

Charismatic Lucas Gray Chapter 1221 -

1221 Each With an Agenda

These two families were from Arizona and Nevada, but they had never had much of a relationship with the families of California. It was unclear why they suddenly came here.

Although they didn't know why the helmsman Anthony and Joel were here, Bruce wouldn't ignorantly turn them away since they had already come all the way here.

"Invite them in!" Bruce instructed.

Before long, Joel and Anthony brought their families' elite bodyguards into the reception hall.

Bruce stood up and said courteously, "Mr. Gillen, Mr. Cross, it's an honor to have you here!"

Although Bruce had long handed over the position of the Hales' helmsman to his grandson Connor, Connor was still too young, and the helmsmen who visited were both in their sixties. So Bruce showed them respect by greeting them personally.

Joel was a thin and petite elderly man with a sparse beard and slanted eyes. He was obviously someone to be trifled with.

Standing in the hall, he said mystifyingly, "Mr. Hale, save the formalities and pleasantries. We have already heard about it. The top families of California are facing a crisis, but you didn't even inform us. Are you looking down on us?"

Anthony, the chubby helmsman of the Cross family, said, "Mr. Gillen is right. We live so close to each other, but you didn't even inform us about such a major matter. If we didn't get the news by chance, I'm afraid the Hales would have been eradicated, and we wouldn't have even known about it!"

What these two people said was puzzling and harsh, as if they were close to the Hales. They actually thought that Bruce should tell them about the trouble the Hales encountered.

Connor was speechless, and he immediately wanted to say that the Crosses and the Gillens were in no place to meddle in their affairs.

On the other hand, Ethan stood up and said to them, "We are grateful for your goodwill in coming here, but we didn't contact you because we didn't want to implicate you."

He thought that since several top families of California were now facing the threat of the Hamiltons, they might be able to increase their chances of dealing with them if they

could obtain the support of the two top families from neighboring states, whose helmsmen had come uninvited.

At this juncture, it was better not to offend them even though their tone wasn't pleasant.

Hearing what Ethan said, Joel and Anthony finally seemed satisfied.

"Don't worry. We live in neighboring states, so we should be considered friends. We've already heard about what happened to you, so we've specially brought our experts here to join forces with you. With so many families standing together, even if the Hamiltons really want to cause trouble for you, they might not dare to do anything!" Joel said firmly.

Anthony said, "Yes. Since you are in trouble, we obviously won't stand by and do nothing. Mr. Gillen and I brought our experts here with good intentions. As long as we stand strong together, even though the Hamiltons are a royal family branch, they will definitely be scrupulous facing so many of us!"

He wasn't lying. They had indeed brought about a hundred experts, who were now waiting outside.

Edmund and Ethan had brought their expert bodyguards as well. Including the hundred-odd experts of the Hales, there were around 400 experts present. It was a rather grand scene.

This was an extremely powerful force.

Edmund, sitting quietly on the couch, looked at Anthony and Joel coldly. After hearing what they said, he snorted coldly and mocked, "Hah, you two make it sound so nice!"

"Why would you be so kind as to help us? The Hamiltons must have gone to your families and threatened you to pledge allegiance to them too. You're unwilling, so you're here to seek an alliance with us, right?"

"Since you're looking for allies, you should show us the proper attitude instead of acting self-important and condescending like you're doing us a favor!"

As soon as Edmund said this, Joel and Anthony turned sullen.

They indeed had such plans in mind, but Edmund saw through them so quickly!

Joel narrowed his eyes and said with displeasure, "Mr. Cole, what do you mean? Mr. Cross and I brought our experts to your aid with kind intentions. However, not only are you not thanking us, but you're even mocking us. Is that how the families of California treat your friends?"

Anthony touched his belly and said threateningly, “Exactly. We were kind enough to help you, but you’re maliciously suspecting us. How disappointing! Mr. Cole and Mr. Hale, if you don’t want our help, just say so. We won’t bother to worry about you! Once you get wiped out by the Hamiltons, you’ll regret it!”

Edmund didn’t buy it at all. “Don’t bother to play tricks in front of me! I’m much older than you two. Do you think I can’t see through your tricks?”

“If you want to form an alliance, do so properly. I can’t stand how you’re pretending to do us a favor. If you’re not happy, leave!”

Among everyone present, Edmund, who was in his seventies, was indeed the oldest and the most senior person. He had the confidence to challenge Joel and Anthony.

They were about to get into a heated argument, and tension arose in the reception hall.

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1222 How to Deal With It

As the host, Bruce immediately stepped forward to stop them. “Everyone, please calm down. Don’t fight!”

“I know everyone is gathered here today in respect for my family and for the sake of handling the matter with the Hamiltons. In that case, let’s not scatter our forces and unite to resolve the threat of the Hamiltons!”

“The Hamiltons are a royal family branch, and they are far more powerful than us. If we don’t stand as one, we might really end up having to give our businesses away to the Hamiltons. I believe none of us wants that, right?”

“So, I suggest we sit down and talk things over calmly. Let’s not fight, okay?”

Ethan chimed in, “You’re right, Mr. Hale. Since everyone is here because of the Hamiltons’ threat, we should each take a step back and unite to solve the problem first! Come, Mr. Gillen, Mr. Cross, please take a seat. Mr. Cole, please have a seat and a cup of tea!”

Under the meditation of Bruce and Ethan, the few of them calmed down.

After snorting coldly, Edmund no longer bothered to argue with Joel and Anthony. Since Edmund had exposed their purpose, the two of them no longer tried to justify themselves. They snorted coldly and sat down, stopping arguing over what just happened.

They were well aware that the biggest issue to deal with now was the threat the Hamiltons had given them.

As the helmsmen of the top families in their states, no one wanted to give away their businesses and succumb to others.

Besides, the Hamiltons were just a family from elsewhere. What right did they have to take over the businesses they had managed for years?

Thus, the most important thing now was for them to join forces and deal with the Hamiltons before deciding anything else.

Seeing everyone quiet, Bruce finally coughed twice and said, "Everyone should have already reached some common ground. In that case, let me say a few words!"

"Okay, Mr. Hale, please go ahead."

"Right, this is the Hale residence. Mr. Hale, please offer your advice!"

Joel and Anthony had changed their attitudes and spoke more politely.

They had been family helmsmen for years. Since Edmund had already exposed their purpose, there was no need for them to continue putting on airs and pretending.

Bruce glanced at Lucas and found that he didn't have any intention of speaking. So he knew that Lucas didn't want to get involved and had given him full authority to lead the discussion.

Thus, Bruce immediately took charge of the meeting and said, "I'll tell everyone what I think. Three days ago, the Hamiltons came to us and demanded that we pledge allegiance to them. We will never agree to that!"

"Of course, the Hamiltons are royals and far stronger than the eight top families of DC. We are no match for them at all. In fact, I think all our families are unable to rival them. Does everyone agree with this?"

Hearing Bruce's question, the helmsmen present all nodded quietly.

He was stating the obvious. They were facing a royal family branch that was far stronger than the eight top families. There were only nine such pinnacle families in the US. How could they compare to them?

"But the Hales can't just sit and wait. It would be shooting ourselves in the foot," Bruce said. "They all say that you can't beat a local tyrant. No matter how impressive the Hamiltons are, they are a family from elsewhere, and they don't have a strong

foundation in California. If we join forces, it will be impossible for the Hamiltons to wipe out all of us.

“I think the Hamiltons want us to pledge allegiance because they want us to control and manage California for them, so they won’t aggressively try to eliminate us. In that case, we have a chance to negotiate with them.”

Joel frowned and asked in puzzlement. “Negotiate? You mean we’re going to go negotiate with the Hamiltons?”

Bruce nodded. “Yes, it’s impossible for us to fight head-on against a royal family branch like the Hamiltons. In that case, we have to think of another way to negotiate with them.

“If it’s just one of our families, the Hamiltons won’t be bothered at all. At worst, they’ll get rid of one of us and find another family to replace us.

“But if we join forces and negotiate terms together, they will be more mindful. This is the confidence we have to negotiate with them.

“As long as we insist on the same terms, the Hamiltons won’t be able to do anything to us.”

After Bruce spoke, the others immediately showed thoughtful expressions.

What Bruce said really made sense. It was exactly what they wanted.

However...

After thinking about it, Joel said, “That’s indeed a great solution, but what if the Hamiltons aren’t willing to negotiate with us and insist on making us succumb by threatening to eradicate us?”

Everyone immediately fell silent.

This was the worst-case scenario, but none of them could guarantee that it wouldn’t happen.

In fact, although they had gathered plenty of manpower and planned to suppress the Hamiltons’ ambitions by outnumbering them, they were all well aware that it was just a means to deter the Hamiltons. They didn’t really dare to get physical with them or kill Brett.

If they really went hard against the Hamiltons, they wouldn’t beat them as local tyrants, but rather, they would be pitting themselves hard against a powerful opponent.

If they really hurt Brett or killed the experts of the Hamiltons, the Hamiltons would definitely see them as enemies and use the severest method to deal with them.

After all, the Hamiltons were royals, and even the eight top families of DC didn't dare to become enemies with them. They were really insignificant in the face of the Hamiltons.

Once the Hamiltons really planned to deal with them, they wouldn't get any time to consider at all. The Hamiltons would gather their forces and destroy them in less than a day.

Amid the silence, Edmund's voice was extremely clear. "Isn't it obvious? If the Hamiltons don't intend to let us off, then we can only fight them to the death!"

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1223 Surrendering is the Only Option

Edmund's vigorous and powerful voice made everyone's hearts shake.

However, not everyone agreed with his decision.

"That's absolutely impossible!" Joel was the first to step forward and voice his objection. "That's the Hamilton family, a royal family branch. Do you think it's some weak family? How can we fight against them? Hah, given the Coles' strength, you're just seeking death!"

"If you have a death wish, go ahead and kill yourselves. Don't drag us down with you!"

His words and tone were extremely rude.

Anthony looked at Edmund with disapproval and snorted coldly. "Yeah! Some people really think too highly of themselves! You think your family is very powerful, but you're nothing in the eyes of the Hamiltons! Fancy you thinking of fighting against the Hamiltons. With what? What a joke!"

In their opinion, the Hamiltons were not a family they could afford to provoke.

Joel and Anthony wouldn't have dared to go against the Hamiltons if it wasn't for the fact that they were unwilling to succumb to them and hand over the family businesses they had been managing for years. It also happened that the families in California had received the same threat, so they planned to join forces with them to negotiate with the Hamiltons.

In Joel and Anthony's opinion, fighting the Hamiltons to the death was incredibly foolish, and they would never do this.

Edmund had been in the military, where he had trained hard and developed a strong character. He had great tenacity and wouldn't easily succumb to others.

But the others clearly didn't have his courage.

Joel and Anthony weren't the only ones who didn't dare to make an enemy of the Hamiltons. Even Bruce and Ethan were contemplating hard.

Seeing the way they were behaving, Edmund snorted coldly. "Hmph, are you all that timid? Once the Hamiltons decide to show a tough attitude, I'll see what you do!

"Hah, I was wrong about all of you. You brought so many experts with you, so I thought you'd at least have the courage to fight against the Hamiltons. But I didn't expect you to be all cowards! You brought so many people here just to give yourselves a little more courage, didn't you? The truth is that they're useless, right?!"

Edmund's merciless mocking made a few people subconsciously look away.

Indeed, they had brought so many experts with them purely for the purpose of emboldening them rather than to deter the Hamiltons.

They would never fight against the Hamiltons, never in this life.

Knowing that Edmund was a tough nut to crack, Joel simply ignored him and instead turned to ask Bruce, "Mr. Hale, tell us how we should be dealing with the Hamiltons. Do we negotiate or get physical? We ultimately need a strategy."

Bruce mused but remained silent.

Ethan said, "I think if we can win against the Hamiltons, I will definitely agree to starting a war with them. But the problem is, even if the eight top families of DC join forces, they might not be a match for them. Even if we join forces, we won't be able to do much to the Hamiltons, right?"

"Although the Hamiltons only brought a few people, they're all top-tier experts far stronger than ours! Since we can never defeat them, do we have any other choice?"

Bruce subconsciously nodded.

Indeed, the Hamiltons' experts were all incredibly impressive. If they resorted to firearms, they might be able to defeat them, but it would definitely result in a lot of casualties. If the Hamiltons pursued the matter and retaliated, they might really have no way out.

Just as Ethan said, since there was no way they could defeat them, they didn't have a choice.

Edmund looked at the people in front of him with disappointment. “Hah, since you are too scared to fight against the Hamiltons, there’s no point in discussing anymore! Just submit to the Hamiltons now and become their dogs. Why are you talking so much nonsense here?”

Joel yelled furiously, “Edmund Cole! Stop making sarcastic remarks! We are here to discuss a solution for the matter. Who said we’re going to submit?”

Edmund refused to compromise. “What’s there to discuss?! Isn’t the matter obvious? None of you dare to fight against the Hamiltons, so what right and confidence do you have to negotiate with them?”

“You don’t even have the courage to fall out with the Hamiltons. As long as the Hamiltons aren’t stupid and have a slightly tough attitude, they will see that you’re just a bunch of cowards. Then they won’t bother to negotiate anything with you!”

“In that case, isn’t your only choice surrendering to them and obeying their orders obediently? Am I wrong?”

Hearing this, the crowd fell silent again.

Although Edmund sounded harsh because he was furious, he was stating facts.

Since they didn’t even have the courage to go against the Hamiltons, how could they negotiate with them?

It was just as ridiculous as someone who didn’t dare to even pick up a rod saying that they would negotiate with robbers using knives. The robbers would definitely take it as a joke and ignore them.

What else could they do then?

Lucas remained sitting on the couch in the corner, watching everything in front of him quietly.

In his opinion, the Hamiltons were nothing to fear. But he wanted to know the attitudes and standpoints of Bruce, Edmund, Ethan, and the rest.

Only after knowing where they stood could he decide what to do next.

Seeing Bruce caught in a dilemma, Connor gritted his teeth and whispered, “Grandpa, at this juncture, you should ask Mr. Gray for his opinion!”

Bruce suddenly trembled and finally realized that he had forgotten to ask Lucas for his opinion in his folly and confusion!

When Lucas first returned to Orange County, Bruce had already personally sensed how terrifying he was. On the day of his great-grandson's baby shower, Lucas had gotten soldiers to take away all the Hales and almost eradicated them.

Later, Lucas had given the Hales a chance to return, which Bruce had seized and offered all of his family's businesses to Lucas in exchange for the opportunity to work under him.

Of course, Bruce had made the right decision. Ever since the Hales pledged allegiance to Lucas, they had not only not declined, but they even became many times stronger than before with the help of Lucas's influence. Now, they had even become a top family that was second only to the Coles in California.

Their achievements were all thanks to Lucas!

Now, Lucas was sitting in the corner of the hall, yet he was so muddled by the matter regarding the Hamiltons that he had forgotten to ask Lucas for his opinion. It was too inappropriate of him!

Joel's eyes were keen, and he noticed the sudden change in Bruce's expression after Connor said something to him. He couldn't help asking, "Mr. Hale, it seems like you have some ideas. Why don't you share them with us?"

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1224 The Third Option

All of a sudden, everyone turned to look at Bruce.

Without hesitating, Bruce walked straight over to Lucas, who was sitting in the corner, and bent forward respectfully. "Mr. Gray, you're the most honored patron of the Hales. Please decide how we should deal with the Hamiltons! We will follow your instructions!"

Connor quickly followed suit and stood in front of Lucas respectfully. "Mr. Gray, the Hales will obey your instructions!"

The two of them were extremely respectful to Lucas, and they clearly viewed him as their master. Their actions immediately made the others stunned speechless.

Edmund knew Lucas's true identity, so his reaction wasn't too bad, and he could roughly guess what the relationship between Lucas and the Hales was.

Ethan was astonished, wondering when Lucas and the Hales had such a close relationship. It seemed that Lucas was the true master of the Hales. It made Ethan rather uncomfortable.

As for Joel and Anthony, they were incredibly shocked.

It was their first time coming to the Hale residence, and they had barely interacted with the families in California in the past, so they didn't know who Lucas was.

Because they didn't know Lucas's identity and because they were too shocked, they looked at each other and couldn't say anything for a while.

When Lucas saw Bruce and Connor standing in front of him and asking for instructions, he nodded slightly.

When Bruce was thinking on his own about how to deal with the Hamiltons, Lucas had thought that Bruce had completely forgotten who the true master of the Hale family was and who had brought them to the success they enjoyed now.

If Bruce had really forgotten, then Lucas didn't need to help the Hales anymore.

But it seemed that Bruce and Connor weren't that foolish as to forget who had helped them.

Lucas said, "I think Mr. Cole is right. You should negotiate with the Hamiltons first. If it doesn't work out, just get physical."

Although he didn't mind fighting directly with the Hamiltons, they still had a high status in the US after all. If they could negotiate with the Hamiltons and get them to give up, it would be for the best.

Bruce had no doubts about Lucas's decision at all. He agreed right away.

"Yes, Mr. Gray. Since you have already spoken, the Hales will definitely do as you say. If the Hamiltons really refuse to drop their ambitions, we'll fight them to the death and force them away!"

Edmund smiled. "Haha, that's how it should be! How can we be so cowardly and allow the Hamiltons to bully us?"

Now, the two helmsmen had already decided to resort to force against the Hamiltons in the event that negotiations fell through.

Ethan looked at Bruce and Edmund, feeling extremely conflicted.

He didn't have much confidence in Lucas.

In the beginning, Ethan got close to Lucas and helped him entirely because Chad Kennedy, the chief butler of the Huttons of DC, had asked him to look out for Lucas and cooperate with him if possible.

But deep down, Ethan felt that the royals were a far more terrifying family than the eight top families of DC and far more powerful than the Huttons. They were just some wealthy families in California. How could they possibly have any chance in a confrontation with such a horrifying family?

Ethan really couldn't make up his mind. He clenched his fists tightly while his heart raced rapidly.

Seeing that Bruce and Edmund had chosen to follow Lucas's lead, Joel and Anthony immediately had a drastic change in expression.

Joel said with displeasure, "Mr. Hale, isn't your decision too frivolous?"

"Who is this young man? Why are you obeying him after just hearing what he said? This matter concerns the future of your family, yet you're leaving it in the hands of a greenhorn. What a joke!"

Antony narrowed his eyes as he glanced at Lucas with disdain and said coldly, "Yes, Mr. Hale. Your decision is too hasty! Moreover, your decision not only concerns the future of the Hales but also the direction of our alliance. One mistake will ruin the Hales and us too! Why should we leave such an important matter to a clueless, unknown young man?"

Bruce snapped angrily, "Shut up! Mr. Gray is the Hales' most honored patron, and he has every right to make decisions on our behalf. You people are in no place to criticize him!"

"If you're upset, just leave. That way, you don't have to be afraid that we'll implicate you."

Hearing this, Joel and Anthony were stunned.

They never thought that Bruce, who had treated them with courtesy from the very beginning, would rebuke them so mercilessly for the sake of a young man.

They were the helmsmen of top families on par with the Hales. How could their statuses be inferior to the seemingly ordinary young man sitting here?

Edmund mocked too, "Exactly. Mr. Hale is right. If you're so afraid of dying, you should leave sooner so you won't be implicated by us."

"I think you weak cowards should just surrender to the Hamiltons as soon as possible and become their dogs!"

“You!” Joel was furious. “What are you saying? We came here to discuss a solution on how to deal with the Hamiltons. If we were really weaklings, why would we still be here?!”

Anthony chimed in, “Hah, you Californian helmsmen are really arrogant! We specially came here with good intentions to form an alliance to deal with the Hamiltons together. But I didn’t expect your attitudes to be so horrendous. You don’t take us seriously at all. In that case, I don’t think there’s a need for us to stay here any longer!”

Seeing that Anthony and Joel were furious, Ethan hurriedly stepped forward to smooth things over. “Everyone, please calm down!”

“Now is the time for us to unite and think of a way to tide through this ordeal. We mustn’t start internal strife and conflicts at this juncture!”

“Given the current situation, it’s impossible for any of our families to deal with the Hamiltons alone. We have to set everything else for now and focus on the problem at hand. Everyone, please do me a favor. At this time, we should work together and not fight against each other!”

Joel snorted coldly. “We aren’t the ones who started it. It’s because of Mr. Cole and Mr. Hale’s problematic attitudes! I just told them not to treat this like child’s play, and they lashed out at me instead. Why can’t I be angry? What working together is there to speak of when they’re giving us such attitudes?!”

Edmund sneered aggressively. “You’re blaming us? Aren’t you just cowardly? Since you don’t even have the courage to wage a war with the Hamiltons, what’s there to discuss? By acting that way, haven’t you already chosen to surrender?”

Joel gave him the side-eye. “Is surrendering the only solution left if we don’t fight? There’s clearly a third option. Just because you haven’t thought of it doesn’t mean we haven’t!”

Charismatic Lucas Gray Chapter 1225 -

1225 Divided Opinions

“The third option?” Ethan asked doubtfully. “Mr. Gillen, if you have other ideas in mind, why don’t you share them with us?”

Joel glanced at Edmund before saying, “Before that, I’d like to confirm something. Our five families have already agreed to have a good discussion with the Hamiltons. No one objects to this, right?”

Edmund, Bruce, Ethan, and Anthony nodded in agreement.

Although they were still deciding on whether or not to go to war with the Hamiltons, they didn't have any doubts about first negotiating with them.

Joel continued, "Okay, it seems that everyone has agreed to this issue. Let's continue talking about the situation.

"In my opinion, it will be best if we can reach an agreement with the Hamiltons and they give up the idea of controlling our families. But if they refuse to agree and greet us with a tough attitude, we don't have to fight them. We can each take a step back, and maybe we'll be able to resolve this problem."

Bruce asked in puzzlement, "Each take a step back? How so? Mr. Gillen, please explain it in detail."

Joel continued, "It's simple. None of us are willing to give away the businesses we've painstakingly built to the Hamiltons, and what the Hamiltons want is nothing more than to expand their development in California, Nevada, and Arizona. So I think we can let the Hamiltons come to our states to develop their forces and establish footholds. Meanwhile, we can also cooperate with them and provide them with some support.

"In that case, the Hamiltons will not only not become our enemies, but they will even likely become our allies. We can help the Hamiltons secure a footing in our three states, and the Hamiltons can also help us. This is the way to achieve a win-win solution.

"Isn't this option better than fighting the Hamiltons to the death?"

After Joel finished speaking, the people present had their eyes glisten.

Anthony was the first to stand up and express his support for Joel's plan. "Mr. Gillen is right! We should be striving for a win-win solution. If we support the Hamiltons to set up footholds in our three states and form an alliance with them, it will be greatly beneficial to our future development. In my opinion, this is the best option now!"

"Mm... I think Mr. Gillen's plan is good. Why don't we work in this direction when negotiating with the Hamiltons?" Ethan also thought it was a good idea. He wouldn't have to submit to the Hamiltons and give away his family's businesses or fight a tough battle. Moreover, he could possibly form an alliance with a powerful family like the Hamiltons. This was simply the best option.

"Bullshit!" Edmund objected without hesitation and sneered. "There's always been an old saying, indulging one's enemy is asking for trouble. How can we accept others meddling in our territories?"

"If you really support the Hamiltons to expand their forces in our three states, how could they possibly be satisfied with sharing control together with us?"

“Even if the Hamiltons agree to your plan, after they establish firm footholds here, within three months, they’ll definitely encroach on our power little by little!”

“And you still want to achieve a win-win solution with them? Hah, the Hamiltons will only treat us as tools and a springboard to dominate our three states. They won’t allow us to share the same status as them. What are you dreaming of here?”

Bruce nodded. “Indeed, the Hamiltons are too domineering. It’s impossible to achieve a win-win situation with them. Therefore, we can’t allow them to have a place to stand firm from the start!”

Edmund and Bruce made some sense.

The Hamiltons were far stronger than these families to begin with. Once they really secured a footing in the three states, they would naturally establish their sole hegemony. The other families would either have to pledge allegiance or vanish from here. There wasn’t a third option.

Joel thought that he had come up with a brilliant idea and even despised Edmund and the rest over it, thinking that they were foolish. But now, he was criticized, so he snapped furiously, “Damn it! How do you know that the Hamiltons will really encroach on our power and annex us? Since you refuse to agree with my idea, does that mean, in your opinion, the only option we have is to go to war with the Hamiltons?”

“Hah, your plan is really courting death!”

Edmund said furiously, “Since you think we’re courting death, then get lost, lest you say that we’ll implicate you!”

“You!” Joel was furious, and it took him a great deal of effort to suppress his anger. Looking at Bruce, who was sitting in the middle, he said, “Mr. Hale, okay then, what do you think we should do?”

Bruce glanced at him before saying slowly but firmly, “Actually, I agree with Mr. Cole. We’ll be inviting danger into our territories by letting the Hamiltons establish footholds in our states. It will inevitably lead to disaster. I don’t care about what happens to Nevada and Arizona, but we can never let the Hamiltons set up a foothold here in California!”

Joel immediately looked gloomy.

Anthony sulked as well.

In fact, the two of them had come up with the idea of letting the Hamiltons set up footholds in the various states. They initially thought that the families of California would agree to it without hesitation, but they didn’t expect them to object outright.

Among the five helmsmen present, only Joel and Anthony supported the third option, while Edmund and Bruce decided to go to war with the Hamiltons if negotiations fell through. Ethan was the only one who hadn't expressed his stand yet.

"Hah, I thought that since the Coles and the Hales are the top families in California, you should be knowledgeable people. But I didn't expect you to be so stubborn as to think of going head-on against the Hamiltons. I won't court death with you!

"Since we can't come to a consensus, there's no need for us to stay here any longer. Mr. Cross, it seems we've come to the wrong place. Let's go! I refuse to believe that we can't find any allies in the three states!"

Joel and Anthony stood up and turned around to leave.

When Ethan saw this, he immediately stopped them anxiously. "Hey, wait! Please stay. There's still room for discussion!"