "drive a wedge" as the proverbial light bulb clicked on over her head.

That's right. The situation does look like someone is sowing the seeds of discord. The most important thing is that I fell for it hook, line, and sinker. If Zeke hadn't intervened... Damn it, who is behind this?

Phoenix drew in a deep breath and looked at Zeke. "Who do you think it is?"

"Do you mind talking in private?" Zeke inquired.

Phoenix contemplated it for a while. "Okay."

He glanced at two of her subordinates. "Both of you can come with me."

She was suddenly nervous. "What is the meaning of this?"

Only one phrase came to mind-total annihilation.

"Would your subordinates be a concern to me if I really wanted to get rid of you?" he asked.

That seemed to assuage her worries.

She followed Zeke to a deserted location, her subordinates close behind.

"Would you like to know who the mastermind is?" He asked.

"Of course I would," Phoenix replied. "But you have to prove that someone else is sowing dissent and not you. Perhaps you staged things to make it appear as if a third party is involved."

Zeke was rendered speechless.

To put it nicely, Phoenix was a highly suspicious and overcautious person.

To be harsh, she was dense, truly dense!

He elaborated, "Firstly, you and I have no bad blood, and I see no reason to harm you. Furthermore, I'm a newcomer who isn't firmly established. I would have had a few loose screws in my head to tread on a Centurion's toes. Secondly, you wouldn't have stealthily killed two of my men to exact revenge instead of raising an army against us. Thirdly, you're straight as an arrow. You would have taken credit for it if it was really you rather than beating around the bush."

She mulled it over. "Fine, what you said makes sense. I'll believe that there is a mastermind for the time being. What is your plan to flush him out?"

"It's simple," Zeke answered. "My question. for you is, what is the mastermind's true motive?"

Phoenix shook her head. "I'm not a parasitic worm living inside their body. How would I know their thoughts and motives?"

Words eluded him once more.

This woman is indeed dense.

## Chapter 2562

"Common sense dictates that the mastermind is instigating us into starting a war, putting him in an advantageous position. He wants us to suffer heavy losses, so we will do precisely what he wants, and he will show himself sooner or later," Zeke elaborated.

Are you dumb?

Phoenix made an affronted expression. "That's a terrible idea. I didn't come from a long line of history to be bait for a single person. Am I supposed to rebuild my army? What if he conquers my army? What, then? Tears wouldn't help me at that point."

Zeke was at a loss for words. "Are you pulling my leg, or do you really not get what I'm saying? We're obviously not going to put up a real fight. It's all for a show, and we'll fabricate a false appearance of a great loss. How about this? Tonight you'll lead a team to ambush me, and we'll battle each other while our men pretend to be wounded or dead. If everything goes according to plan, the mastermind will reveal themselves tonight or tomorrow. The truth will become clear by that time."

She nodded. "You're right. Very well then, the sneak attack is scheduled for tonight, so make your preparations accordingly."

"Let's put on a convincing show," he said.

"How?" she asked.



His gaze flitted to the two subordinates standing behind her. "These two will have to stay with me and do a little more work."

"Why are you holding my men hostage?" Phoenix was wary.

Zeke explained patiently, "In actuality, these two are killed by me, and we have reached an untenable position. This will be a justifiable reason for tonight's ambush, and no one will suspect we're staging a performance."

"That makes sense. Okay, let's do as you say." She offered a nod.

She ordered her subordinates, "You're both dead men now. Why aren't you lying on the ground? You must remain motionless like corpses before the plan is a success."

Understood!

Both of them immediately collapsed on the ground and closed their eyes, not moving a muscle.

Then, Phoenix suddenly slammed her fist into Zeke. "Go to hell, you jerk!"

Huh?

Fortunately, he blocked her attack deftly and pretended she had sent him sailing in the air.

In reality, her attack was merely a tickle to him, but he didn't want her to know his true capabilities, so he feigned a reaction.

Phoenix barged out of the door and roared, "Zeke, you dared to touch my men? That's it! There can only be you or me on Theos Island!"

Then, she quickly took her leave.

Zeke was dumbstruck. She may be dense, but her acting skills are decent.

He thought they were really turning on each other for a second there.

Apollyon and everyone present watched with their hearts pounding.

They recognized it was a divisive strategy and had hoped Zeke would resolve the misunderstanding. Having more enemies would put them at a disadvantage here.

To their surprise, not only did Zeke not smooth things over, but he had killed Phoenix's subordinates.

This means trouble. Our Centuria may become the subject of public criticism.

Apollyon looked at Zeke and asked, "Mr. Williams, should we go after her?"

Getting rid of Phoenix would dismantle her Centuria, preventing her people from attacking them.

Zeke shook his head. "Forget about it. Let her go. I've taught her a lesson, so she wouldn't come back here again."

All right!

Apollyon heaved a rueful sigh. "Mr. Williams, I think Phoenix wouldn't let this go easily and will strike back. What should we do next?"

## Chapter 2563

Zeke said, "Everyone, please be on alert! Notify me immediately if you spot any suspicious activity."

"Understood!"

Apollyon immediately arranged for people to stand guard. No single suspicious person would be allowed to approach the base.

Zeke went back to the room to rest.

To him, this matter was not a big deal at all, and he didn't really worry about it.

Whoever the mastermind was, Zeke was confident that he could handle the blitz well.

He would pinch his opponents to death if they dared to strike.

Meanwhile, Phoenix staggered all the way back to the base.

As soon as she returned to the base, she spat out a mouthful of blood. "D\*mn it, that cunning b\*stard!"

Of course, she purposely splurged out the blood in front of the crowd.

Seeing that Phoenix was injured, her subordinates felt their faces turn pale and ran up in a hurry.

"Ms. Phoenix, what happened to you?"

"Where are the followers who went out with you? Why are you the only one coming back?"

"What about the blood on you?"

Phoenix was panting heavily. Rage blazed furiously in her eyes as she bellowed, "This is too much. The new guy has gone too far!"

"What?" The members of the Phoenixion turned pale in shock. "Ms. Phoenix, don't tell us that you were injured by that newcomer."

Phoenix responded, "Who else but him that would break the rules like they're nothing? Originally, I was hoping to have a talk with the new guy, but I never expected that he was this wicked and plotted against me. I've never seen such despicable methods before. I accidentally fell for his trick. Fortunately, I was able to escape in one piece. However, those two followers weren't this lucky... It's all my fault. I failed to protect them!"

Upon hearing Phoenix, the crowd erupted in fury.

"What! I thought there was a misunderstanding when Declan said that the three guards were killed."

"He even dared to kill a Centurion. It seems that what happened before was not a misunderstanding at all!"

"How arrogant! As a newcomer, they dare to go against the old Centuria. Do they have a death wish?"

"This is simply intolerable! If we don't eradicate them, it would be a great shame to all of us!"

"I demand that we eradicate the new Centuria!"

"You have my support!"

"Me too!"

Phoenix waved her hand to gesture to everyone to quiet down.

It took a long time for the volatile crowd to calm down.

"Phoenixion will not be bullied. Our brothers shall not die in vain! Hence, I decided to launch a sneak attack on the new Centuria tonight. Those who support the decision, please stand on the left. Those who don't support it, please stand on the right!"

The crowd immediately struck into action as soon as Phoenix finished speaking.

Everyone stood to the left.

They all agreed to ambush Zeke tonight.

"Great!" Phoenix nodded with satisfaction.

"You guys didn't disappoint me. Go back and get ready. Tonight, we will fight to the death with them!"

"Fight to the death!"

The crowd dispersed with a jarring war cry and went back to gear up for the battle.

Declan left with the crowd too.

However, he did not return to the resting place. Instead, he sneaked out.

Declan's movement was caught by Phoenix, who had been secretly observing him.

A sinister smile appeared on the corner of her mouth. "You son of a b\*tch! It's really you! How dare you betray me? I will skin you alive!"

She summoned Scar Face to her room.

Scar Face bowed and said obsequiously, "Ms. Phoenix, how can I help you?"

Phoenix nodded. "Scar Face, you've been monitoring Declan closely. Have you noticed any strange behaviors from him?"

Scar Face replied, "I haven't found anything unusual nor seen him come into contact with any suspicious people."

Phoenix said, "Well, from now on, you don't need to monitor him anymore. I need you to monitor his family instead. Remember, Declan may secretly transfer his family away. You must stop him at any cost. You must never let Declan take his family away."

## Chapter 2564

Scar Face said in surprise, "Ms. Phoenix, if I hear it right, you're saying that Declan... wants to betray Phoenixion?"

Phoenix nodded solemnly. "The matter has been confirmed. However, we can't announce it yet so as not to alert our enemy. You must act stealthily for what I've ordered you. Do you understand?"

Scar Face nodded repeatedly. "I understand. I will keep a close watch on Declan's family."

"You can leave now."

Scar Face walked out with a dumbfounded expression.

Everyone knew that the four guards, especially Declan, were loyal to Phoenix. Declan had even once taken a blade for Phoenix using his body.

The four guards were the least likely people in Phoenixion to betray Phoenix. To his surprise, the first to betray Phoenix was Declan.

He concluded that one should never judge a book by its cover.

However, Scar Face wasn't livid at all. In fact, he even secretly felt a little happy.

If Declan were still loyal to Phoenix, Scar Face would have to play second fiddle to Declan, no matter how powerful he was.

Yet, Declan had betrayed Phoenix. The latter would definitely punish him severely and even take his life.

At that time, Scar Face would be held in high regard!

Phoenix must value him a lot to entrust him with such an important task.

He could already foresee the bright future that awaited him.

After Declan sneaked out of Phoenixion, he ran all the way to Platinumion, where Platinum was.

At the door, the guard of Platinumion blocked Declan's way. "Stop! Who are you? Why do you come to Platinumion?"

Declan gasped and said, "I-I am from Phoenixion. I have something important to inform Mr. Platinum."

The guard said indifferently, "Do you have any appointment with Mr. Platinum?"

Declan said, "I don't need an appointment to meet him. Can you please inform him that I'm here?"

"Hmph!" The guard snorted. "Mr. Platinum is busy and has no time to meet you. Please leave now."

Frustrated, Declan stood at the door and shouted, "Mr. Platinum, I am Declan from Phoenixion. I have come to see you and have something important to inform you."

D\* mn!

The guard berated, "How dare you cause trouble at the door of Platinumion? Are you seeking death? Go to hell, jerk!" With that, the guard was ready to attack Declan.

"Stop!"

Right then, an authoritative voice stopped the guard.

It was from their Centurion, Platinum.

The guard at the door immediately stopped attacking Declan. He turned around and knelt on the ground. "Good day, Mr. Platinum!"

Platinum reprimanded, "The gentleman here is my esteemed guest. He's also an honored guest of Platinumion. How dare you be so rude to him? "

Ahhh!

The guard was scared senseless.

He couldn't believe that the insignificant man standing in front of him was actually Platinum's esteemed guest.

Platinum even wanted take his life to soothe the guest's anger.

Who is this guy? Why does Mr. Platinum respect him so much?

The guard's legs gave out beneath him, and he dropped to the ground in an instant.

"Mr. Platinum, I'm sorry. Please spare my life..."

Platinum said, "There's no use begging for forgiveness from me."

The guard immediately got on his knees and apologized profusely, "Sir, I shouldn't have treated you disrespectfully. I'm sorry that I've offended you. I'm begging for your forgiveness. Please spare my life. Please forgive me..."

At this moment, Declan was flattered beyond words.

He never expected Platinum to be so courteous to him.

Platinum was even willing to sacrifice one of his men's lives to appease him.

He enjoyed being the target of worship. Declan almost lost himself in the feeling of being someone high and mighty.

He was having the time of his life.

Haha, it seems like I've picked the right side this time.

Declan said with his chin held up high, "I won't stoop to your level this time. Make sure this never happens again!"

The guard let out a sigh of relief and thanked Declan repeatedly.

## Chapter 2565

Platinum extended an invitation. "Please come in, Mr. Cook. I've prepared some nice tea. Let us have a quick chat."

"Thank you for your hospitality, Mr. Platinum."

Declan got all self-conceited for being able to enjoy some expensive tea in Platinum's room.

Is this the luxury that Centurions get to enjoy? It feels great.

The two of them chatted for a bit before Platinum cut to the chase. "What good news do you bring with you today, Mr. Cook?"

Declan laughed. "Your plan worked. wonders, Mr. Platinum. Phoenixion will launch an ambush on that newcomer tonight. You can get the loot after both parties are worn from battle."

Platinum smiled. "It's all thanks to your help, Mr. Cook. My plan wouldn't have worked if not for you! You're key to this plan. You don't have to worry. I won't forget about your contributions."

All of a sudden, Declan added, "Nonetheless, I feel obliged to remind you. of something else, Mr. Platinum."

"Oh? Speak your mind, Mr. Cook." Platinum studied Declan with curiosity.

"There might be an alternative way in which the situation might develop." Declan surmised.

"What could it be?"

"Do you think that they might've noticed someone sowing discord between them and pretended to ambush the newcomer just so they could lure us out?"

Platinum smiled. "Why would you say so, Mr. Cook?"

Declan explained, "It's obvious that Phoenix doesn't believe me when I told her the newcomer killed three guards. While she did claim to be leading her men on a crusade against the newcomer, I think they're actually going to verify the situation with him. If that's the case, they would very likely realize something was wrong, which would lead them to stall their assault. I suspect that they coordinated the ambush on the newcomer after her subordinates were killed to lure the mastermind out of hiding."

Platinum reaffirmed, "You sure pay a lot of attention to details, Mr. Cook. However, you don't have to worry about that. for I already have it sorted out."

"Oh?" Declan seemed surprised. "How did you solve the problem, Mr. Platinum?"

Platinum disclosed, "I snuck into the newcomer's Centuria and assassinated two of his guards. The blame was then put on Phoenix. The newcomer would definitely assume that Phoenix was the perpetrator. By the time they meet, they would already have the preconception that the other was feigning innocence by calling for a crusade! Given Phoenix's temper, she wouldn't possibly verify the situation with the newbie peacefully. Therefore, a conflict between them would be inevitable."

Having a grasp on the situation, Declan gave Platinum a thumbs up. "Haha, this is such a great plot, Mr. Platinum! I'm impressed!"

"I have one more favor to ask of you, Mr. Cook," Platinum requested. "Please update me on their losses if a battle broke out tonight. I need to get a hold of details to plot my next move."

Declan happily agreed. "No problem! Leave it to me! All right, I'll be taking my leave now. I need to hurry back lest Phoenix comes to me."

Platinum said, "Sure, I won't keep you any longer. A three-day celebration is due after our



success. By then, you shall be an esteemed guest of mine!"

"Sure!"

The two of them had an amiable chat.

Platinum even sent him off from Centuria in person.

After seeing Declan off, Platinum turned to give an order to his subordinates in Platinumion.  
"None of this is to be revealed to anyone under any circumstance. Those who leaked this will be executed!"

His subordinates answered fearfully, "Absolutely, Sir!"

Platinum then turned his attention to the guard he had chided just now.

"I'm sorry for what I did just now, Jeffrey. I had to scold you due to the circumstances. Let's see... As a token of my apology, you will be given an extra one-fifth of your monthly stipend."

## Chapter 2566

Huh?

Jeffrey, the guard, was confused.

What's going on? He just threatened to kill me over what I did to that outsider! What's with the sudden shift in attitude? He's even apologizing and offering compensation.

Jeffrey turned the offer down right away. "Mr. Platinum, y-you don't have to apologize. I was the one who offended your esteemed guest out of ignorance. I deserved the punishment..."

Esteemed guest?

Platinum sneered. "He's far from an esteemed guest! Truth be told, I only showed him such courtesy due to his usefulness in the current situation. I won't go easy on him after he outlives that. The fact that he betrayed his superior means he would betray me for personal gains in the future too. I wouldn't want someone like that around me. Besides, I'll be in trouble if he tells anyone about it..."

Realization hit Platinum's subordinates. So this is what's going on.

Platinum apologized to soothe his subordinates.

A lot of them looked dissatisfied when he punished them over Declan.

Leading them would be a challenge if he didn't smooth things over right after that.

Admittedly, Platinum was a talented leader.

The night sky darkened as time passed.

By two o'clock in the morning, members of Phoenixion exited their rooms and gathered at the plot of empty land at the front.

It was time for them to act.

Phoenix got out of her room and swept a glance at the crowd. "Are you ready?" she whispered. "Consider this a notice of the forefront. A life-and-death battle will ensue later on. People will die. Those who do not wish to take this risk can back out now. I won't force anybody into this."

None of them spoke.

Phoenix said, "Great. I'll take your silence as acquiescence. Women and children stay. The rest of you, come with me! Let's go!"

With Phoenix in the lead, the troop snuck over to the barracks occupied by Zeke's faction.

His troops were sound asleep, so deathly silence hung in the barracks.

Even the guard at the entrance was nodding off, so they arrived unnoticed.

Members of Phoenixion were elated. Their stealthy action would allow for a preemptive strike.

Just as they awaited Phoenix's orders to launch an assault, she walked up to the entrance and yelled, "Come on out, Zeke!"

F\*ck!

The members of Phoenixion were dumbfounded.

Are you out of your mind? We're on an ambush! Do you even understand the term? We should be cutting their heads off while they're still asleep! Did you wake them up because you think it's unfair to kill them in their sleep? Or rather, aren't you having too much faith in our abilities? Whoosh!

There was an upheaval in Zeke's faction.

"F\*ck, who's there?"

"You must be intruders for barging into our barracks in the dead of night!"

"Get up, get up! We have intruders!"

Zeke's men quickly gathered at the entrance to make a stand against members of Phoenixion.

"F\*ck! You're despicable for launching an ambush at night!"

"They've always been looking down on us newcomers! I can't contain this rage any longer!"

"A new broom sweeps clean! If we don't teach these older factions a lesson, they'll continue to find fault with us!"

"D\*mn! I'm going all out against them! We get a foothold here if we win; if we lose, we just get our heads cut off!"

The men from Zeke's faction were agitated. War was brewing.

The men from Phoenixion wouldn't back down and continued to challenge them.

A battle could start at the drop of a hat.

At that critical moment, a deep voice rumbled. "Stop it right there!"

Zeke had arrived.

All attention was on him immediately.

"Give the order, Mr. Williams."

"They've gone overboard. They assumed that we're easy targets just because we're new here."

"This is pathetic! I can't get over this if we don't f\*ck them over!"

## Chapter 2567

What Zeke said next took everyone aback.

He waved and said to his people, "Move aside."

What?

The people on Zeke's side were dumbfounded, and they wondered if they had heard him wrong. "W-What did you... just say?"

Zeke repeated, "Move aside. Our guests are here. Of course, we have to welcome them."

Guests?

His people laughed out loud.

Who'd come in the middle of the night with machetes? Mr. Williams must be mocking them.

They were all laughing, but none moved aside.

At that, Zeke furrowed his brows and said, "What are you waiting for? Hurry up and open up a path for our esteemed guests."

What is going on?

The people all widened their eyes.

Zeke does not look like he was joking at all. Is he really inviting our enemies who came to ambush us in the middle of the night to our base? Isn't he inviting the gift horse in despite knowing what's inside?

Nevertheless, Zeke uttered again, "Open up a path!"

Apollyon quietly moved aside, and the others followed suit.

He was certain that Zeke was doing this for a reason.

Zeke looked at Phoenix and said, "Come in, and let's have a chat."

Phoenix nodded. "Come on. Let's go in."

Even the Phoenixion's men were dumbfounded by the exchange.

What the heck is going on?

They were certain that Zeke's invitation was a trap.

However, Phoenix was about to willingly step right into the trap.

What kind of joke is this?

One of them then grabbed Phoenix and said, "Ms. Phoenix, we can't go in. Can't you see that this is a trap?"

Phoenix replied, "Just come in. Why are you still wasting so much of your breath on nonsense? I've got everything in control."

With that said, Phoenix strode into Zeke's base.

Apollyon was thrilled.

Phoenix was now surrounded by their people, and it was the perfect chance for them to deal with the fatal blow.

He turned to Zeke and whispered, "Mr. Williams, are we going to make a move now?"

Zeke shot Apollyon a scathing look.

Hence, Apollyon gave up on that notion. I really have no idea what Phoenix and Mr. Williams are thinking about.

The men from Phoenixion exchanged looks with each other, but none followed Phoenix into the base.

Phoenix turned around and urged, "Why are you still standing there? Hurry up and come in with me. This is an order!"

After hearing that, her people were rendered speechless. They then anxiously stepped in after Phoenix.

We're taking a risk by doing this.

Fortunately for them, Zeke's men did not do anything to them.

Declan's heart was thumping loudly against his ribcage.

Anyone with a brain would be able to figure out that there was something fishy about the matter.

What he was most worried about had happened. Zeke and Phoenix were executing their plan. They were baiting someone else; they were trying to lure the mastermind out by pretending that

both sides were suffering great losses.

No, I have to tell Mr. Platinum about this as soon as possible. But it's obvious that I can't escape now. I have no choice but to wait until the right time comes before coming up with another plan to flee from this place.

What happened next was an even stranger scene.

The people of two opposing sides seemed to be sharing a space in peace.

They were looking at each other with hostile expressions, but no one dared to make a move.

It was a tense and awkward atmosphere.

Phoenix then said, "Mr. Williams, tell the others the truth."

Zeke inclined his head. "I hope you can do so instead."

"All right. Quiet down, please, and listen to me."

The people, who were shifting nervously, instantly went silent and turned to Zeke and Phoenix to hear what they had to say next.

Phoenix said, "We've actually looked into what happened earlier, and we've found out that our people weren't killed by Mr. Williams's men. Of course, his men weren't killed by me either. Someone else is behind this. They want to set us up and sow discord between us. Once we fight, we'll both suffer losses. Then, the mastermind behind this will appear to take advantage of the situation and reap the benefits without needing to do anything."

## Chapter 2568

What?

The people were stunned.

"I can't believe this is what's going on. Ha! I've long guessed that things weren't as simple."

"Who is the evil mastermind? We really have to find out who they are!"

"Hmph! I knew it; the newcomers wouldn't have the guts to do anything to our men."

"By the way, Ms. Phoenix, since we know that someone's trying to drive a wedge between us, why are we still ambushing them in the night?"

Phoenix answered, "I'm playing along with their game. Didn't they want to see us hurt each other? That will be the show we will put on for them. We'll pretend to suffer heavy losses. The moment the mastermind rears their head, we'll lop it off!"

"Wonderful!" the people exclaimed. "This is a fantastic plan!"

Zeke continued, "Therefore, we'll need to trouble you all to play in a show. We'll make it sound like we're fighting, but of course, please don't actually hurt each other. We'll make it seem like we've lost half of our men by the end of the fight. Let's start now."

Phoenix immediately got to work. "Start now. Kill them all!"

In an instant, chaos erupted within the space.

The sounds of weapons clanging together and war cries went on.

Of course, it was not a real battle; they were only putting up a show.

Most were just hitting their weapons against the other party's weapons.

"Lift your f\*cking weapon higher. It's not thrilling enough to hit it from this height!"

"Hit my foot! My weapon's about to break because of you."

"What a useless weapon. Are these the weapons your Centurion is giving to you?"

"Are you dissing my weapon? I'm done entertaining you. Go and hit it yourself!"

With that, the man tossed his weapon to the ground to let the other party hit the weapon by himself while he rested at the side.

"Darn, I'm tired. Hurry up and die so that I can rest."

"Ha, loser! You're tired out already? I'm not done playing around. Even if one of us has to die, it'd be you!"

"Sure. Let me die for a while first. Come on, let's move to that corner so that no one will step on my hand while I'm dead."

Some could not even find an enemy to spar with and could only exchange blows with someone from their party.

It was a messy scene, but the messier it was, the more it looked like a real battlefield.

In the meantime, after a while of sparring with someone from the other party, Declan became tired and lay on the ground to play dead.

He then deliberately "died" in a quiet corner.

When the people around him lessened, Declan carefully crawled to the outer ring, about to inform Platinum about the situation.

However, just as he crawled out of the battlefield, a figure flew toward him and slammed into him.

Declan was speechless for a moment.

Who the f\*ck are you? I'm already dead, so why are you still attacking me?

The one who slammed into Declan was Scar Face.

Scar Face apologetically said, "Sorry, sorry. I didn't mean to do it. There was a really impressive guy who killed me earlier, and he even tossed me all the way here after I died. Huh? Why are you here instead of fighting in the battle?"

"What the hell are you on? Aren't I clearly dead as well?"

A look of pity appeared on Scar Face's face, and he shook Declan's hand. "We're on the same boat. Yes, we are."

Declan cursed inwardly, Who the f\*ck's on the same boat as you? F\*ck off.

Out loud, he uttered, "Scar Face, if you want to die, die somewhere else. Don't come so close to me. I'm tired, and I want to lie here for a nap."

Scar Face chuckled. "Darn, my friend, we're fated to be. That's what I'm thinking too. A nap will be great now. Darn, my circadian rhythm. I get so sleepy at this time every day."

As he said that, Scar Face even yawned.

Declan sighed in resignation. "All right then. Sleep now."

With that, he lay on the ground and began snoring.

Scar Face closed his eyes, and in no time, he started snoring.



At that, Declan grinned. Hmph. You nearly messed up my plan!

## Chapter 2569

He then stood up to leave.

Before he departed, he even tentatively called out to Scar Face, fearing that the latter was pretending to sleep.

Fortunately, Scar Face's only response to his repeated calls was to keep snoring. Hence, Declan sped toward where Platinumion was.

However, not long after he started his journey, a sense of uneasiness gripped him. It felt as if someone was watching him.

Someone's following me?

With that thought in mind, he turned around.

Alas, it was empty behind him.

"That's strange," he muttered under his breath before turning back, about to go on.

However, just as he turned around, he was greeted by a face full of scars, and that nearly frightened the living daylights out of him.

"Oh my goodness! What is this?"

Declan jumped away.

"Dec, what's the matter with you? Dec? It's me, Scar Face! Look at how surprised you are. It's almost as if you've seen a ghost!"

That scarred face belonged to none other than Scar Face.

However, Declan was only even more frightened when he saw Scar Face, and a shudder wracked his body.

D\*mn it. Why did Scar Face follow me? It can't be that Scar Face is starting to suspect me,

right?

After taking in a deep breath, Declan asked, "Scar Face, it's you? W-Why did you follow me here?"

Scar Face replied, "That's what I was about to ask you. Declan, why are you running everywhere instead of playing dead?"

The gears in Declan's head started working, and he quickly said, "I'm here to piss."

Scar Face raised a brow. "You need to piss at a place so far away?"

"Rubbish. How am I supposed to pee in front of so many people? We're the second in-command of Phoenixion. We have a reputation to keep."

Scar Face bobbed his head. "Hm, you have a point. I've been holding my pee too, so let's do it together."

"Okay," Declan forced himself to answer. "Turn around, and don't pee on me."

Scar Face obediently turned around.

Now's the time!

A vicious look crossed Declan's face, and he swung his fist toward the back of Scar Face's head.

However, just as he inched closer to ScarFace, something cold touched his abdomen. Then, Scar Face's even colder voice traveled into his ears. "Stop."

What?

Declan quickly lowered his head to see a machete against his stomach, and the handle of the machete was held by Scar Face.

D\*mn this! ScarFace really came prepared! It looks like he was suspicious of me from the beginning.

Nevertheless, Declan continued to play the fool. "Scar Face, what the f\*ck are you doing? We're both from the same Centuria. Aren't you afraid that Phoenix will punish you if you kill me?"

A faint smile grew on Scar Face's lips. "Punish me? Say, what do you think would be a proper punishment for betraying Phoenixion?"

"I..." Declan gritted his teeth. "What are you talking about, ScarFace? What do you mean by betraying Phoenixion?"

ScarFace snorted. "I'm impressed by your mental resilience. You're still refusing to admit what you've done until now. You're working with the mastermind, aren't you? Are you on your way to inform him about the situation? What did he put on the table that made you betray Phoenixion?"

"I..." Declan did not know what to say.

He knew that no explanation he made would be of any use anymore.

The only two options he had were to either kill or bribe Scar Face.

However, Scar Face had a machete aimed at his stomach. The moment he counterattacked, that machete would be plunged into his stomach.

Therefore, the only option he actually had was to bribe Scar Face.

Declan took in a deep breath to recompose himself before saying, "All right, Scar Face. You're right. I'm in cahoots with the mastermind."

Upon hearing the confirmation, Scar Face turned furious. "What an ungrateful person you are, Declan! Although I wasn't in

Calixion in the past, I've heard of how good Phoenix treats you. It won't be an exaggeration to say that she thinks of you as a brother. However, not only did you switch sides, but you're even going to hurt Phoenix. How can you bring yourself to do this?"

Declan replied, "I was forced to do this. That's enough. I won't make any more excuses now. A betrayal is a betrayal. Listen to me, ScarFace. Come and work with me. I promise that you'll have a bright future. How does that sound?"

## Chapter 2570

After a moment of hesitation, ScarFace said, "Then tell me what benefits I'll have if I work with you?"

Declan asked, "What do you want?"

ScarFace mulled over his words for a moment before saying, "Twenty pounds of Spirit Stones."

Declan gasped. "You're insane! You're old. and you should know what twenty pounds of Spirit Stones mean. That's a month's income for Centuria! If I give it to you, then Centuria won't have anything to live on for the month!"

ScarFace hummed. "Too bad. If you don't give me the twenty pounds of Spirit Stones, I'll tell Ms. Phoenix about your betrayal."

You f\*cking

Declan was stumped. "Scar Face, can't you be a little more far-sighted? So what if you get twenty pounds of Spirit Stones now? You'll still be as broke as before once you spend them all."

Moreover, other Centurions will surely target you if you suddenly get twenty pounds of Spirit Stones. You might be able to get rich, but you won't be able to spend it!"

Scar Face nodded. "That's true. Forget it. I don't want Spirit Stones anymore. I'm going to reveal to the others that you're the traitor instead."

What?

Declan panicked. "Stop, ScarFace! Why don't I offer you a deal you won't be able to resist instead?"

ScarFace raised his brows and asked, "Oh, do tell me what it is. I'd like to see if I'm interested."

"To be honest with you, the Centurion I've sided with is very capable. He has already promised to make me the second-in command of his Centuria. If you come with me, why don't I let you be the second-in command instead?"

Scar Face shook his head. "That doesn't sound good enough."

His patience completely depleted, Declan snarled, "Then what do you want?"

Scar Face responded, "Do you think I'm an idiot? He promised to make you second-in command, but he's probably only going to do it if you succeed in the plan. Now that his plan is known to others, there's no way it's going to work. So, why would he still make you the second-in-command? In fact, he might even think that you were the one who revealed the plan. He might even kill you!"

Hearing that, Declan felt his heart skip a beat.

Right. Why didn't I think about this earlier? Will Mr. Platinum kill me to erase the evidence if he finds out Phoenix has realized this was his plan and is now trying to lure him out? That's very likely. What should I do? What should I do? There's nothing else I can do. Darn this. I never

expected this to happen to me.

Declan cried out miserably, "Tell me, ScarFace. How did I treat you in the past?"

ScarFace ruminates about it for a while and answered, "Pretty well."

"Okay. In that case, can you let me go? I've crossed two Centurions, and I won't be able to survive in Centuria's district anymore. I'm going to go to the outermost Contubernium's district instead. Don't worry. As long as I'm alive, I'll keep sending you a part of my income. Trust me."

Scar Face then said, "Honestly, I'm tempted, but even if I agree to this, she won't."

What? Who?

Declan frowned and said, "There's no one else here."

Right as those words were out of his mouth, a gentle breeze blew behind him. It seemed like someone had landed behind him.

Who is it?

Declan shuddered and spun around.

The moment he registered the face of the newcomer, his mind went blank.

Phoenix. It's Phoenix! D\*mn it. Why is Phoenix all the way here? She must have suspected my involvement. Oh no, I'm doomed.

Nevertheless, Declan was not going to admit to his betrayal until the very last moment.

Trying his best to let any of his emotions show on his face, Declan said, "Ms. Phoenix, why are you here?"

Phoenix's expression was glacial as she uttered, "Declan, tell me. How do I usually treat you?"

"I... I..." Declan stammered.

Phoenix snapped, "Answer me!"

## Chapter 2571

"You treat me like I'm your brother," Declan said.

"Oh, you're aware of that? Declan, I didn't expect you to be the type of person to betray your brothers and sister!" Phoenix snapped.

"Ms. Phoenix, I don't understand what you're talking about..." Declan insisted.

"You still won't admit it, huh? I heard everything you were talking about."

Thud!

Declan's legs went weak in an instant, and he collapsed to his knees in front of Phoenix.

Since Phoenix had heard their conversation, there was no way he could defend himself.

The fact that he was a traitor was now irrefutable.

"Ms. Phoenix, I was wrong. I admit my fault! Please forgive me. Please give me another chance!" he pleaded.

With a sigh, Phoenix said, "I'm sorry. I do want to give you a chance, but how will I face my brothers and sisters in Phoenixion if I do that? Scar Face, what did you use to do to traitors back in Calixion?"

"It depends on the degree of their offenses. A light punishment involves climbing a knife ladder and walking over a burning platform. For a heavier punishment, the traitor gets skinned."

Upon hearing that, Declan felt his head buzzing.

Those punishments were more terrifying than death.

Scared out of his wits, he desperately begged Phoenix for mercy.

"Ms. Phoenix, I beg of you. Please let me off! I'm willing to do anything for you. I'll do everything you want me to! If... If you want, you can just take my life now! Please have mercy on me. I've worked hard to serve you for many years, after all. Please don't let me undergo those tortures! The truth is, I was forced to betray you. If I had any other way, I wouldn't have done this!"

Phoenix took a deep breath and prompted, "Tell me what happened then."

Not daring to hide the truth, Declan told Phoenix about everything in detail.

After listening to him, Phoenix clenched her fist and cursed, "That scum! I knew this was Platinum's doing. He's a wolf in sheep's clothing! How despicable!"

Declan cried, "Ms. Phoenix, I only obeyed him for the sake of my family's safety. If I didn't do so, my family would have... You know that my family is everything to me."

"All right, I'll give you a chance. It's up to you to take it or not."

"Thank you, Ms. Phoenix. Thank you! I'll do whatever you tell me to!" Declan agreed instantly.

"I want you to go to Platinum now and tell him his plan has succeeded. Let him know that Zeke's group and my group both lost more than half of our men. Better yet, instigate him to attack us."

"Uh..." Declan appeared hesitant.

Immediately, Phoenix added, "Never mind if you don't want to. Scar Face, get rid of him."

"I'll do it! I'll go right now!" Declan blurted.

"You better behave well, or your family will bear the consequences for you," warned Phoenix.

"Okay, got it!"

With that, Declan sped away.

"Ms. Phoenix, how could you just let him go like that? What if he pulls some tricks?" Scar Face spoke worriedly.

"Don't worry. With his family in my hands, he won't dare. Let's go and check the situation of the battle."

When they returned, the battle had already ended.

The battlefield looked disastrous. More than half the people lay there playing dead, and the smoking ground was littered with shattered weapons.

Some of the "dead" men were even snoring.

"All right, the battle is over. We have suffered too many losses. Pull out the survivors and take the heavily injured ones as captives. As for the dead men, handle them as corpses," Phoenix ordered.

In an instant, Apollyon and the other nine Decani got to work. "Injured members of Phoenixion, come here. You're going to be captives."

"The dead ones over there, get up! Get into this cave and stay inside for a few days. Come out

only when we need you."

## Chapter 2572

What?

The group of "dead" men began protesting right away.

"You want us to play dead for a few more days? No way!"

"If we stay in the cave, we'll have to eat and do our business in the same place. You're treating us like animals!"

"I'm not dead. I hereby declare that I've come back to life!"

Nevertheless, under Phoenix's order, they eventually entered the cave cooperatively.

On the other hand, the dead men under Zeke had yet to be locked up in the cave.

They had to dig their graves first on the empty plot of land at the side before entering the cave.

Since they were going to put on an act, they might as well make it more believable.

While the men bustled around, Phoenix approached Zeke and flashed him a friendly smile. "To a fruitful collaboration."

"Mm," Zeke responded indifferently.

His reaction irked Phoenix. Is he acting cool? How dare he give me the cold shoulder! No man in this world can resist my beauty. Keep pretending, Zeke. I'm going to see how long you can keep this act on!

Nonetheless, she told him. "I've looked into this matter, and it turns out this was the doing of someone named Platinum. I'm sure he'll launch an attack on us in a few days. Let's join hands and defeat him, then split his properties and territory equally. Deal?"

Zeke glanced at her and replied. "You can talk to Apollyon about this. I don't have the energy to oversee everything."

After saying that, he turned around and left.

A gust of cold wind swept by Phoenix as she stood there with a stiff expression.



What the... Did he just brush me off? I've got to admit he's very good at pretending. I'll give him that, but I know for sure he'll give in sooner or later! Let's wait and see!

Meanwhile, Declan barreled all the way to Platinumion.

When he came to a spot near their territory, he suddenly paused in his tracks. Upon giving it a thought, he picked up a rock and smashed it against his own head until it began bleeding.

Next, he ripped his clothes and tousled his hair to appear more disheveled and pathetic. Only then did he move forward.

As he approached Platinumion's gate, he started yelling, "Good news, Mr. Platinum! Good news!"

Having learned his lesson, the guard spoke to Declan politely since he knew the latter mattered a lot to Platinum now.

"Mr. Cook, you're here to meet our Centurion, right? Please wait for a while. I'll inform him right now!"

"Hurry up! I have important news for him!" Declan panted.

Before the guard could even turn around, Platinum showed up on his own. He walked toward Declan and greeted, "Mr. Cook, you're finally here. I've been waiting for you."

He then turned to the guard and instructed, "Hurry up and escort him in. Remember to let Mr. Cook in immediately when he visits next time. There's no need to report to me first."

"Okay, I'll keep that in mind," the guard replied.

Platinum then led Declan inside.

After ordering someone to serve drinks, Platinum cued, "Mr. Cook, I suppose there's some progress in our plan. Am I right?"

"Yes."

Declan chugged down the drink and continued, "They're fighting! It's so bloody. When I came here, the battle was still ongoing, and both sides had lost at least half of their men. I'm not sure what's going on right now."

With a pleased smile, Platinum remarked, "Right. That's what I expected to happen. Thanks for informing me, Mr. Cook."

Declan waved his hand and swallowed his saliva. "It's nothing."

"What do you plan to do now, Mr. Cook?" Platinum asked.

"I have to return to Phoenixion. If they can't find my corpse on the battlefield, they'll consider me an escapee. I won't be able to show myself before them again if that happens. All right, it's getting late. I should head back now."

## Chapter 2573

A murderous glint formed in Platinum's eyes as he pondered the matter.

Declan is no longer of any use to us. There's a risk of him leaking information about this if we keep him around.

However, Platinum eventually dismissed that thought as he still had to establish dominance over Phoenix.

Given how stubborn Phoenix is, it's unlikely that she would submit to me. I might be able to convince her if I keep Declan around, though.

With that in mind, Platinum said respectfully, "All right, Mr. Cook. I won't keep you any longer. Let me walk you out of here."

"No need to trouble yourself, Mr. Platinum. I can see myself out."

Platinum insisted on walking him out anyway.

Declan breathed a huge sigh of relief and panted heavily after leaving Platinumion.

His back was drenched in a cold sweat, and his legs were weak from fear.

Declan had noticed the murderous intent in Platinum's eyes earlier.

My goodness! I can't believe Platinum was actually going to kill me! I was so scared that I could barely breathe! I don't know why he changed his mind all of a sudden, but I sure am glad he did!

"If I weren't prepared, I probably would've been done for! Platinum, you b\*stard! I'll make sure to kill you someday!" Declan muttered under his breath as he anxiously made his way back to Phoenixion.

Since the guys over at Phoenixion were oblivious to Declan's defection, they greeted him warmly as usual.

Declan forced himself to smile at them as he made his way back to his living quarters.

To his surprise, there was nobody there.

What the f\*ck? Where are my wife and kids? Oh, I know! Phoenix must've taken them!

The look on Declan's face turned gloomy at the thought of that. He then quickly made his way to Phoenix's quarters and knocked on the door.

"Hey, Phoenix! It's me, Declan! I have returned!"

"Come in!" Phoenix called out to him lazily.

"Where's my family, Ms. Phoenix? If you must punish me, then go ahead and do so, but please leave my family alone!" Declan said as he opened the door.

"Close the door," Phoenix ordered coldly.

She then waited for Declan to shut the door behind him before continuing, "I've made arrangements for someone to look after your family, so they're perfectly safe. Don't worry; I won't go back on my promise."

"I want to see them now, Ms. Phoenix. I can't rest easy until I see that they're fine," Declan said.

Phoenix nodded. "All right. I'll arrange for you to meet them in a bit. Now, tell me what happened over at Platinumion."

"I need to see them and confirm that they're all right before I report the situation," Declan insisted stubbornly.

Phoenix got slightly angry when she heard that. "Do you not trust me, Declan? I told you I would arrange for you to meet them after you tell me what happened! This is an order!"

"I..."

Declan fell silent and hesitated for a bit.

I know Phoenix always keeps her promises, but my family's safety is on the line here! What should I do...

He was snapped out of his train of thought when Phoenix yelled angrily, "What, you won't talk? Fine! Get lost, then!"

"Okay, I'll talk! I'll talk!"

As Phoenix was holding Declan's family hostage, he had no choice but to give in to her demands.

"As per your instructions, I told Platinum that both parties would be worn from battle. It's likely that he believed my words and would launch an attack on Zeke's Centuria in a few days. In fact, he might even do it tomorrow."

"Oh? How come Platinum didn't kill you, then? You no longer serve him any purpose, so you're nothing but a liability to him now. He doesn't strike me as the kind who would leave loose ends untied. You're not hiding anything from me, are you?" Phoenix asked.

Declan may be actually loyal to Platinum. Maybe he told Platinum the truth about everything. That would explain why Platinum didn't kill him.

Declan fell to his knees as he said, "I'm telling you the truth, Ms. Phoenix! I told Platinum exactly what you wanted me to!"

## Chapter 2574

Phoenix nodded. "Hmph! I don't suppose you'd dare lie to me anyway. All right, you can go look for Scar Face. He'll take you to see your family. In the meantime, continue to stay in touch with Platinum and report to me immediately if he makes a move. If you try anything funny, it'll be your family that receives the punishment. Keep that in mind, Declan."

Declan nodded profusely. "Understood!"

All he wanted was for his family to be safe. so he didn't dare think about crossing her at all.

Meanwhile, Zeke's men were almost done cleaning up the battlefield.

"Apollyon, did you manage to capture the person who tricked us into thinking Phoenix killed our men?" Zeke asked.

"Yes, Mr. Williams. You may rest assured that I have captured the person," Apollyon replied.

They had confirmed that Platinum killed the two guards, so the surviving guard who accused Phoenix must've been bought over by Platinum.

"Good. Bring him to my room."

"Understood!"

Apollyon then brought the guard into Zeke's room about five minutes later.

The guard fell to his knees without any hesitation immediately after entering the room.

"I'm terribly sorry for what I did, Mr. Williams! Please accept my most sincere apologies!" he pleaded with his head held low.

Apollyon sent the guard flying with a kick as he yelled angrily, "Apologies? You could die a thousand times, and it still wouldn't be enough to pardon your crime! We nearly went to war with Phoenix because of you! Hundreds of our men would've died in vain if we did! Do you understand? I'm surprised you have the audacity to ask for forgiveness after what you've done!"

The guard went pale when he heard that. He didn't know what else he could do except kneel and beg Zeke for forgiveness.

Zeke took a deep breath and said, "That's enough. Tell me what happened that day."

The guard was trembling all over as he told Zeke everything he knew.

After hearing the guard's story, Zeke asked with a frown, "So, you did what Platinum asked to protect your family?"

The guard nodded. "That's right, Mr. Williams. I don't mind dying myself, but I can't let my family die along with me. I know what I've done is unforgivable, so I am willing to die to atone for my mistake. All I ask is for you to spare my family."

Zeke waved at him. "Forget it; you're free to go. I'll let you off the hook this time, but you'd better not do it again."

What?

Both Apollyon and the guard were staring at Zeke in shock and disbelief.

Is Mr. Williams going to just forgive this guard? His actions nearly caused the loss of our entire army! How could Mr. Williams let him off so easily? Has he lost his mind or something?

The guard swallowed nervously as he asked, "M-Mr. Williams, are you really going to forgive

me?"

Zeke nodded, much to the guard's surprise.

"W-Why would you-"

Zeke cut him off impatiently, "Get out. Stop bothering me."

"O-Okay!"

The guard quickly left the room after that.

"What's the meaning of this, Mr. Williams? Do you have something else planned for that guy?" Apollyon asked in confusion as he watched the guard leave.

Zeke shook his head. "No. I'm simply pardoning his actions, that's all."

"Why?" Apollyon asked.

"First of all, he only made that mistake because he wanted to keep his family safe. Secondly, those who live here have long since lost their humanity, so I'm sure he didn't intend to betray us. Thirdly, his family is innocent. If he dies, they'll be affected and end up suffering as well. After taking all of that into consideration, I decided to forgive him this once," Zeke replied.

Although Apollyon kept quiet, he couldn't help but feel that Zeke was a little softhearted.

The reason Zeke chose to forgive the guard was quite simple. He simply couldn't bear to tear a family apart ever since he had one of his own.

That night was a rough one for both Zeke's men and Phoenixion.

## Chapter 2575

Of course, things were just as bad for Platinum.

He couldn't sleep a wink that night as he was eager to head over to Phoenixion at dawn to see how it was doing.

Being a cautious man, he couldn't rest easy until he confirmed that both sides were truly worn from battle.

When dawn came, Platinum headed straight for Phoenixion as quickly as he could. Upon arriving outside its door, he saw that the place was a total mess.

Everyone in there looks exhausted and dispirited. Their bodies are covered in blood and wounds. There are lots of women sobbing in a corner over there. I'm guessing their husbands have died in battle. It looks like Phoenixion suffered some pretty heavy casualties...

Whatever doubt he had in the back of his head was gone in that very instant.

One of the members of Phoenixion recognized Platinum and stepped forward to greet him, "What brings you here today."

"I was just aimlessly strolling about and somehow ended up passing by." Platinum replied solemnly.

He then glanced and asked about, "What happened to you guys! Why is Phoenixion in such a mess?"

The other guy let out a huge sigh, "Obviously, we lost a battle. What do you think happened?"

Platinum pretended to know nothing about it as he asked, "Battle: What battle: Who were you guys fighting?"

The guy let out another sigh as he replied, "That new guy and his men. You have no idea how arrogant and obnoxious they were! It's a shame we didn't get to kill them all!"

"What? How dare they behave so insolently? This is unacceptable! It looks like I'll have to show him the true power of my Centuria!" Platinum yelled angrily.

He then glanced about as he asked, "By the way, how is Phoenix? Is she injured?"

"I think you should go see for yourself."

"All right."

Platinum then rushed over to Phoenix's room and knocked on the door. "Hey, Phoenix! It's me, Platinum! Open up!"

"What are you doing here?" Phoenix asked after a brief pause.

"I heard you got into a battle with the newcomer, so I came to pay you a visit," Platinum replied.

"I'm fine. You can go now," Phoenix said.

Platinum let out a disappointed sigh in response. "Why must you treat me like this, Phoenix? I

came here because I'm genuinely worried about you."

"Fine, you may come in," Phoenix replied after another brief pause.

Platinum quickly opened the door and went inside.

Upon entering her room, he saw her bandaging a wound on her leg. Phoenix quickly covered her wound with her pant leg when she saw Platinum.

"How's your injury, Phoenix? I have some medication available. I'll have someone bring it over after I get back," Platinum said worriedly.

"It's a mild injury, so that won't be necessary. Anyway, you can go now," Phoenix replied coldly.

"You know how I feel about you, Phoenix. Why must you be so cold to me?" Platinum asked with a helpless look on his face.

"Because you're not my type. It's impossible between us," Phoenix replied.

"Either way, my love for you will never change. I will avenge you, Phoenix. You don't need to thank me for it or anything, though. I just want to do something for you because it'll make me feel a lot better," Platinum said.

Phoenix simply remained silent.

Realizing that was probably his cue to leave, Platinum got up and said, "Anyway, I'll get going now. The next time I come back, I'll be bringing Zeke's severed head with me."

Instead of heading back after leaving Phoenix's room, Platinum wandered around the base and pretended to check on the wounded while he searched for Declan.

Eventually, he saw Declan bandaging a wounded member in a corner.

Since he and Declan weren't exactly close friends, Platinum refrained from greeting him publicly to avoid arousing suspicion.

Instead, he winked at Declan and gestured at him to go somewhere secluded.

## Chapter 2576

"What brings you here today, Mr. Platinum? Would you like to talk in my room?" Declan asked



respectfully.

"That won't be necessary. We should keep our connection a secret for now. I don't want anyone getting suspicious of us. Anyway, I came here to ask for your help with something."

Declan flashed him a mysterious smile as he asked, "Let me guess... This is about Phoenix, isn't it?"

Platinum nodded. "Yeah... She's being way too cold toward me. I don't know what I should do about that. You're her most trusted subordinate, so I need you to help put in a good word for me."

"No problem. You need to be more patient with women. As long as you keep at it, I'm sure she'll be touched by your efforts eventually," Declan reassured him.

Platinum let out a chuckle. "I'll be counting on you, Mr. Cook. Oh, by the way, I'll be attacking Zeke's men tonight. I plan to present his severed head to Phoenix as a gift. Hopefully, that'll help change the way she feels about me."

"Phoenix has a burning hatred for Zeke right now. I'm sure she'll be touched if you bring her his severed head!" Declan said.

"I hope so. All right, I'll get going now. I need to head back and begin my preparations," Platinum replied.

"Goodbye, Mr. Platinum!"

Declan then waited for Platinum to leave before rushing over to Phoenix's room.

"Ms. Phoenix! Mr. Platinum came to see me just now!"

"Oh? Did he tell you his plan?" Phoenix asked.

Declan nodded. "Yeah, he did. He's planning on attacking Zeke tonight."

"Heh... The sooner he attacks, the better. Tell everyone to get ready for combat. Also, tell Scar Face to inform Zeke about this," Phoenix ordered.

"Understood!"

"Declan, you've contributed a lot throughout your many years of service. Since you're an incredibly valuable member of Phoenixion, I'll give you a chance to prove your loyalty to me."

Declan had never been to hear that. "Thank you very much, Ms. Phoenix! Just tell me what you need me to do, and I'll be sure to get it done!"

"I want you to kill ten enemies in battle tonight. You will be spared if you manage to do so. If you fail to do so, you will be executed for your betrayal. If you end up dying in battle, I will label you as a hero and treat your family accordingly," Phoenix said.

"Consider it done!" Declan promised.

Although things appeared calm at Platinumion, Phoenixion, and Zeke's faction, they were all secretly preparing for the upcoming battle.

Upon returning to his base, Platinum ordered his men to get ready to launch an assault later that night.

Tonight, I shall claim Zeke's head for sure!

Zeke's men, too, were busy working on their defenses.

As for those at Phoenixion, they were all getting their weapons ready, so they could lend Zeke and his faction a helping hand.

It wasn't long before the skies turned dark that night.

A chilly breeze was blowing through the base of Zeke's faction.

Everyone in the base was fast asleep, or at least that was the illusion they were trying to create.

In reality, they were all wide awake and ready for battle at any time.

With a large-scale assault incoming, they couldn't possibly fall asleep anyway.

Sure enough, they soon heard rustling noises coming from outside the base.

In just a matter of minutes, twenty groups of men had gathered outside the base of Zeke's faction.

As each group consisted of ten people, there were a total of two hundred people surrounding Zeke's base at the time.

Those men were none other than members of Platinumion, and Platinum was the one leading them all.

A sinister grin formed on his face as he looked at Zeke's base and saw no security guards.

Ha! This place doesn't even have the most basic level of security! In this case, he has only

himself to blame when I take his head!

Platinum was about to order his men to attack when a loud alarm rang out in the base. A few seconds later, people were yelling angrily, "Come quick! We have intruders!"

## Chapter 2577

Swoosh!

The base, which had been silent just moments ago, was instantly in an uproar as the members rushed out of their rooms with murderous expressions and weapons in hand.

"D\*mn it! How dare they try to sneak up on us?"

"People who dare interrupt my beauty sleep deserve to die!"

"This is great. I didn't quite get my fill earlier today, so I'll probably sleep better after a mini-killing spree."

Platinum frowned as he surveyed the scene before him.

Sh\*t! Were we exposed? Did something give us away? Also, why are they all so alert? Why do they all seem so prepared? It's almost as if they were expecting our arrival!

However, it was merely a fleeting thought. Platinum did not believe that a mere newcomer like Zeke had the ability to lay such an elaborate trap.

"Tell your boss to come out and face me!" Platinum shouted.

Zeke could hear Platinum's voice from inside his room. Standing up, he smiled at Apollyon.

"Come. Let's meet Platinum."

"Mr. Williams, leave it to me. There's no need for you to personally greet him. Apollyon said.

"It's all right. I have too much time on my hands anyway. I'd like to join in the fun." Zeke replied. He was not too concerned about Platinum and merely wanted to join in for his own amusement.

The two of them spotted Platinum the moment they exited the room.

Zeke sighed softly. "Hello, pretty boy."

The crowd immediately burst into laughter.

Platinum was rendered speechless.

I am spearheading this fight against you, and yet before I've even spoken, you've already derided me. This is unforgivable!

"Everyone shut the hell up!" Platinum bellowed. "So, you're the new guy? You're more arrogant than I expected."

"Thanks for the compliment." Zeke smirked.

Once again, Platinum was left speechless.

That wasn't a compliment at all! Can you stop being so unpredictable? Thanks to you, my mind's a mess right now.

Platinum continued angrily, "Save your breath because your wittiness is wasted on me. Since you're quite new, I'll give you a chance to redeem yourself. If you and your people submit to me and become my servants, I'll let you all live. If you refuse, all of you are going to die today."

Zeke cut in impatiently, "You talk too much. So, are we going to fight or not?"

Apollyon added, "Mr. Williams, I'm tired of his prattling too. Shall we make a move?"

Zeke nodded. "Kill them all."

"Everyone, you heard Mr. Williams! Kill them all!" Apollyon roared.

Everyone on Zeke's side immediately dashed forward and attacked.

Platinum nearly exploded in anger.

Sh\*t! What the hell's going on? Why does it feel like they've turned the tables on us, and we're the ones under siege instead of being the attackers?

Things were unfolding in a way Platinum did not expect. Nonetheless, he was able to regain his composure quickly.

It did not matter if they refused to yield. Their abilities were inferior to his, and he had the advantage in numbers. There's no way we're going to lose.

"Kill them! Obliterate them all!" Platinum yelled.

Kill them all!

Soon, the battle began, and chaos erupted within the space.

Platinum's subordinates were experts from Centuria's district. Each and every one of them was strong and vicious, and their combat abilities were superior to that of Zeke's men.

Moreover, they also greatly outnumbered their opponents. The battle had just begun. but Zeke's side already appeared to be at a disadvantage.

Apollyon had decided to personally take on Platinum.

However, Platinum's rank was Half-King Class, and he was exceptionally experienced in combat.

Apollyon, who was also Half-King Class, was forced to be on the defensive. He was continuously beaten back, unable to fight back.

Platinum sneered. "Hah! Aren't you ashamed to fight me with weak abilities such as yours? How could Calix lose to the likes of you? He's a shame to the Centurions. Die!"

No longer able to hold back, Apollyon roared, "What are you all waiting for? Stop hiding! The time has come for you all to fight!"

## Chapter 2578

Huh? Are there others here?

Momentarily distracted, Platinum paused briefly instead of unleashing his ultimate move.

The people from Platinumion also turned to look around warily.

Suddenly, vicious shouting sounded from a cave nearby.

Followed by that, seemingly endless. a stream of people flowed from the cave and joined the fray.

There were hundreds of them, and each of them wielded a weapon. Their murderous aura hung thick in the air, and they

obviously came prepared for a battle of life and death.

Platinum was confused. Sh\*t! Where did these people come from?

When Zeke first came in, Platinum had sent someone to investigate and found out that the former only had close to a hundred subordinates.

However, there were over a hundred and fifty of them at the moment.

Even if Zeke did not lose that many men during his battle with Phoenix, the numbers simply did not add up.

The uneasy feeling in Platinum's heart grew stronger.

The moment the group of people joined the battle, they immediately turned the tides, and the people from Platinumion began to drop like flies.

"F\*ck! Who are you people, and why are you helping Zeke?" Platinum demanded.

Suddenly, one of the members of Platinumion exclaimed, "Huh? Aren't you from Phoenixion? I thought you perished in battle! Why are you here fighting us?"

"D\*mn it, they're from Phoenixion!"

Platinumion and Phoenixion have no grudge against each other, so why are you attacking us?"

Gradually, the people from Platinumion began to recognize members of Phoenixion.

"Hey, aren't you also from Phoenixion? Why are you attacking us? Even if you don't want to work with Platinumion, there's no reason for you guys to form an alliance with outsiders!"

"D\*mn Phoenixions, how dare you take advantage of the situation!"

After Platinum realized the people who had just arrived were members of Phoenixion, his face turned pale in anger.

"Members of Phoenixion, I'm ordering you to withdraw immediately. If you leave now, I will not hold you responsible. If you refuse, I will destroy you all. This is your last warning. There won't be another opportunity to retreat."

Before the people from Phoenixion could reply, Phoenix's voice suddenly rang out from somewhere nearby.

"Listen up, men! Even if you have to fight for your life, you will not back down. You will take down every one of the Platinumion b\*stards!"

"Yes, ma'am!" The members of Phoenixion replied in unison, then proceeded to fight even more fiercely.

Forcing Apollyon backward, Platinum turned to look in the direction of Phoenix's voice.

She stood some distance away, surrounded by reinforcements from Phoenixion. They all rushed forward and joined the battle.

Gritting his teeth, Platinum asked, "Phoenix, what do you mean by this? I was kind enough to stand up for you and help you get revenge, and this is how you repay me? Why are you colluding with them?"

Phoenix laughed. Her laughter was vibrant and filled with amusement.

"Oh, Platinum. I applaud your bravery. Do you think I'm too stupid to see through your schemes? I know it was all a setup or you to sow discord. Are you seeking revenge on my behalf? Sure, why not? My revenge will be complete if you kill yourself."

Platinum swept his eyes over the battlefield, chuckling bitterly. "I guess I underestimate you. You staged your fight with Zeke and pulled a fast one on me. It was a miscalculation on my part."

After a brief pause, Platinum continued. "Phoenix, everything I've done was for your sake. Why can't you understand this?"

Phoenix sneered, "You expect me to believe that you're hurting me for my own good? How ridiculous! Platinum, your hands are tied. Surrender now, and I'll leave your corpse intact. Unless you prefer being torn to shreds and fed to the dogs."

Apollyon clicked his tongue.

What a ruthless woman. He's practically wearing his heart on his sleeve, and yet you're telling him you're planning to feed his corpse to the dogs. How heartless!

## Chapter 2579

Platinum smiled bitterly. "Alright. I admit my lapse in judgment led to my loss, but that doesn't mean I can't flee! Just wait, Phoenix! I'll take you down sooner or later, no matter the cost!"

With that said, Platinum turned around to flee. Noticing his intention, Phoenix shouted, "Zeke, stop him! We'll be in trouble if he defects to another Centurion and urges them to gang up on us."

Without the slightest hesitation, Apollyon rushed forward to stop Platinum.

However, Zeke simply continued to sit quietly at the side, unmoving.

Rage nearly consumed Phoenix at Zeke's defiance. F\*ck me! How can he still be so calm at a f\*cking time like this? What a poser!

Ignoring Zeke, Phoenix urgently dashed toward Platinum, hoping to stop him.

However, Platinum didn't give Phoenix and Apollyon a chance to attack simultaneously.

When Phoenix was about to catch up to him, he pushed Apollyon back, freeing himself to square off with Phoenix.

Once Apollyon closed in again, Platinum would force Phoenix to back off and turn to face off against Apollyon.

As the battle continued in such fashion, both sides couldn't gain an advantage over the other.

Finally, Platinum found a sliver of opportunity to flee and escaped.

Without hesitation, he unleashed the fastest speed he could and fled from the battlefield.

F\*ck!

Phoenix and Apollyon were frustrated that they'd let Platinum flee. "We can't let him escape and must catch up to him with all our might!"

They knew they wouldn't be able to get any shut-eye if a Half-King Class warrior was roaming about, intending to attack them.

Since the opportunity had presented itself, Phoenix and Apollyon knew they had to grasp it and capture Platinum once and for all.

Right when they were about to give chase, the unmoving Zeke suddenly said, "You two couldn't even deal with an Archduke. You truly are idiots and embarrassments to martial artists."

Phoenix's blood boiled as her temper sparked.

She gritted her teeth and glared at Zeke. "What did you say?"

Her threatening tone and sharp glare didn't scare Zeke in the slightest. Instead, he calmly explained, "The two of you, both Archdukes, can't even defeat one man and let him escape. What are you if not an idiot?"



Argh! As the Centurion of Phoenixion, I lead hundreds of subordinates. Even in Centuria's district, I reign above all except for one. My position is only second to Centuria's district's and Legion's district's Chieftain. Yet he's calling me an idiot in front of everyone? How outrageous! I'll kill him, the shameless \*sshole!

Rage consumed Phoenix at Zeke's snide remark.

In contrast, Apollyon lowered his head in shame. "I'm sorry, Mr. Williams. It's my fault. I'll make sure to train more and improve my abilities."

Phoenix yelled, "Apollyon, why are you apologizing? That Platinum is way too strong and cunning. He inevitably escaped. No one can blame us for it. Aren't you powerful, Zeke? Why don't you pursue him yourself if you're that powerful?"

Zeke questioned, "What's in it for me if I catch him?"

Phoenix replied, "I'll call you Daddy in front of everyone if you do. How about that?"

Zeke coldly rejected, "Sorry, I don't have such an old daughter."

With that, he casually walked toward the direction Platinum fled.

F\*ck!

Phoenix stomped her foot heavily against the ground in anger. "Just you wait, Zeke! If you can't catch Platinum, I'll condemn you for three days and nights straight until you die from frustration! With your speed, you probably can't catch him even if the world has ended."

Apollyon shot a pitying look at Phoenix. There's a high possibility that she'll have to call Mr. Williams "Daddy" later. Mr. Williams is a mysterious guy with unfathomable abilities. If he says he can catch Platinum, then it's likely he can. On second thought, it'll be interesting to watch such a strong and independent woman as Phoenix calling Mr. Williams "Daddy."

Suddenly, anticipation filled Apollyon as he tried to stifle his chuckle.

Phoenix scolded, "What are you laughing at!"

## Chapter 2580

"Nothing! It's nothing!" Apollyon shook his hands vehemently.

"Don't just stand there. Let's join in the battle too," Phoenix urged.

"Okay!"

Phoenix and Apollyon joined in the battle between the normal members.

The entry of two Archdukes into the battle was akin to two hungry wolves making their way into a flock of sheep. They crushed the Platinumion members with ease.

Phoenix roared, "Members of Platinumion, listen up! Surrender now, and I'll spare your life. If you continue to resist, I'll slaughter you!"

A member of Platinumion asked, "Do you give your word, Phoenix?"

Phoenix retorted, "Of course! When have I ever gone back on my words?"

"Okay, I'll join you."

Since Platinum had already ditched them and fled, what was the point of them continuing to resist? They knew they would still die in the end even if they resisted and took down a dozen others with them, so why wouldn't they submit to Phoenixion?

In less than five minutes, the battle had ended.

The survivors of Platinumion had all thrown in the towel.

Phoenixion won a complete victory.

Meanwhile, after Zeke disappeared from Phoenix's line of sight, he pushed himself to the fastest he could and pursued Platinum.

In less than a minute, Zeke had rushed past Platinum and halted in front of him.

Platinum was fleeing as fast as he could when a figure appeared out of the blue in front of him, sending chills running down his spine.

"Who is it?" Platinum asked cautiously.

Zeke slowly turned around. "Me."

Platinum's mind was blown away when he saw it was Zeke.

What the f\*ck! Where did he come from? Why is he here? I saw Zeke standing unmoving when I fled earlier, so how did he get ahead of me in a blink of an eye? Is his speed faster than mine? That... is very unlikely.

Platinum's greatest strength was fleeing. Until that day, no one in Centuria's district could outrun him.

Or can it be that Zeke has a twin brother, and this guy standing in front of me is his twin? I don't even believe that.

Platinum's heart pounded, but he kept a calm front. "It's you, Zeke! How did you get in front of me?"

Zeke answered, "What a stupid question. I caught up to you, of course."

Platinum asked, "You're faster than me?"

Fast?

Zeke smiled. "Oh? Do you think you're fast?"

Platinum didn't know how to respond to Zeke's taunt.

If he's saying I'm slow, then how fast is he? It looks like this guy in front of me is more powerful than I thought. I underestimated him.

Platinum knew he had nowhere to run and sighed. "All right. I admit I've lost to you, Zeke. Why don't we do it this way? Spare my life, and I can concede to you and only take your orders. How about that?"

Zeke shook his head. "Sorry, you're not worthy enough to be my subordinate."

Why you?

Anger rushed through Platinum at Zeke's quip.

I'm Platinum, the leader of Platinumion, yet he's telling me I'm not worthy enough to be his subordinate? He sure talks big!

Platinum said, "Think it through, Zeke! You don't get any benefit by rejecting me. I know I'm not a match for you, but if I detonate my life force, it'll harm you all the same. Besides, my subordinates are loyal to me. They'll put their lives on the line to avenge my death. Your Centuria won't get any peace and quiet."

"Haha!"

Zeke suddenly burst out laughing.

Platinum frowned. "What are you laughing at?"

Zeke mocked. "A pest threatening a human. Don't you think that's hilarious?"

Platinum's heart clenched.

I'm nothing but a pest in Zeke's eyes. He doesn't even consider me his equal. D\*mn! Where did he come from, and what is his background? How powerful is he to say something so presumptuous? What an arrogant man.

The threat of imminent death loomed over Platinum.

## Chapter 2581

He was beginning to grow afraid.

"What is that?" he shouted suddenly as he gazed behind Zeke, who turned around.

Platinum was delighted. Zeke fell for it!

Without hesitation, he turned and ran.

As soon as he took a single step, however, he felt his body bound by an immense force that rendered him completely immobile.

Struggling to breathe, he felt as if he had fallen into cement.

What's happening to me? D\*mn it, what the hell is going on? Why can't I move? Could it be his doing? What trickery is this?

Platinum was having a mental breakdown as he realized he had met his match this time.

He was only an Archduke, so he was not at the point where he knew about materializing and using energy. That was why he did not understand how Zeke had restrained him.

He tried turning around to face Zeke but could not move at all.

In a flash, Zeke appeared before Platinum.

"You had a chance to live, yet you threw away the opportunity. Any last words?"

Platinum sensed his restraint weakening, though he was still unable to move his whole body, only his lips.

"I-I'm sorry. I should not have provoked you," he said with difficulty.

Zeke sighed. "It looks like you still don't know what you did wrong. I wouldn't need to claim your life if all you did was provoked me."

Platinum was confused. "Please enlighten me, Mr. Williams."

If there's another reason for him to claim my life aside from my provocation, then there might be a chance for me to redeem myself.

"Your mistake was to commit murder. What's more, you were murdered because of me," Zeke said. "This is an unforgivable sin which you will pay for with your life."

Platinum hastily explained, "Listen to me, Mr. Williams. The ones I killed are as insignificant as insects, the most wretched existences on Theos Island. Their lives cost a mere Spirit Stone or two. They would have died in the hands of others regardless, given their prowess. I refuse to accept the exchange of my life for theirs! If you forgive me just this once, Mr. Williams, my life will be yours."

Zeke laughed coldly. "Hah! Your life is more valuable than the lives of others, who are like insects. Who taught you such wickedness? You will die just for this belief alone!"

Without another word, Zeke increased the amount of energy exerted onto Platinum, whose body began to crumple in.

Platinum felt like he was being stepped on by an elephant and was at risk of exploding at any moment. His eyes bulged out of his head, and his tongue hung limply out of his mouth. He did not have an ounce of resistance.

At the very last moment, he asked the final and most important question of his life. "W-who are you?"

"The Great Marshal of Eurasia!" Zeke answered.

The Great Marshal!

The words set off an explosion in Platinum's head.

Then, he resigned himself to his fate of being crushed alive.

It appears that the Great Marshal of Eurasia has come to Theos Island, which is about to undergo huge changes. I have no regrets about dying at his hand. Even Theos may not escape Zeke's grasp, let alone the Legatuses and Camp Masters. What hope do I, a Centurion, have?

Taking the remains of Platinum with him, Zeke began marching back.

Though Platinum had been squeezed to death, his face was still somewhat recognizable. Only his internal organs had been expelled.

## Chapter 2582

The battlefield fell utterly silent in the wake of the survivors of Platinumion laying down their arms.

Scar Face maintained order while Phoenix and Apollyon were doing the death count.

Apollyon chuckled. "Will you go back on your word when Mr. Williams brings Platinum back, Phoenix?"

"Preposterous! I am famed for my reputation of keeping my word. I always deliver on my promise!" Phoenix replied haughtily. "However, I am concerned that he would be beaten to death by Platinum. Even if he survived the beating, his emptyhanded return here would be humiliating. Hah! I am going to give Zeke the lambasting of his life, and don't you dare defend him. I'll go harder on him if you do."

Apollyon was confident. "I still have faith in Mr. Williams. He has never let me down."

"Is that so? Why don't we have our own wager, Apollyon?" Phoenix suggested.

Apollyon laughed. "All right. What would you like to bet on?"

"If Mr. Williams captures Platinum, I will do whatever you ask. If he fails, both of you will have to call me Grandma. How about that?"

Apollyon considered it before making up his mind with a chuckle. "I don't mind since I've lost all my dignity during my years in the outermost districts anyway. I would even worship you if you so wish. Here's my term: if Mr. Williams does capture Platinum, you spend the night with him. How about that?"

Phoenix's anger blazed. "How dare you propose such nonsense? Scoundrel! I'll tear your tongue out!"

Apollyon shrugged. "I can't force you to agree to it. We'll call off the bet, then."

"Hang on! I'll do anything else; just change the term. What you want me to do is disgusting!" Phoenix protested.

Apollyon shook his head. "No, it has to be this. Make up your mind. I don't have time for meaningless wagers."

You..

Phoenix could not bear Apollyon's torment any longer. "Fine, I promise," she said while gritting her teeth.

"It's a deal, then."

Apollyon was gleeful.

Mr. Williams would be delighted if he knew of the stake and might even give me better tips in my cultivation!

As he was lost in thought, a thump suddenly sounded behind Phoenix.

What was that?

Phoenix jumped in surprise before turning around, and her heart began to race when she got a good look.

It's a corpse!

The deceased had died a gruesome death, it seemed. The body was covered in blood, and his stomach, chest, and face were covered in irregular ruptures as if his insides had tried to explode out of him.

"Who the f\*ck did this?" Phoenix screeched, livid.

Apollyon was also unnerved. "This man just fell from the sky... Hang on. I think I know who did it," he uttered with a gasp.

"Who?" Phoenix demanded.

"Mr. Williams, if I'm not mistaken," Apollyon replied.

Phoenix frowned. "How do you know?"

He pointed. "Look closer. Is this Platinum?"

Eh?

Phoenix's eyes seared as they gazed upon the corpse.

Then, she grew nervous.

The outfit was indeed Platinum's. She had not recognized it immediately as it had been dyed red with blood.

Also, his frame and disfigured face were very similar to Platinum's.

Is this a coincidence, or could Zeke have really caught up to and killed Platinum?

Another thud sounded behind her as she was lost in thought.

Phoenix jumped. Whipping around, she found herself face-to-face with Zeke.

## Chapter 2583

Phoenix's heart sank. There seems to be no doubt that Zeke had done away with Platinum.

Apollyon greeted him warmly, "Welcome back, Mr. Williams. Is this Platinum? Did you capture him?"

Zeke nodded. "I did."

"You're actually pretty good. Who knew? Well done." Phoenix smiled sheepishly before turning to leave.

Zeke called out to her, "Stay where you are, Phoenix."

Phoenix stopped begrudgingly. "What do you want?"

"Aren't you forgetting something?" Zeke prompted.



Phoenix pretended to be confused, "Nothing that I'm aware of. All right, I have work to do. Drink on me another time."

As she spoke, Phoenix once again prepared to take flight.

Zeke shot Apollyon a glance, and the latter dashed forward to stop her in her tracks.

"Stand down, Apollyon, and move aside!" Phoenix yelled, incensed.

"It seems you've forgotten, Phoenix, so let me remind you about your wager with Mr. Williams," Apollyon offered.

Wager?

"Ha! I would have forgotten if you didn't mention it," Phoenix exclaimed with feigned realization. "Talk of wagers are all done in jest, and there's no need to take them seriously. By the way, we have joined forces to take down Platinum and Platinumion. I think this is a cause for celebration, so what say we celebrate tonight? My treat! Think of it as a welcoming banquet for you. I should make the preparations now."

Zeke chuckled. "Don't change the subject, Phoenix. You're not getting out of wager."

Phoenix became annoyed. "You're not letting this go, are you? You should grant mercy when you can."

"Phoenix of Phoenixion does not keep her word. If word gets out about it, how will you gain the respect of your team?" Zeke mused.

"That's none of your concern. Stand aside, Apollyon, or I won't hold back," Phoenix warned.

"I would hold back if I were you, Phoenix. You are no match for Mr. Williams and me if it came to it. Watch out that we don't acquire Phoenixion as well," Apollyon said earnestly. "Even if we don't, you wouldn't have any dignity left to operate on Theos Island if word of our wager gets out."

Phoenix paled before reddening.

Godd\*mn it, Apollyon is right.

Backed into a corner, Phoenix could only grit her teeth and mutter, "Daddy."

She nearly died of shame from uttering that word.

"I hope you remember this lesson and never underestimate anybody, or it may cost you your life

one day," Zeke said coldly.

Led by Hawkeye, Sole Wolf, Killer Wolf, and Connor are closing in on Theos Island now and are masquerading as low-skilled fighters. Instead of being merciful like I am, they might take Phoenix's life if she provokes them.

"Am I supposed to thank you for saving my life?" Phoenix asked, affronted.

"You're welcome," Zeke replied.

Go to hell!

"Thank you all, so much!" Phoenix spat.

She was about to stalk away again when Apollyon stood in her path. "You cannot leave yet, Phoenix."

Phoenix gritted her teeth. "What else do you want?"

"You've fulfilled your bet with Mr. Williams, but you've yet to fulfill ours. Would you prefer to do so now or tonight?"

Phoenix's knuckles cracked menacingly.

Spending the night with Zeke is out of the question. No way in hell!

"Don't even think about it," she said flatly. "I will fight you to the death if you force me!"

Apollyon stepped back hesitantly upon noticing that Phoenix was dead serious.

This woman would claw my eyes out.

## Chapter 2584

Apollyon stood aside.

However, Phoenix was in no rush to leave this time. Instead, she turned around.

"I need to speak with you regarding the spoils of war, Zeke. My people investigated the Platinumion headquarters and discovered many Spirit Stones valued at the cost of their entire base. Would you prefer the Spirit Stones or the Platinumion headquarters? As for their

members, they're free to decide who they want to go with. We should stay out of that."

"I'll have the Spirit Stones," Zeke said.

"Fine. I will arrange for the Spirit Stones to be delivered to you," Phoenix promised. "One more thing. Are you prepared to join the Southern Faction or the Northern Faction?"

Zeke was mystified. "What are the Southern and Northern Factions?"

"The forces of Theos Island, no matter Contubernium, Centuria, or Legion, are divided into two factions: the Southern Faction and the Northern Faction.

"The Southern Faction, per their namesake, serves Camp South, while the Northern Faction serves Camp North.

"Platinum and I, in addition to Calix, serve the Southern Faction. Though it was within the rules for you to wipe out Calix and Platinum, Southern Faction will not forgive you for that. I suggest taking the initiative to join us and stem the damage, and the Southern Faction will show you mercy in exchange."

"What benefits would I derive from declaring my allegiance to the Southern. Faction?"

"The Southern Faction can protect you by preventing other forces from killing you."

"The Southern Faction sent Calix and Platinum, yet they died by my hand. Why didn't the Southern Faction show themselves to protect them?"

"It's complicated," Phoenix answered. "Firstly, your killing of Calix and Platinum was within the rules, and the Southern Faction cannot fault you for that. Secondly, Calix and Platinum were confident of wiping you out, so they did not ask the Southern Faction for help. Without knowing they were about to perish, the Southern Faction had no way to protect them."

"The Southern Faction would not protect us out of kindness. They must want something in return," Zeke reasoned.

Obviously.

"Serve the Southern Faction, of course," Phoenix said. "We are to search for Spirit Stones in the Centuria's district or to obtain them from spiritual water to offer to the Legatus. Aside from exchanging it for food, the Legatus will craft the Spirit Stone into weapons and offer it to Theos through the Camp Masters. The higher the craftsmanship of one's weapons, the more likely they will be granted entry into the center of Theos Island during the Worship Theos in close Ceremony to worship proximity. Otherwise, one would have to worship from the outermost

perimeter."

Zeke was deep in thought. "So, the Contuberniums would gather spiritual water from the district's outskirts to present to the Centurions, who will then obtain Spirit Stones from it. These Spirit Stones would then be turned into weapons by the Legatus?"

Phoenix nodded. "That's right. How does that sound? Would you like to join the Southern Faction? If you do, I can refer you to Draco."

"Who is he?" Zeke asked.

"Draco is the leader of Centuria's district's Southern Faction and the most powerful Centurion in the district," Phoenix explained. "Whether or not you're worthy of joining the Southern Faction depends on Draco's say-so."

"What if I won't join you? I can craft the weapons on my own and offer them to Theos. Won't I be able to meet him directly then?"

Phoenix chuckled. "What a wild imagination you have! The Southern Faction and the Northern Faction will not stand for your neutrality. They will send people to get rid of you. Besides, do you think just anybody can make these weapons? Even the Legatus can only craft a rough shape. The Camp Masters will be the ones who create the finished product."

Zeke chuckled. "I'd like to see them get rid of me."

## Chapter 2585

Phoenix looked at Zeke in surprise. "Wait a second. What do you mean, Zeke? Don't tell me you're planning to build a neutral faction."

"Why? Do you have something to say about it?" inquired Zeke.

Immediately after hearing that, Phoenix was dumbfounded. "You'll only be digging your own grave. I know you were strong enough to beat Calix and Platinum, but you're nothing when compared to the Southern Faction and the Northern Faction. Here's what I think-"

Zeke had no time to listen to Phoenix's nonsense, so he unceremoniously interrupted the woman. "It's time for you to go. I'm tired; I need rest,"

With that, Zeke turned around and walked away.

Rendered speechless, Phoenix wondered where the man found the ambition and confidence to go up against the Southern and Northern Factions with his own group. There's only so much pie to go around, so why would they share it? He's condemning himself to death by doing that.

"Fine. I'm not going to stop you if you want to kill yourself. Just don't drag me down with you." Phoenix then sighed in response before leaving with Scar Face.

However, instead of returning to her base, she went to Platinum's.

On the way, Scar Face cautiously inquired, "Ms. Phoenix, do you think Mr. Williams is really planning to be neutral?"

"What do you think?" responded Phoenix, posing the same question for Scar Face.

"My guess is he was just bluffing."

Phoenix sighed once again. "It'd be great if that were true. The last thing I want is to see him dead so soon."

"We're somewhat isolated in the Southern Faction now, so if we can get Zeke on our side, our standing in the faction will be more secure."

"Then let's hope he doesn't do anything stupid."

Before long, the two arrived at Platinum's base, which Phoenixion had completely taken over.

After Phoenix personally ensured the Spirit Stones Platinumion left behind were accounted for, she had them all sent to Zeke.

"Ms. Phoenix, if you don't mind me saying, the value of these Spirit Stones is greater than that of Platinumion's base itself, so I think we should keep some of them. It's just fairer that way," suggested Scar Face carefully.

However, Phoenix did not concur with the man. "Forget it. Zeke deserves the share because he was the main reason we managed to get rid of Platinum."

To that, Scar Face nodded thoughtfully. Phoenix remains as fair as ever, which is why I follow her.

Everyone was keeping busy at the base when they suddenly heard a shout. "D\*mn it! What do you people think you're doing? Stop now! Are you committing robbery in broad daylight, Phoenix?"

They then turned around to see a skinny man with a mustache leading a small team over.

He ordered Phoenix's people to stop when he arrived at the scene, and when one of them failed to do as commanded, he brazenly kicked that person to the ground.

"That's just rude, Harrison. You're bullying my people right in front of me!" stated Phoenix somewhat angrily.

The skinny man was none other than Harrison, one of the Southern Faction's Centurions.

He was considered quite powerful among his peers, for he was stronger than Phoenix and second only to Draco, the leader of Centuria's district's Southern Faction.

On top of that, Harrison was Draco's righthand man and highly respected in the faction.

"Phoenix, is it not rude to rob your ally of his base in broad daylight?" inquired Harrison rhetorically.

To that, Phoenix responded, "Platinum's camp has been destroyed. If I don't occupy it now, am I to wait for the Northern Faction to do it instead?"

What? Harrison was taken aback by the revelation. "Platinum has been defeated? What happened? Who did it?"

"Me!" replied Phoenix.

Immediately, Harrison boiled with anger. "How dare you, Phoenix! Are you ignoring the Southern Faction's rules and challenging Draco? Is this a rebellion?"

"Hold your horses. Platinum was the one who started it, so the faction cannot punish me for taking him out. I didn't break any rules."

## Chapter 2586

"Is that so? Then why don't you tell me exactly what happened?" urged Harrison.

Hence, Phoenix spared no details when she explained what had happened to the man.

Harrison thought for a while after listening to Phoenix. "If Platinum really sowed discord between you and the new Centuria, he did deserve to die. However, I'll have to conduct an investigation first, and I'll ensure that you'll regret the day you were born if you dared hide anything from me."

"You won't find me trembling in fear because I'm innocent, so investigate away."

"On a side note, that new Centuria just wiped out both Calixion and Platinumion. What does that say about our faction if we let him live? Either he joins us, or he dies. There's no other way. Phoenix, come with me to get him to join the Southern Faction," voiced Harrison.

"Is that really necessary? He can join us if he wants to, but what makes you think you have the right to make him do so?" questioned Phoenix, trying to defend Zeke. Since Harrison is determined to get Zeke to join the Southern Faction, and Zeke insists on remaining neutral, the two stubborn men will surely be at each other's throats if they meet. On top of that, Harrison will likely be the one that ends up dead since Zeke's strength is no joke, and if Zeke breaks the faction rules by murdering Harrison, he'll be hunted down like a dog.

Seeing that Phoenix was hesitating, Harrison scolded, "Did you just say that I have no right? Have you lost your mind, Phoenix? If possible, that man should be killed twice for murdering two of our Centurions, and you're asking me what right I have to make him join us? Whose side are you on? Don't tell me you've fallen for him!"

"T-That's nonsense!" Phoenix immediately shouted. "Don't test my patience with your nonsense, Harrison!"

"Hmph! If you refuse to come with me, I'll go by myself. Let's leave, men!" With that, Harrison led his team toward Zeke's base.

After some thought, Phoenix eventually decided to follow the group. If I'm there, I might be able to stop the two from going to war. Otherwise, the meeting will undoubtedly end in bloodshed. No matter who survives, there's no way Zeke can come out of this alive, so I have to save him.

Phoenix, who was trying to figure out a way to help Zeke, was anxious along the way.

Then, she suddenly realized how much she cared about Zeke. I've never felt this way before for anyone. Was Harrison right about me falling for Zeke? No way! It's impossible that I'd fall for any man! I'm tagging along simply because I know the meeting will be interesting.

Meanwhile, Zeke was studying a piece of Spirit Stone in a room while using his mind to communicate with Ossa Dei. "No wonder we had nothing to show for our study on spiritual water. It turns out we were looking in the wrong direction."

"Right," responded Ossa Dei. "We were trying to find out how spiritual water could benefit our body, but as it turned out, its purpose is to extract Spirit Stones from it to make divine weapons."

"Now we have another problem. What can we do even if we have a lot of Spirit Stones?" inquired Zeke in a troubled tone. "How can we fight the Southern Faction and the Northern Faction if we don't know how to make divine weapons? How about I secretly force the faction

leaders to serve me and produce divine weapons for me?"

## Chapter 2587

"If you do that, you'll attract Theos' attention. Aren't you worried that they'll kill Lacey once your identity is exposed?" asked Ossa Dei.

"You're right. This is such a headache," uttered Zeke while rubbing his forehead.

"Zeke, don't you think you sometimes underestimate those around you?"

Zeke was puzzled when he heard that. "What do you mean by that, Ossa Dei?"

"Why are you so sure I don't know how to make divine weapons?"

"Wait a second. Are you telling me that you're familiar with the art of making divine weapons?" inquired Zeke excitedly.

"Of course. I'm the bones of an Ancient God, so why would there be anything that I don't know?"

"Hold on. You're joking, right? If you really are familiar with the art, how come you were unaware of the function of spiritual water?"

"Excuse me? Why would a god like me joke with the likes of you? I'm merely the bones of an Ancient God, so it's perfectly natural that I only retain a part of the memory. Besides, anyone would've forgotten a thing or two when they've been around as long as I have. However, just because my memory isn't complete doesn't mean making divine weapons isn't a piece of cake for me."

"Fine. Stop trying to explain yourself because you're only making yourself look more desperate. You know what they say actions speak louder than words."

"What makes you think I'm trying to explain myself to you? This is so infuriating! I'm simply telling you the truth because I have no reason to hide anything," uttered Ossa Dei.

Suddenly, Zeke heard an unfamiliar voice from outside shouting, "You have guests, Zeke!"

"Another Centurion? Come on! I just took care of one," complained Zeke with a frown. "Let's hope he doesn't offend me, or he'll end up like Platinum."

"Judging from the tone of his voice, that's probably what he's here to do," commented Ossa Dei.



"If that's the case, I'll kill as many Centurions as it takes to make these people think twice about crossing me."

"Zeke, have you noticed how much more murderous you've become since you got here?" inquired Ossa Dei cautiously.

"Really?" Zeke knitted his eyebrows curiously.

"Yes. You may not see it, but it's crystal clear to me."

"Maybe Theos Island does have a mysterious effect on people's personalities." At that moment, Zeke was even more determined about destroying the evil island.

When Zeke walked out, he saw Phoenix back with a group of strangers led by a fierce and arrogant man with his nose in the air.

Harrison was the first to break the silence. "Are you Zeke, the new guy?"

In response to that, Zeke nodded. "I am. Who might you be, if I may ask?"

"This is Mr. Harrison, one of the best among the Southern Faction's Centurions." Phoenix quickly introduced.

Zeke nodded once again before questioning, "What can I help you with. Harrison?"

Immediately after hearing that, Harrison turned red from anger. "Tsk! How dare you address me so casually! I'll let you off the hook this time since you just got here."

"Is there a reason you're here?" inquired Zeke somewhat impatiently.

"Of course. Let me ask you this. Did you kill Calix and Platinum?"

"I did," replied Zeke, nodding.

"Hmph! You don't seem to regret killing my men at all. You have nerves of steel; I'll give you that," commented Harrison.

"They deserved to die because they crossed me."

At that point, Harrison could feel anger welling up in his chest. This has to be the most insolent person I've ever met! Nobody ever dared disrespect me like that before.

## Chapter 2588

Not even Draco has ever spoken to me that way. It'll be my pleasure to teach this brat a lesson. Then again, if he has both the guts and the capability to kill Calix and Platinum, I might not be a match for him.

After some thought, Harrison decided to let Draco take care of Zeke.

He was certain Draco would not go easy on Zeke if Zeke were to behave the same way before Draco. "Even if Calix and Platinum had crossed you, they should've been executed by Draco of the Southern Faction, not you. You didn't have the right to do that, so now you must f\*cking pay the price! Tell me. Do you want to live or die?"

Even though Harrison spoke fiercely, Zeke remained unfazed by the man's intensity.

"What happens if I tell you that I want to live? And what happens if I want to die?" questioned Zeke lazily.

"It's simple. If you want to die, Draco can grant you your wish anytime. If you want to live, you'll pledge your loyalty to the Southern Faction for killing two of our Centurions, and I'll promise that we're even," replied Harrison.

After thinking for a moment, Zeke invited Harrison into the room. "What do you say we talk inside?"

A murderous intent flashed across Zeke's eyes as he made the offer. This b\*stard dared insult and curse at me, the Great Marshal, so he must die! Plus, only with him dead will it be easier for me to execute my plan.

"Sure. Let's talk inside then." Harrison accepted the invitation without a second thought before following Zeke into the room.

Even though Harrison did not expect that Zeke would dare lay a finger on him, Phoenix noticed the murderous intent in Zeke's eyes.

Furrowing her eyebrows in concern, Phoenix could feel her heart racing. D\*mn it! Is it me, or does Zeke look as if he's ready to kill Harrison? That's impossible, right? Even if he's as bold as brass, there's no way he'd murder a centurion for no reason. My eyes must be playing tricks on me.

Then, Phoenix, too, hurried into the room before Zeke closed the door behind them.

"Why did you close the door?" Phoenix quickly asked with a lowered voice.

"For the butchering," teased Zeke.

Immediately after hearing the man, Phoenix could feel her heart skip a beat. 'D\*mn it! He really is planning to make a move on Harrison!'

"Are you out of your mind? Do you have any idea what killing Harrison will mean for you? It means you're opposing the Southern Faction. You'll lose any opportunity to join it."

However, Zeke ignored Phoenix's words and locked the door.

With the situation getting out of control, the woman had no idea what to do next. Her mind went completely blank then.

When Harrison rudely took Zeke's seat, Zeke was less than pleased.

"You have no right to sit there. Now move away," commanded Zeke in all seriousness. How dare he take my seat and leave me, the Great Marshal, standing!

Harrison was amused when Zeke ordered him around. "You dare speak to me like that? Did you forget that you're at my mercy now? Believe it or not, I need only say the word, and you'll never even get the chance to pledge your fealty to the faction. By then, your only option will be to die!"

"I hate repeating myself. Move!"

What the heck... Harrison could not believe how difficult Zeke was to deal with.

Still, after some thought, he decided to let Zeke have the seat. Let's see how long you can remain insolent after joining the faction. I'll be d\*mned if Draco allows you to treat him this way!

"Now, let's talk about the Southern Faction's rules. You'll only see Draco when you know them by heart, and you'll only be one of us when he says so. Of course, I can also make the necessary arrangements if you're in a hurry to see him."

The truth was that Harrison wished Zeke would request to see Draco right away, for he was sure Zeke would disrespect or even get physical with Draco.

## Chapter 2589

Harrison smirked. No matter how powerful Zeke is, once the Dragon King sends his Southern Faction forces, he'll die instantly!

"Oh? Since when did I say I'll be joining the Southern Faction?" Zeke questioned him.

Harrison knitted his brows, looking confused. "What do you mean? You said there's something you want to discuss with me. Is it not about you joining the Southern Faction?"

Zeke shook his head. "Of course not. I ask you to come in because I want to settle scores with you."

An ominous feeling immediately swamped Harrison. "What do you mean?"

"You were rude to me. You think you can walk away just like that?"

"What do you mean, I was rude to you? You're just f\*cking trying to find fault with me."

Zeke let out a sigh. "You deserve to be killed for using the F word on me earlier. And now, you're using it again. So tell me, how should I punish you?"

"F\*ck! You're offended just because of that? I've been putting up with you all this while, so don't push it. And so what if I used the F word on you? What can you do to me? If you dare to lay your finger on me, the Southern Faction will skin you alive!"

"Great! I'd love to find out how powerful your so-called Southern Faction is!"

Zeke zapped through the crowd and slapped Harrison on his cheek.

Before anyone could respond, Zeke had returned to his seat in the blink of an eye. It was as if he had not moved an inch.

At that point, Harrison had collapsed to the ground with blood seeping out of his mouth. The impact was so powerful that a few of his teeth broke and fell out.

The piercing sound of the slap reverberated in the crowd's mind. Holy shit! What just happened? Who slapped Harrison? What a powerful slap!

The crowd suspected the culprit was Zeke, but he had been sitting stoically on his chair the whole time. Does that mean he moved so quickly that we didn't manage to catch a glimpse of him slapping Harrison? This is crazy!

Cupping his cheek with his hand, Harrison cursed, "F\*ck! Who slapped me? Who did that? Own up like a man!"

A smirk flashed across Zeke's face. "Me!"

Harrison gritted his teeth. You!

"Zeke, you're dead. You're dead! You've officially made an enemy of the Southern Faction! Let's go!"

Knowing he was no match for Zeke, Harrison decided to retreat first. 'I'll get the Dragon King to deal with him later!'

Just when he was about to crawl up and leave, another slap landed on his cheek.

In a split second, Harrison, who had just struggled to stand up, landed in a heap on the ground.

This time, everyone noticed Zeke's slight movement. It was him, indeed!

Once again, his immense power rendered the stunned crowd speechless.

Harrison was also on the verge of having a breakdown.

He was a Centurion and Draco's right-hand man, yet he had been struck twice by his enemy to the point where he could not even retaliate. I'm just a loser-an utter loser!

Although he did not dare to fight back, he refused to give in like a coward. "Zeke Williams, what do you think you're doing? Don't you dare go overboard!"

"As I said, you'll pay the price for being ill mannered," Zeke said. "Either you bow before me and apologize, or you die!"

Harrison nearly cursed again. What the? He wants me to bow before him and seek his forgiveness? Over my dead body!

Yet, on second thought, Harrison decided to swallow his pride. But he'll kill me if I don't do as he said. Hmph! You think you have the upper hand here, huh? Wait till I report this to the Dragon King. You're doomed!

Under the gaze of the crowd, Harrison dropped to his knees before Zeke.

Everyone's jaws dropped. They only had one word in their minds: bad\*ss.

Zeke is indeed a bad\*ss!

## Chapter 2590

Only a bad\*ss had the power to make Draco's right-hand man bow before him.

Zeke responded with a satisfied grin. "Buzz off."

Harrison and his subordinates scrambled their way out.

All his subordinates dared not utter a word when they saw how Zeke punished their superior. They were stunned by Zeke's savagery. If he could take it out on our boss, he could kill us all with the snap of a finger!

"Hold on!" Phoenix panicked. She turned to Zeke. "You can't just let them go."

"Why?" Zeke asked.

"You're asking the obvious. Once Harrison gets out of here, he'll definitely instigate the Dragon King to lead the Southern Faction to come and take you down. If that happens, do you think you can walk away alive? It's better if you kill him right now."

"Don't worry. I've infected him with the cursed parasitic worms. He'll be dead soon."

"Okay, but how long will it take the worms to react?"

"In about an hour."

Phoenix got even more flustered. "By then, he would have gotten back to update about what had happened."

"That's exactly what I want him to do. I wonder if the Dragon King would explode in rage if Harrison died before his eyes."

"You..." Phoenix was at a loss for words. Is he trying to agitate the Dragon King and make him fight with his might? What is he thinking? Is he tired of living?

"You should go now. I believe the Dragon King will arrive shortly. He'll take it out on you if he realizes you're on my side."

Phoenix sighed. "All right. I'll go first. Let me know if you need my help. I can help you, but you must understand I can't mobilize the Phoenixions. They're innocent, and I don't want to involve them in this mess . "

"I don't need any help." Zeke waved his hand dismissively and left.

Phoenix was hopping mad. He's certainly as stubborn as a mule! Forget it. Why should I be mad at him if he wants to get himself killed?

Yet, surprisingly, the thought of Zeke dying made her feel devastated.

Meanwhile, Harrison had left the scene at lightning speed.

Instead of returning to his base, he went straight to Draco's residence-Dragon Palace!

He wanted to meet Draco as soon as possible and tell him what Zeke had done.

The more he thought about it, the more frustrated he was. There were moments he got so agitated that he could barely breathe. How can I survive in Centuria's district if everyone finds out someone struck me? They'll make me a laughingstock! Zeke Williams, you'll pay me back with your life for humiliating me!

Soon, Harrison arrived at Dragon Palace.

The building was heavily guarded, and several checkpoints had been set up to ensure Draco's safety.

Since Harrison was Draco's trusted aide, he passed the checkpoints without difficulty and arrived at Dragon Hall.

Whenever Draco called for a meeting with the Centurions from the Southern Faction, he would meet them at Dragon Hall. No one could enter this important place without his permission.

At that time, Draco was discussing with two Centurions.

Harrison instantly recognized the two Centurions-Emerald Dragon and White Tiger. They were also Draco's right-hand men.

When the three of them noticed Harrison from a stone's throw away, they stopped talking.

Harrison dropped to his knees and lamented, "Master Draco, you have to avenge me!"

Draco was not pleased with the way he carried himself. "Harrison, you're a Centurion, yet you're wailing in front of everyone. Are you not embarrassed?"

Harrison continued crying, "Please forgive me. I cried because I couldn't help it. Someone humiliated me in public."

Emerald Dragon and White Tiger looked confused. "Harrison, did someone beat you up?"

Harrison nodded. "Yes. That vicious man showed no mercy and struck me hard. I mentioned the Dragon King and the Southern Faction, but he didn't seem to be bothered. Master Draco, you have to avenge me!"

## Chapter 2591

A deep frown appeared on Draco's face. "Harrison, which ignorant fool dared to bully you? Is he from the Northern Faction? Nowadays, the people from the Northern Faction are getting carried away."

Harrison shook his head and answered, "No. Although the people from the Northern Faction are arrogant, they still fear you. Whenever I mentioned your name, they'd always back off. The guy who came at me is the new Centurion, Zeke Williams."

Huh?

Those three were in disbelief.

"How could a new Centurion act so brazenly and have a go at a veteran Centurion? Besides, are you saying that he's not afraid of the Dragon King? How could that be? Theoretically speaking, he should be begging to join the Southern Faction and asking for the Southern Faction to protect him. How dare he attack someone from the Southern Faction?"

"He's new, so he's very full of himself. I think he's hungry for more power, and I doubt he would be satisfied with being a mere Centurion. He's most probably aiming to become either a Legatus or Camp Master," Harrison said.

Draco was still rather skeptical. "Harrison, could it be that there's bad blood between you and the newcomer and you're tricking us into killing him on your behalf?"

"Master Draco, if I've lied, I swear I'll die a horrible death!"

Only then were Draco, Emerald Dragon, and White Tiger convinced.

"We were just talking about that guy, Zeke, just now. I think Platinum has his eyes on him. Go and look for Platinum, then. Work with him to kill Zeke. We must annihilate people like him. Otherwise, he's going to cause trouble in the future," Draco instructed.

Harrison was amused. "Master Draco, don't you know? Zeke has already killed Platinum."

What? Draco turned pale in shock. "When did that happen?"

"Just a while ago. Platinum died a horrifying death. His base and Spirit Stone were given away



as loot."

Draco gasped in astonishment. "Are you serious?"

"I swear on my life!"

Draco fell silent after that.

Emerald Dragon took a deep breath and said, "Dragon King, if this newcomer can kill Calix and Platinum on his own, he's definitely a strong fighter. Perhaps we should let him live and join the Southern Faction. Who knows? He could even contribute massively."

Draco mulled over it and answered, "You have a point."

Harrison, however, started to panic. If Zeke joins the Southern Faction, we'll have endless conflicts in the future. Since he's stronger than me, the Dragon King will most likely favor him. Heck, he might even replace me in the future!

At that thought, Harrison quickly argued, "Master Draco, I don't think that's a good idea."

"Why not?" Draco queried.

"That newcomer isn't even strong. He was lucky, that's all. From what I heard, he didn't kill Calix. It was Apollyon who did it. As for Platinum, Zeke didn't kill him on his own either. He was in cahoots with Phoenix, and they killed Platinum with their evil plan. Besides, Zeke doesn't even want to join the Southern Faction. He's always mocking and ridiculing the Southern Faction."

Oh!

Draco and the other two finally had a grasp on the situation.

"I knew it! There's no way that newcomer is strong enough to kill two Centurions on his own. It seems like he's nothing but a scheming b\*stard. We can't keep someone like him around. He's going to scheme against us next time."

Harrison encouraged, "That's right. You should kill him, Dragon King. Otherwise, he might attack the Southern Faction in the--"

Before Harrison could finish his sentence, Draco, Emerald Dragon, and White Tiger suddenly widened their eyes and stared at him.

"Harrison, w-what's the matter with you?"

Looking extremely confused, Harrison asked, "What do you mean, what's the matter with me? Dragon King, what are you guys on about?"

## Chapter 2592

"Y-Your mouth is bleeding... Your eyes and nose are also bleeding. T-There's blood coming out from your ears as well..." Emerald Dragon stammered fearfully. "There's blood coming out from all your orifices!"

That's impossible!

Harrison hurriedly touched his mouth and was stupefied.

Blood! There's blood all over my hand!

When he opened his mouth to speak, blood spurted out. It was as if his mouth was a broken tap.

Harrison was utterly dumbfounded. Where did all this blood come from? I don't feel pain anywhere!

He was so stunned that he only regained his senses three seconds later. "Help! Help me!"

Emerald Dragon and White Tiger instinctively wanted to help him out.

However, Draco stopped them. "Wait! Stay away from him. Back away! Back away! Quick!"

Emerald Dragon and White Tiger stared at Draco puzzledly. "Why are we not helping him, Dragon King?"

Emerald Dragon and White Tiger both knew how much Draco liked Harrison. In fact, they knew Draco favored Harrison over them. Why is he letting Harrison die?

"These are symptoms of a person being infected by the bloody worm. Someone has most probably used a cursed parasitic worm on him! Anyone nearby might get infected and have the same symptoms as him," Draco explained.

What? Bloody worm?

Emerald Dragon and White Tiger were terrified, and they both retreated at once to keep a distance from Harrison.

Harrison plunged into despair and reached out toward Draco. "Save me, Dragon King..."

Draco grabbed a bench nearby and threw it at Harrison. "Buzz off! Stay away from me!"

When the bench hit Harrison, his head broke, and a pool of dark-colored blood oozed out from there. At the same time, countless weird-looking worms came gushing from the hole in his head.

Needless to say, those were all bloody worms.

Soon after, Harrison fell to the ground. Evidently, he was as dead as one could be.

An overwhelming amount of bloody worms were then seen crawling out from Harrison's body.

Seeing that, Draco quickly told his men to bring over some fuel and pour it all over Harrison's body before setting it ablaze.

As the fire burned, the bloody worms around the body were killed instantly.

Nonetheless, Draco was still worried. He sealed off the room and told his men to leave no traces of Harrison behind.

Once that was done, Draco heaved a sigh of relief. "That newcomer knows how to use cursed parasitic worms. He's definitely a priceless talent! If he joins the Southern Faction, I'll get incredibly strong. We can even wipe out the Northern Faction silently with the help of cursed parasitic worms."

Upon hearing that, Emerald Dragon and White Tiger shared a meaningful look. Dragon King wants the new Centurion, Zeke, to join him. Shit! True enough, there are no eternal enemies, only eternal interests. Although Zeke has killed Calix, Platinum, and Harrison. Dragon King is still holding Zeke in high regard instead of punishing him. What if the same happens to us next time? Will Dragon King eliminate us when he has no use for us anymore in the future?

"Emerald Dragon, White Tiger, here's an order for you guys. I want you guys to look for Zeke now and invite him to join the Southern Faction," Draco ordered.

"Dragon King, don't you think Zeke will reject us? Didn't you hear what Harrison said? He said Zeke doesn't want to join the Southern Faction. In fact, he despises and looks down on us," Emerald Dragon asked cautiously.

In a cold tone, Draco questioned, "How trustworthy are Harrison's words?"

Uh... Emerald Dragon hesitated and pondered over it for a while. Upon heaving a sigh, he answered, "Not one bit."

"Exactly. If Harrison had sincerely invited Zeke to join the Southern Faction, Zeke should've been over the moon. I think Harrison was making things difficult for the newcomer. Harrison might've even threatened him in the name of the Southern Faction. Zeke was left with no choice but to kill Harrison. No one on earth can resist joining the Southern Faction. Tell Zeke that as long as he agrees to join the Southern Faction, I won't punish him for killing Harrison and the rest."

## Chapter 2593

Emerald Dragon and White Tiger nodded. "Understood!"

They had no time to spare, so they immediately went to Zeke's base.

At that moment, Zeke was in his room with Ossa Dei, trying to figure out how to create divine weapons, when he heard a commotion outside the base.

"Zeke, we're sent by Dragon King. Are you not coming out to see us?"

Zeke heaved a sigh and cursed, "F\*ck! Why can't I have peace and quiet? I just want to know how to create divine weapons! Argh! The Southern Faction is so annoying. F\*ck it. I'll just kill them here and now so that they won't bother me anymore."

With that, Zeke went out to see his visitors.

When Emerald Dragon and White Tiger saw Zeke, they sized him up haughtily. "Are you Zeke Williams, the new Centurion?"

Zeke nodded. "That's right."

"Yes. You have a strong aura, so you must be very capable," Emerald Dragon and White Tiger said. "Zeke, Dragon King ordered us here to discuss something with you. Are you going to keep us standing here?"

"Come in and have a seat. Apollyon, make some drinks for them," Zeke said.

"All right!" Apollyon felt helpless as he watched Emerald Dragon and White Tiger walk in. The only reason Mr. Williams invited them in is that he's going to kill them. What is Mr. Williams up to? He has only joined Centuria not long ago, and he has already killed two Centurions. Is he trying to invoke the public's wrath? Forget about it. I shouldn't worry so much. There must be a reason why Mr. Williams is doing this. I'm not capable of figuring out what Mr. Williams'

intentions are.

With that in mind, he obediently went to prepare drinks.

As soon as he was done, he brought the drinks into the room and stood respectfully next to Zeke.

He was worried that Zeke would have trouble handling Emerald Dragon and White Tiger, so he wanted to stay and help.

Emerald Dragon and White Tiger were even more overbearing than Harrison.

"Zeke, did you kill Calix and Platinum?" Emerald Dragon asked coldly.

"Yes, I did." Zeke nodded.

White Tiger sneered. "You're rather honest. You don't sound remorseful at all. You've killed our men. Don't you feel guilty at all?"

"Well, they offended me first. I was just acting in self-defense. Why should I feel guilty?"

"Forget about that. I don't want to know how that happened. However, the fact is that you've killed our men. Zeke, do you wish to live or die?" Emerald Dragon asked.

Zeke chuckled bitterly. "Why does everyone from the Southern Faction like to give options? Prior to this, Harrison gave me the same options. Do you know what I chose?"

"What?" Emerald Dragon and White Tiger asked curiously.

"I chose death for Harrison instead! Now, you're asking the same question. I'm not changing my answer. I'm choosing death for the both of you!"

Damn it! Emerald Dragon and White Tiger slammed the table as they sprang to their feet.

Before this, Harrison didn't know this fellow well enough and ended up getting infected with cursed parasitic worms. That was his fault for not knowing his enemy. Now, we know Zeke is skillful with cursed parasitic worms, so we're well-prepared. How is he going to win against both of us? This fellow is snobbish as hell, and there's no way he's going to bow down to the Southern Faction.

"Zeke Williams, you're going to pay for your arrogance!" Emerald Dragon said coldly. "Let's go, White Tiger!"

With that, the duo turned around to leave.

"Hold it right there!" Zeke demanded coldly. "Did I tell you to leave?"

This guy must be joking! White Tiger replied, "This is the Southern Faction's territory, so we rule the area. We are allowed to go anywhere we want to. You, on the other hand, are an outsider. Yet, you're claiming domination of our territory. Don't you think you're stepping over the line?"

## Chapter 2594

"Don't waste your saliva on him. Let's go," Emerald Dragon said.

The two of them continued walking out.

"Stand right there!" Zeke roared. "You two have offended me with your attitude, so you must pay the price. Kneel before me and apologize! Otherwise, none of you can leave."

What the f\*ck?

Emerald Dragon was enraged. He continued moving forward without turning back. "You wish to see us kneel before you and apologize? Dream on!"

Likewise, White Tiger said through gritted teeth, "We've underestimated your level of arrogance. A person like you will not survive long on Theos Island."

Zeke let out a long sigh all of a sudden. "I gave you guys a chance to live, but you guys didn't appreciate it. Don't blame me for being merciless."

"What are you going to-" Before the two of them knew it, they saw Zeke transforming into a bolt of lightning and circling around Emerald Dragon.

In the next second, one of Emerald Dragon's arms dropped to the ground, and blood gushed out uncontrollably like a waterfall.

Emerald Dragon screamed agonizingly while rolling on the ground with his broken arm in his grip. "My arm! My arm!"

What's going on? White Tiger only returned to his senses when he heard Emerald Dragon screaming in pain. Right away, he turned to the side.

To his surprise, he saw Emerald Dragon only had one arm left, and blood was everywhere.

White Tiger went pale at the sight. What happened just now? All I remember is seeing a shadow flashing past before my eyes. Then all of a sudden, Emerald Dragon's arm is broken! Did Zeke do that? Was Zeke the shadow? How fast is he? If he's that fast, he's definitely stronger than both of us. Furthermore, Emerald Dragon only has one arm left!

Emerald Dragon and White Tiger both knew they were in trouble, and they knew they weren't as strong as their enemy.

White Tiger hurriedly kneeled before Zeke and said, "Mr. Williams, I-I was wrong. I'm an ignorant fool for offending you! P-Please let me go. I'm on my knees, and I'm begging you. Please have mercy."

Zeke shot White Tiger with a cold glance. "I'm sorry, but I only show mercy to the first person who kneels before me. Unfortunately, you came second."

White Tiger quickly turned to the side to look at Emerald Dragon. At some point, Emerald Dragon had endured the pain and kneeled before Zeke.

Upon seeing that, White Tiger was embarrassed and enraged. Why didn't I kneel before Emerald Dragon? I should've done that!

While glaring at Emerald Dragon, Zeke uttered, "Go back to where you came from and tell Dragon King this. I don't see the Southern Faction as an enemy. However, I won't hold back if the Southern Faction offends me."

"Okay! Okay!" Emerald Dragon nodded frantically. "I'll make sure he hears it. I'll make sure he hears it!"

"Buzz off," Zeke said.

Emerald Dragon stood up and wanted to run.

However, White Tiger grabbed him and said, "Emerald Dragon, y-you can't leave. You can't leave me alone. If we work together, we may both live. If you leave me here, I'll surely die. We've known each other for so many years now. You can't possibly sit back and watch me die. We're practically family."

Emerald Dragon kicked White Tiger aside and scolded, "F\*ck off! I don't want to die with you. How dare you offend Mr. Williams? You deserve death."

Judging purely by Zeke's speed, Emerald Dragon knew neither of them was strong enough to fight him. I only have an arm left. If I stay, we'll both die.

With that in mind, Emerald Dragon left cold-heartedly.

Meanwhile, White Tiger was sprawling on the ground upon getting kicked by Emerald Dragon.

At that moment, the pain he felt in his heart was greater than the physical pain he was feeling.

Indeed, the feeling of getting betrayed wasn't a pleasant one.

However, he had no time to wallow in his misery. Without wasting another second, he humbly prostrated himself before Zeke and begged, "Mr. Williams, please let me live. I'm begging you. Please let me live. Please show me mercy."

## Chapter 2595

Zeke flashed an evil smirk and said, "Tell me why I should let you live."

"Mr. Williams, Dragon King will definitely come after you next. You're strong, but frankly, you'll die if you're outnumbered. In the end, the Southern Faction will kill you," White Tiger answered hurriedly. "I-I'm willing to serve you. I'll protect you with my life!"

Zeke shook his head. "Outnumbered? I'm sorry, but that word doesn't apply to me."

Zeke was a Celestial Class warrior, and his worthy opponent was Theos himself. A mere group of Centurions wouldn't be enough to cause his death.

"Say your last words and apologize for your death."

"Mr. Williams, i-is there no way I can live?" White Tiger muttered miserably.

"No."

White Tiger chuckled gloomily. "You're cruel, aren't you, Zeke? You're even more vicious than Dragon King! In that case, I have no choice but to drag you to hell with me."

With that, White Tiger rushed toward Zeke and self-destructed his life force.

Boom!

The intense explosion razed the nearby buildings to the ground, and countless people were seen getting blown up into the sky. Even the trees in the vicinity were blown to dust.



Zeke, on the other hand, was unscathed.

He activated his energy barrier in time to block himself from White Tiger's self destruction.

"What an idiot!" Zeke cursed when he looked around to see the mess White Tiger had caused.

Ossa Dei heaved a sigh and said, "Zeke, your murderous intent is getting stronger. This is bad."

Only then did Zeke realize how much his murderous intent had grown.

Although I didn't kill White Tiger with my own hands, I forced him into committing suicide. For what he did, he didn't deserve death. All he did was behave unfriendly toward me. He didn't even say anything bad to me. The effect of Theos Island is affecting me greatly.

"Okay. I know. I'll suppress it from now on," Zeke answered.

"Since Theos Island is capable of messing with the mind of a Celestial Class warrior, I think the Gods left something behind on this island. It could be a treasure that's capable of disrupting a person's mood. If you succeed in conquering Theos Island one day, make sure to look for the treasure," Ossa Dei said.

A treasure the Gods left behind? A treasure that's capable of disrupting a person's mood? That's definitely a treasure! If my enemy is also a Celestial Class warrior, whoever whips out a treasure capable of doing that will win the battle. It's a life-saving treasure! Zeke's interest was piqued. After I get rid of Theos and save Lacey, I must turn this place upside down to look for that treasure!

While holding his broken arm, Emerald Dragon ran all the way back to Dragon Palace.

As he was running, blood was gushing out from his wound. He couldn't be bothered to wrap it up because he was afraid that Zeke would change his mind and chase after him.

By the time he returned to Dragon Palace, he barely had any blood left in his body.

Draco was enjoying his lunch when Emerald Dragon arrived. When he saw the state Emerald Dragon was in, he went pale and slammed the table. "What happened to you, Emerald Dragon?"

Emerald Dragon lost too much blood, and he had used up almost all his energy running back. He slumped to the ground and uttered weakly, "Help me... Dragon King... Help me..."

With that, he passed out on the spot.

"Doctors! Treat Emerald Dragon!" Draco ordered.

Soon after, a doctor rushed toward the scene and stopped Emerald Dragon from bleeding.

Emerald Dragon finally stopped bleeding after receiving treatments. However, his face was still pale, and he was extremely weak.

Draco's expression turned utterly solemn when he asked the doctor, "How did his arm break?"

"It seems that someone has yanked it off," the doctor answered cautiously.

What? Draco couldn't help but feel a shiver. Did Zeke do this? That fellow is brutal! How could he yank Emerald Dragon's arm off just like that? How about White Tiger? Why didn't he come back? Could it be that Zeke has beaten two Centurions at once? Could it be that one of them has gone missing while the other is injured? Draco was feeling slightly threatened. I can't even remember the last time I felt threatened.

## Chapter 2596

Pfft!

Suddenly, Emerald Dragon puked out a mouthful of blood. As he was waving his arm in the air unconsciously, he mumbled, "Help me... Help me..."

Draco was despondent. Exactly what happened to Emerald Dragon? What could cause him to ask for help even in his sleep?

He patted Emerald Dragon's cheeks. "Wake up, Emerald Dragon. You're safe now. I'm Dragon King. I'll protect you."

Emerald Dragon opened his eyes and heaved a sigh of relief when he saw Draco.

While tugging at Draco's sleeves, Emerald Dragon begged, "Save me, Dragon King. I-I don't want to die."

"Don't worry, Emerald Dragon. Your wound is all wrapped up. You'll be fine," Draco replied. "Emerald Dragon, tell me who did this to you. And where's White Tiger?"

Emerald Dragon looked as though he was in extreme pain when he recalled what had happened. "Dragon King, it's that newcomer, Zeke. H-He did this to me and White Tiger. White Tiger... He's..."

Although the possibility of White Tiger being dead had already crossed Draco's mind, he was still dumbfounded when his speculation was confirmed.

Draco recomposed himself and said, "Emerald Dragon, tell me what happened and spare no details."

Emerald Dragon painfully told Draco everything.

Obviously, he didn't tell Draco that he had left White Tiger to die on his own. Instead, he told Draco he had fought Zeke alongside White Tiger. In the end, White Tiger was ambushed by Zeke. Emerald Dragon said he only fled because he knew he was no match for his opponent.

Draco was taken aback. Zeke is strong. Prior to this, I underestimated him. He can actually defeat two Centurions on his own.

"Emerald Dragon, how did he kill White Tiger and injure you? Did he use the Poisonous Worm Technique?" Draco questioned.

Emerald Dragon shook his head in response. "No. He used his pure strength to defeat us. Throughout the battle, he didn't use any cursed parasitic worm."

Draco's lips trembled when he heard that. Zeke didn't use any cursed parasitic worm? Did he actually win against two Centurions just by using his raw strength? If he uses cursed parasitic worms, even I can't defeat him!

"Emerald Dragon, how did the fight happen? Did you guys behave impudently toward him?" Draco asked.

He still hadn't given up on the idea of getting Zeke to join him. If Zeke did this because Emerald Dragon and White Tiger have been rude, I may be able to turn things around. At worst, I'll just bring Emerald Dragon with me to see him and ask for forgiveness.

To his dismay, Emerald Dragon smiled bitterly and answered, "Dragon King, we were ordered to recruit him. We knew we might all end up as comrades in the future. Why would we be rude to him? We were courteous toward him, but he responded with violence. He's such a bully."

Instantly, Draco's heart broke. There's no hope, is there?

"Looks like there's no way we can recruit him," Draco said. "This fellow is definitely a ticking time bomb. Since we can't get him to join us, we must destroy him. Otherwise, he might kill all of us in the future. Tell all the Centurions in the Southern Faction to come here. We need to have a meeting now."

"Understood!" Draco's subordinate answered and rushed out of there.

"Master Draco, we don't know much about Zeke. If we were to fight him, we might suffer huge losses even if we were to end up victorious," Emerald Dragon warned.

Draco turned toward Emerald Dragon and asked, "What are you trying to say? Speak your mind."

"Have you forgotten about the fact that Zeke had worked together with Phoenix before this? They defeated Platinum together. Phoenix should know Zeke better than anyone else. Why don't we ask Phoenix about Zeke? Who knows? We might find out what his weaknesses are."

## Chapter 2597

Draco fell into deep thought and nodded. "You have a point. Okay. I'll get someone to bring Phoenix here."

Draco then ordered his trusted aide to summon Phoenix.

Half an hour later, all the Southern Faction's Centurions arrived. However, only six showed up.

The Southern Faction had ten Centurions. After Zeke murdered Calix, Platinum, Harrison, and White Tiger, only six were left. It was truly a huge loss for the Southern Faction.

Usually, the Centurions would only stay in their own territories, so they wouldn't know much about the things that happened in other areas. A lot of them also didn't know four Centurions had perished.

When they were first told about it, they were all stunned and filled with disbelief. The Southern Faction had ten Centurions! Yet, we lost four Centurions in a matter of days. That's almost half of the original number... Who did this? Who would have the guts to do such a thing? How are we going to defend ourselves against the Northern Faction now that four of our Centurions are gone? We might even get betrayed.

The remaining six Centurions stared at Draco intently and asked, "Dragon King. who did this to the Southern Faction? Tell us!"

"Hmph! This person has committed an unforgivable sin. For the sake of the people. we must destroy him! He has gone over the line. Does he think he's allowed to bully the Southern Faction?"

Draco told everyone about what had happened.

When he was done, everyone fell silent. Although they hadn't seen Zeke with their own eyes, they knew how strong he was after listening to Draco's story. If we unite and fight him, we'll win, but we'll suffer heavy losses. Is it worth it to risk so much, including our lives, for a newcomer?

Draco knew what was on their minds, so he said, "Okay. I know what everyone's thinking about. Although the Southern Faction isn't afraid of anyone, we're still not going to act rashly and put everyone's life at risk. If we want to win, we need information. That way, we can minimize our losses."

Everyone present nodded in agreement.

"Everyone has a weakness. If we can find out about our enemy's weakness, we can destroy him with ease," Draco added.

Again, the crowd nodded.

"Master Draco, how are we going to know more about our enemy?" someone asked.

"Based on what I know, someone here has a good relationship with Zeke. I bet she knows more about Zeke than any of us," Draco answered.

Phoenix was present, and she suddenly grew anxious. He's talking about me, isn't he?

Her speculation came true because Draco ended up shifting his gaze toward her.

"Phoenix, you've worked with Zeke before, haven't you? You know him better than any of us. Now, would you tell us everything you know about Zeke?" Draco asked.

Phoenix heaved a sigh inwardly. Well... What I fear most has finally happened.

She pretended to be calm and answered, "Master Draco, I don't think it's such a good idea to go after Zeke."

"Oh? Do you have a better idea? Enlighten us," Draco said.

"The Southern Faction is now short of four Centurions, so we're weak. If the Northern Faction were to attack us now, I doubt we could survive. I think we should forget about going after Zeke. Instead, we should recruit him. Let him work for us to atone for his wrongdoings. That way, he'll strengthen the Southern Faction. If we have a weapon as strong as that, I don't think the Northern Faction will dare to act rashly," Phoenix answered.

"Hmph! He killed four of my Centurions. If I show him mercy and let him join us, I may as well

kiss the Southern Faction's dignity goodbye! How can I do that to my fallen men? How am I supposed to lead everyone else in the future? I was impressed by Zeke's talent before this, so I wanted to recruit him. However, he rejected me and killed my men. He has no respect for the Southern Faction, and he'll never submit to the Southern Faction."

## Chapter 2598

In truth, if Zeke were to pledge allegiance to Draco there and then, Draco would definitely welcome him with open arms. He wouldn't even mind about the deaths of his Centurions. However, the signs indicated Zeke's refusal to join them.

Upon hearing Draco's response, Phoenix massaged her temple and said, "Master Draco, honestly speaking, I only know Zeke as well as you guys do. Although I've worked with him before, it was a straightforward collaboration. He's a cautious person, so he didn't reveal much to me. All I know is this: Apollyon is always by his side, and he seems strong."

Everyone knew how strong Apollyon was, so it was obvious that Phoenix was merely giving a half-hearted answer.

Naturally, Draco didn't believe Phoenix. "Phoenix, are you sure that's all you know?"

"Of course." Phoenix nodded.

Draco and the rest weren't convinced.

Suddenly, Emerald Dragon said, "Master Draco, I think I know one of Zeke's secrets."

Everyone turned their attention toward Emerald Dragon at once. "Tell us."

"Judging by Phoenix's attitude, I think she's protecting Zeke. It's safe to assume that there's something going on between them. Phoenix might be Zeke's weakness. If we use Phoenix to blackmail Zeke, do you guys think Zeke will yield?"

Realization dawned upon everyone after they heard Emerald Dragon's remark, and they all started whispering among themselves.

"He's right. Emerald Dragon has a point."

"It looks like Lady Luck is on our side."

"Zeke's weakness has been sitting in front of us all this while, and yet we couldn't see it. How dumb are we?"

"If we use Phoenix to blackmail Zeke, we'll have the upper hand."

Phoenix didn't share the same emotions as the others. In fact, she was pissed off. "You b\*stard! What nonsense are you talking about? After my collaboration with Zeke the last time around, we never crossed paths again! I don't have anything to do with him! How dare you use me to blackmail him? Why don't you use your wife instead? F\*ck you!"

Emerald Dragon smiled and said, "Why are you so worried, Phoenix? I didn't say there's definitely something going on between you guys, did I? I merely said it's worth a try. If eke feels threatened and submits to us, then that's the best outcome. If Zeke doesn't care about you, you're not going to lose anything either. As a matter of fact, you'll also find out if he's just a jerk. It'll be hitting two birds with one stone. Don't you think so?"

Phoenix was rendered speechless.

Draco nodded approvingly and said, "Yes. I think Emerald Dragon's idea is a good one. Let's do that."

Phoenix wanted to explain herself further, but her subordinate, Scar Face, stopped her. "Ms. Phoenix, stop talking. The more you explain, the more they'll feel suspicious about you. If that happens, they'll end up using you. Don't worry about it. I think Zeke is so dense that he won't risk his life for you."

Phoenix's heart broke when she heard that. That's right. Why would Zeke care about me? He wouldn't even care if I died. I've been delusional all this while. How did I end up thinking that he would risk his life to save me? How foolish and childish is that?

"Scar Face, I'm ordering you to look for Zeke. Tell him if he doesn't show up tonight, Phoenix is going to die!" Draco ordered.

Scar Face nodded in response. "Yes, Master Draco! I'll look for Zeke now."

After that, Draco said to the other Centurions, "Gather all your strong fighters here and stay hidden. We shall set up a trap for Zeke."

"Got it!" The Centurions left to make preparations for their upcoming battle.

## Chapter 2599

Finally, Draco gazed at Phoenix. "Phoenix, you'll have to be our hostage. Don't worry. When it's over, you'll get lots of benefits."

Phoenix smiled wryly. "Master Draco, you're placing too much hope on me. Do you really think someone as cruel as Zeke will risk his life to come here and save a woman? Nothing is going on between us. Even if there is, he is too heartless to care about my life."

"I have no other choice now. I can only try this and hope for the best. Go and prepare."

To prevent Phoenix from stirring up trouble, Draco decided to guard her himself.

Nevertheless, Phoenix had no intention of running away, as she was sure Zeke would not come to save her.

Meanwhile, Zeke was using the Spirit

Stones to create a divine weapon under Ossa Dei's guidance.

"Alternate between low and high fire for three minutes. Use seventy percent of your energy to forge the center of the weapon. Spread out the remaining thirty percent of your energy into eight directions... Wait, the angle is off. Ugh, you've wasted another bunch of Spirit Stones."

D\*mn it!

Zeke threw the tools for forging a divine weapon aside dispiritedly and sat down on a long bench to rest.

He hadn't experienced failure for a long time and felt defeated.

"I was so close, but I failed at the last moment and wasted my efforts. Forging a divine weapon is so difficult."

"Of course. Ordinary people can't forge divine weapons. If everyone can forge divine weapons, then it won't be called a divine weapon," Ossa Dei uttered.

"Duh! Ossa Dei, is there a problem with the method of forging you taught me? If not, why would I fail after trying nine times?"

Ossa Dei comforted, "Enough, Zeke. Stop complaining. You're doing very well already. You've only tried nine times, and you're close to success. Many geniuses have tried hundreds, thousands, or even ten thousand times to reach your level. You're a genius at forging divine



weapons. Your future is bright."

Zeke was shocked. "Really? Some people only succeeded after hundreds or thousands of tries? Then how many tries did you take to reach my current level?"

Ossa Dei cleared his throat. He hesitated for a while before replying, "I'm slightly better than you. It took three tries to reach your level."

"Really?"

The nervousness in Ossa Dei's voice made Zeke feel suspicious.

"Of course."

Truth be told, Ossa Dei had tried forging a hundred times before nearing success.

Despite that, his record was already considered pretty good in his era.

Yet, Zeke was close to success after trying only nine times. He was not just talented; he was a genius!

However, how could the proud Ossa Dei admit defeat to Zeke?

One should never be humble when it's time to boast.

Zeke was about to question Ossa Dei when he felt a wave of familiar energy in his mind.

It was Sole Wolf's energy.

Hawkeye had brought Sole Wolf and the others to Theos Island.

Immediately, Zeke communicated with Sole Wolf using the fluctuations of energy: Sole Wolf, where are you all?

Sole Wolf hurriedly answered: Zeke, Hawkeye brought us to Theos Island. Where are you? We will find you and meet up with you.

Zeke: Get Hawkeye to take you all to the Chieftain. He will bring you to me.

Sole Wolf: Understood!

Zeke: Remember, do not let Hawkeye escape. Bring him to me.

Sole Wolf: Understood!

At that moment, Hawkeye was wandering around in confusion, muttering, "Something's not right. When I left, Mr. Williams' troops were stationed here. I haven't been away for long, yet there's no one here now, not even a shadow to be seen. Did Mr. Williams get killed by the other teams? But that's impossible. His team includes the top ten squads. No other team from the outer district can threaten them."

## Chapter 2600

"Damn! It's not possible that Mr. Williams was defeated by a Centurion and was killed, right? If that's the case, I'll be in trouble. He infected me with a cursed parasitic worm. I still need him to cure me."

Just when Hawkeye was feeling worried, Sole Wolf spoke. "Zeke asked you to find the Chieftain, and he will take us to Zeke."

"That mean Mr. Williams is alive?" Hawkeye asked eagerly.

"Of course."

"Wait. How did you get in touch with Mr. Williams?"

"You don't need to care about this. Hurry up and take us to find the Chieftain."

"Let's go."

Shortly after, Hawkeye brought Sole Wolf and the others to the Chieftain's manor.

Hawkeye knocked on the door. "Chieftain, I'm Hawkeye. Please see us."

"Coming."

A hoarse voice sounded from inside the Chieftain's manor. Then Johan walked out of the wooden house.

Upon seeing Johan, Sole Wolf could not help but frown. It's him! The ex-member of Cygnus Room, Johan!

Back then, Sole Wolf had worked in the Cygnus Room and had been mainly in charge of gathering information, and Johan had been his subordinate.

By chance, Sole Wolf had found out about a mysterious organization that could threaten Eurasia's safety.

He had sent Johan to be a spy in that mysterious organization and did not expect it to be a permanent farewell.

After Johan joined that secretive organization, that organization disappeared along with Johan, and there was no news of Sole Wolf thought that Johan was long dead, never expecting him to appear at such a place.

Sole Wolf's first reaction was that Johan had betrayed Cygnus Room and Eurasia and was hiding at such a distant place to live out the rest of his life aimlessly.

However, that thought was fleeting. He immediately thought of another possibility.

Maybe this Theos Island is the mysterious organization I sent Johan to investigate back then. Theos Island is too peculiar for him to find a way out, so he's trapped and can only remain undercover here. Yes, this is very likely. I understand what kind of person Johan is. The likelihood of him betraying Cygnus Room and Eurasia is too small.

The instant Johan walked out, he sensed someone staring at him.

He looked around and met Sole Wolf's eyes.

Although it was just a glance, it was enough to make Johan tremble in shock.

It's General North, Sole Wolf, the head of the Intelligence Department, my ex-supervisor! What is he doing here on Theos Island?

Johan felt his lips trembling. He wanted to greet Sole Wolf, but as others were present, he couldn't reveal his and Sole Wolf's identities.

He could only force himself to control his emotions and pretend not to know Sole Wolf.

Likewise, Sole Wolf did not reveal Johan's identity.

Taking in a deep breath, Johan asked, "Hawkeye, why have you come to find me?"

"Mr. Williams asked me to find you. He said you could bring us to him."

Johan nodded. "Yes. Zeke has now become a Centurion. You were his subordinate, so now that he's gone to Centuria's district, you can go there too. However, the rest of them are strangers. According to the rules, they can't enter Centuria's district."

What?

Surprised, Hawkeye asked, "Zeke Williams is in Centuria's district? He became a Centurion? Which Centurion did he challenge? I can't believe he succeeded."

"Calix of Calixion!"

Hawkeye gasped. "Mr. Williams is indeed powerful, more powerful than I have imagined."

"Let's go. I'll take you to Zeke. The rest can only stay in Contubernium's district."

"Chieftain, actually, Mr. Williams asked me to find them. They've been serving him since long ago. Now that Mr. Williams has become a Centurion, they should, of course, continue serving him," Hawkeye hurriedly explained.