

The Man's Decree Chapter 41 (The Man like none Other chapter 41)

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"The two of you are just too much to pick on us, ordinary people, just because you've got wealth and power! Everyone, come and see this! The heiress of the Sullivan family is a bully!"

Sandy staunchly refused to wipe Kai's clothes for him, for she couldn't get over the contempt within her.

In the past, it had always been him pandering to her and being at her beck and call. For that reason, she couldn't accept the reality that she was to lower herself before him then.

Right that moment, she feigned weakness, hoping that the people around her would take pity on her and lend her a hand.

Slap!

While she was trying to seek help from the bystanders, Josephine stepped forward and struck her right across the face without the slightest bit of hesitation, stunning her to the core.

"That's enough nonsense from you! I said to wipe it off right this instant!"

Josephine asserted, her voice leaving no room for negotiation.

Sandy's hand flew to her face, and she glanced at the crowd around her. Alas, no one spoke up for her. That aside, some timid ones even left quickly, not daring to stay and watch the show any longer.

Left with no other choice, she could only take out a piece of tissue in the face of Josephine's icy expression. Then, she dragged her feet over to Kai and bent down to wipe the spit off his clothes.

Kai looked down at her with a smirk on his face. But when her hand was a second away from coming into contact with his suit, he dodged it.

Taken aback, Sandy looked up at him.

"I'm afraid that your hand will dirty my clothes."

After saying that, Kai wiped the spit off himself with a piece of tissue.

"How dare you?"

Sandy's chest heaved violently, yet she had no retort to that.

"Let's go!"

Taking Josephine's hand, Kai strode out of the mall.

As Sandy glowered at their backs, she was so livid that she shook with rage.

Gritting her teeth, she spat, "You b*stard, I'll never forgive you for this, Kai!"

Regretfully, Kai had long since exited the mall and could no longer hear her.

"You're rather feisty today! But it isn't quite appropriate with your identity as the heiress of the Sullivan family. Your reputation will be negatively affected if news of this gets out," Kai said to Josephine when they had left the mall.

"Ah, never mind that! I get mad whenever I see her!" Josephine clenched her jaw, her face still stained with a trace of wrath. In the next moment, she turned to the man. "Were you frightened by my demeanor?"

In response, Kai shook his head with a smile. "Nope! You're pretty appealing when you get up in arms."

"Since you like it, how about I do it to you every day?" Josephine inquired, a gleam of something glinting in her eyes.

"No, no..." Kai waved his hands frantically and immediately changed the subject,

asking, "Where exactly are you bringing me that you dressed me up so nicely?" "Mr. Grange is hosting a huge banquet at Glamor Hotel today. Many distinguished people in Horington will be in attendance, and I heard that it's exceedingly difficult to gain entry, for they don't even allow the guests to bring their families. Anyway, it's at my family's hotel, so I can bring you in without an invitation. Then, you can make the acquaintance of the eminent figures in the city!" Josephine admitted frankly without keeping him in suspense. Conversely, Kai was torn between laughing and crying after hearing that. Walter is hosting the banquet for my sake, yet she now wants to sneak me in. "Why are you laughing? I'm serious! Besides, Mr. Grange is purportedly hosting this banquet to introduce a friend of his to the big shots in Horington. Right now, everyone is speculating about that friend of his! And do you know how many people want to attend the banquet this time yet haven't the right or opportunity to do so? If the banquet weren't being held at Glamor Hotel, I wouldn't even have the chance to bring you in! Make sure that you seize this opportunity and make an impression!" Josephine exhorted. "Okay, I'll do my best!" Kai chuckled, not telling her the truth so that he could give her a surprise later. Unwittingly, he could also sense a shift in his feelings toward her. While neither of them said anything, they were both aware of the other's feelings since some things could be discerned tacitly.

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Yoel rushed to Horington Hospital and tossed a suit at Leyton, ordering, "Change and come with me!" "I'm recuperating, Dad! Where are you bringing me?" Leyton inquired with bemusement etched on his face. "To a banquet!" Yoel answered. "I don't want to go. My arm is broken, and I'm now recuperating. Why should I attend some banquet?" Leyton instantly lost interest after hearing that. He had attended quite a number of banquets, and they involved nothing more than feasting and drinking besides singing each other's praises. Furthermore, he would have to wear a suit that would keep him very much uncomfortable. Hence, he didn't feel like going. "Do you know who's hosting the banquet this time, you b*stard? It's Mr. Grange! Everyone who's someone in Horington is attending the banquet! As such, ensure that you make a good impression this time! I'll be handing the businesses of the Scott family to you in the future, and I don't want you to run them to the ground!" Yoel snarled, smacking him upside the head. The instant Leyton heard that Walter was hosting the banquet, he didn't dare utter a single word of protest anymore. He hastily changed, but he couldn't manage with a broken arm. "Where is your girlfriend? Where did she go instead of taking care of you here? Call her over and have her help you out! I want to see you at Glamor Hotel at eleven o'clock later. Don't be late! I've still got something else to do, so until

later!”

Yoel left as soon as he had finished speaking.

Glancing at the time, Leyton didn't dare tarry anymore. He gave Sandy a call and ordered her over right away.

At half-past ten in the morning, the entrance of Glamor Hotel was already cluttered with luxurious cars. All the prominent figures from the political and business circles had arrived early, long before the banquet would begin.

They all greeted each other and exchanged pleasantries before entering the hotel with their invitations in hand, one after another.

However, their accompanying family members could only wait outside the hotel. Walter only invited the head of each family and the leader of each department to the banquet this time because he wanted to reduce the number of attendees. He was afraid that Kai would be annoyed if there were too many people and it became too noisy.

Leyton, too, came with an arm in a cast while Sandy supported him at his side.

When Sandy saw the countless big cheeses there, her excitement was so great that her heart almost pounded out of her chest.

“Stand here and be on your best behavior! Don't cause any trouble for me as the attendees this time are no ordinary people!” Yoel cautioned Leyton.

“Am I not going in, Dad?”

Bewilderment was written all over Leyton's face. Huh? He asked me to come here, yet he's not allowing me to go in?

“Of course not! Only the heads of each family or leaders of different ranks are invited to the banquet this time! What right do you have to enter?” Yoel snapped, glaring at him.

At once, disgruntlement swamped Leyton. “Why did you call me here if I can't enter? I'm going to burn to a crisp outside!”

Hearing that, Yoel was tempted to kick his idiotic son hard.

Plenty of people are waiting outside. Is he saying that they're all fools? This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity! Making acquaintances can only be beneficial to the development of one's company. Alas, all he knows to do are eat, drink, and play! He never considers anything else!

“Mark my words that I'm going to cut off your allowance for half a year if I don't see you when I come out!” he threatened, afraid that his son would take off at a whim.

As soon as Leyton heard that his allowance for half a year was at stake, he shuddered in fright and nodded fervently. “I won't be going anywhere! I'll be waiting right here!”

Finally, Yoel entered the hotel with peace of mind, leaving Leyton and Sandy to bake in the sun at the entrance.

Right then, Kai and Josephine arrived as well.

“Wait for me here. I'll go and make arrangements for us to sneak in through the back entrance,” Josephine said to Kai after alighting from the car.

Kai nodded in acquiescence.

Josephine then left to make the arrangements while Kai stood there and waited around. Everyone there was from the upper echelons of society, so he didn't know any of them. As such, he could only fiddle with his phone.

Having sharp eyesight, Sandy spotted Kai at once. When she noticed him scrolling through his phone with no one paying him the slightest mind, a sneer immediately bloomed on her face.

“Ley, isn't that Kai? How's someone like him worthy of attending the banquet?” she whispered to Leyton.

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Leyton cast his gaze over when he heard Sandy's remark, only to see that it was indeed Kai. His eyes glinted coldly, and he strutted over.

Seeing that, Sandy hurriedly trailed after him, glowering at Kai with resentment burning hotly in her eyes. The incident at the mall earlier remained vivid in her mind.

"Do you think you're worthy of being here, Kai? Are you aware of the statuses of the people here today? Do you think you're an elite just because you've put on new clothes?" Leyton regarded Kai with an air of arrogance.

On the contrary, Kai merely threw him a chilly look before ignoring him altogether.

"Where's your domineering demeanor back when you were at the mall earlier, Kai? And where's your beautiful Ms. Sullivan? Why didn't she bring you in? Could it be that even she couldn't get in? Pah!" Sandy again spat at Kai, convinced that he wouldn't dare order her to wipe it off with Leyton there this time.

At that, Kai's face went glacial. "Mark my words. You'll be licking it off like a dog later!"

"Haha!" Laughing uproariously, Sandy spat at him again. "Who do you think you are that I'll be licking it off you? You're just an ex-convict! What's so great about you?"

Then, she raised her voice and hollered, "Everyone, look here! An ex-convict is all dressed up to attend the banquet! He doesn't even know his place!"

Her shout attracted many people who all gathered to watch the show.

Nevertheless, Kai remained indifferent as he watched her incessant acting.

"Who's that, Leyton? He doesn't seem familiar," a young man about Leyton's age asked out of the blue.

After all, everyone who came was people of high standing in Horington or their family members. Therefore, they were either acquainted or had seen each other in passing.

Kai, however, appeared exceedingly unfamiliar and didn't seem to be someone from the elite classes. For that reason, someone asked Leyton about him out of curiosity.

"Oh, him? He's my girlfriend's ex-boyfriend. He was her lapdog for three years but didn't even get to hold her hand. Later, I put him in prison, and he was there for three years. He was just released two days ago," Leyton explained with a derisive expression.

Following his words, everyone around them threw contemptuous looks at Kai since people of high statuses like them were loath to be anywhere near an ex-convict like him.

Everyone promptly shied far away and started whispering about the man. Despite that, Kai remained calm and unruffled as though he couldn't hear anything.

"You've really gotten shameless after your time in prison, Kai! Do you still have the nerve to stay now that things have come to this?" Sandy derided with a layer of frost on her face when she saw that the man wasn't at all bothered.

"Kai!" At that precise moment, Josephine was done making the arrangements

and returned.

The second she caught sight of Sandy and Leyton, she instantly frowned. "What are the two of you doing here?"

"We're naturally here to attend the banquet!" Sandy proclaimed proudly.

She wasn't afraid of Josephine with Leyton by her side, backing her up.

Pfft! Josephine burst out laughing upon hearing that. "Attend the banquet? Why are the two of you still standing here, then? Is it because you don't have an invitation and couldn't even get past the door?"

Sandy opened her mouth, but no words came out because they indeed hadn't an invitation and couldn't enter.

At the look on her face, Josephine's lips curved upward. Taking Kai's hand, she declared, "Come, let's go in!"

When Sandy saw that they were going in, she was promptly startled. "Do you two have an invitation?"

"I'm not telling you that!" Josephine retorted with a smug smile.

Sandy felt as though she was on the verge of bursting a blood vessel. But when she noticed them heading toward the back entrance, realization dawned upon her at once. "Ley, they're planning to sneak in via the back entrance! They don't have an invitation either!"

Leyton had also worked that out, so he swiftly stepped forward and blocked their path. "How could you two sneak in the back entrance when you don't have an invitation? I'm going to expose you both!"

"Are you dumb, Leyton? Glamor Hotel is my family's property, so I can enter from wherever I want! What can you do even if I want to jump in through the window?"

Josephine questioned as she eyed him as though he was an idiot.

At once, Leyton was left without a single retort.

"Keep a close eye on them. Kick them out if they dare sneak in from the back entrance!" Josephine ordered the few security guards.

"Understood, Ms. Sullivan!"

The bodyguards immediately trained their gazes on Sandy and Leyton.

Meanwhile, Josephine entered the hotel from the back entrance while dragging Kai along. As Leyton and Sandy stared at the couple's backs, intense fury brewed within them.

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After going into the hotel, Kai texted Tommy and told him to give Yoel the boot. He didn't want to dine with the latter, nor did he want the Scott family to know about his identity. In truth, he wanted to see how much longer Leyton and Sandy could provoke him.

In the hotel, everyone surrounded Walter with deferential expressions on their faces.

Some of them were even aware of his penchant for collecting antiques, so they had searched high and low for rare antiques as a gift for him that day.

Beside Walter was a burly middle-aged man with a grim expression who was vigilant at all times. That was his personal bodyguard, Luca Turner. Luca was a retired member of the Dragon Squadron and once protected Walter when the

latter was still holding office. When the man stepped down, he did the same and continued guarding him ever since.

Walter would bring Luca along for security purposes every time he attended a public event.

"Ladies and gentlemen, I have some rules at this banquet of mine today. Firstly, I'm not accepting any gifts. Secondly, I'm not going to discuss business. I merely want to introduce a new friend to all of you, so please make yourselves at home," Walter declared loudly after waving a hand to shush the crowd.

Many people had actually heard about this even before coming, but they were still inexorably surprised when they again heard it from the man himself. They wondered about the impressive background of the person he was going to introduce since he wouldn't be making such a fanfare otherwise.

"Why isn't Mr. Chance here yet?" Walter asked Tommy beside him after glancing at the time.

"He'll probably be arriving soon." Tommy hadn't any idea why Kai wasn't there yet when they had hammered out the details the day before.

No sooner had his words fallen than his phone buzzed. When he saw that it was a message from Kai, he showed it to Walter.

After scanning through it, Walter nodded lightly. "No wonder he hasn't made an appearance yet. It turns out that there's such a reason behind it. It was my oversight."

Upon saying that, he cast his gaze at Yoel in the near distance. Right that moment, Yoel was also anticipating the appearance of the young man Walter spoke of. Someone whom Walter Grange attaches such importance on is definitely no ordinary person! If I get an in with such a person, the Scott family might be able to surpass the Sullivan family!

While he was thinking along those lines, he noticed Walter looking at him before he started, "Mr. Scott..."

As soon as Yoel heard that, he hastily rushed forward. "Mr. Grange... Is there anything I can do for you?"

"You're not allowed to attend the banquet today, so please go back."

Walter ordered him to leave right in front of all the guests there.

Hearing that, Yoel was stunned, and he gaped at the man in disbelief. "Mr. Grange, I—"

Without even waiting for him to finish speaking, Walter waved a hand. "Someone, escort him out!"

While Yoel was very much confounded, he couldn't shamelessly stay there, so he had no choice but to whirl around and leave.

Following that, everyone wondered whether the Scott family had offended Walter.

By then, Josephine had already sneaked in with Kai. The two of them were watching secretly in a corner.

"Let's hide first. We'll go out when the banquet begins in a while. Then, we won't get caught so easily," Josephine murmured as she surreptitiously poked her head out.

"Why should we hide? Since we're here, let's just go out openly!"

Right after saying that, Kai walked straight out.

Stricken, Josephine quickly stepped forward to pull him back. Alas, all she grasped was empty air.

"Mr. Chance is here!" Tommy exclaimed in exhilaration when he spotted Kai.

Upon hearing that, Walter raised his eyes. The instant he caught sight of Kai, delight showed on his face, and he strode toward the younger man.

Among the crowd, William broke out in a cold sweat when he saw Kai making an appearance and Walter heading straight for the man.

Crap! I was the one who told Josephine to sneak him in, so I'm dead if Mr. Grange finds out about it!

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William promptly rushed to the front while throwing looks at Kai, signaling him to leave posthaste. He blocked Walter's path and fibbed, "Mr. Grange, that's a server at the hotel, and he's probably taken a wrong turn and came here instead." Right then, Josephine had also caught up to Kai. She dragged him away while muttering, "Just how inattentive were you that you didn't even watch where you were going and ended up here instead?"

"Wait a moment!" Walter called her back at once.

Halting in her tracks, Josephine dropped her hold on Kai.

"I apologize for my mismanagement that a server barged in, Mr. Grange. I'll be sure to give you an explanation later."

William was sweating bullets, afraid that Walter would fly into a rage.

Unexpectedly, Walter was taken aback. "Are you saying that Mr. Chance is an employee of your family?"

"Yes!" William nodded in affirmation, but in the next second, he froze. "M-Mr. Chance?"

Huh? How does he know that Kai's family name is Chance? And he's even addressing him as "Mr.?"

"Yes, that's right. The guest of honor of my banquet this time is Mr. Chance. All the other guests are just here for the company," Walter explained with a nod. This time, William and Josephine were stumped and couldn't make sense of the entire situation.

"I hope I'm not late, Mr. Grange?" Kai inquired with a smile as he took two steps forward.

"You're right on time, Mr. Chance. And this is?" Walter queried, pointing at Josephine.

"This is my daughter, Mr. Grange. She's friends with Mr. Chance."

William was indeed a veteran in the business field, for he gathered his wits about him in no time.

When Walter heard that, he chuckled. "They're simply a match made in heaven, one handsome and the other beautiful!"

Following that, all the other guests complimented Kai and Josephine on their compatibility.

That had Josephine flushing bright red, and she didn't even dare lift her head.

"Do be seated, Mr. Chance. We've been waiting for you!"

Tommy stepped forward and made a sweeping gesture at Kai.

Kai didn't dither either but walked straight toward the main seat. The crowd gathered around him, for despite having no idea who he was, they knew that he would undoubtedly be an influential person in Horington in the future.

Not only was he greatly respected by both Walter and Tommy, but he was also the son-in-law of the Sullivan family, the wealthiest family in the city. As such, none of them dared to offend him.

After exchanging a glance, William and Josephine followed as well. When Kai had taken his seat, Walter sat beside him. The other side of him was empty, for no one dared to sit there.

"This seat is reserved for you, Ms. Sullivan. You two should sit together since you're a couple."

All smiles, Walter beckoned at Josephine.

With her face bright red, Josephine shyly sat down beside Kai. The seat a step down from hers was given to William. It should have been Tommy's seat, but if Kai and Josephine were in a relationship, William would then be the former's father-in-law. Thus, Tommy wouldn't dare sit above him.

When everyone was seated, Walter lifted a glass of wine and said to Kai, "I'll toast you first, Mr. Chance!"

He knew that he didn't need to bother about anything else after doing so since not a single person there was a fool. Thus, they would naturally know what they should do.

"You flatter me, Mr. Grange!"

Picking up his wine glass, Kai downed it in one go.

Right as he put his wine glass down, shock deluged Walter, for he had glimpsed the spit on the man's brand-new suit.

"What happened to your suit, Mr. Chance?" he exclaimed, pointing at the saliva stain on Kai's suit.

"Ah, some uncivilized person spat at me twice when I was outside earlier," Kai replied mildly.

"Who was so bold to spit on you, Mr. Chance?"

Walter's expression darkened, and he swept his gaze over all the guests there. It was no secret that the people outside were family members and the like brought by those seated there. That was why he turned his gaze on them.

All at once, everyone's heart leaped to their throats, and they fervently prayed that it wasn't the doing of their family members.

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"It was the doing of the girlfriend of the heir of the Scott family, Leyton Scott. She used to be Mr. Chance's girlfriend, but she now feels that she's superior after hooking up with the Scott family. Hence, she spat on him several times,"

Josephine chimed in.

"The Scott family? How bold of them! I'm going to summon Yoel here and question him right this instance!" Walter snarled, slammed his hand onto the table as a frown marred his countenance.

Ah, I now know why he texted to have Yoel kicked out! It turns out that he has such a grudge with the Scott family!

Realization immediately dawned upon everyone there, and they knew that the Scott family was going down. It looked like they had to quickly cut off all business ties with the Scott family!

"There's no need to be so angry, Mr. Grange. I can resolve such a trifling matter by myself!"

Kai flashed him a faint smile, not at all bothered about the matter.

In that moment, Leyton and Sandy were merely ants in his eyes. Outside the hotel, the scorching sunlight irritated Leyton greatly.

"Have some water, Ley!"

Sandy handed Leyton a bottle of water.

Taking a huge gulp of water, Leyton dabbed at the sweat beading on his forehead while softly griping, "Why are we waiting here when we can't go in? This is insanity!"

Despite his grumbles, he didn't dare leave as he really feared that his father would cut off his allowance for half a year.

Just as he was having a drink of water, he suddenly saw his father walking out of the hotel.

Elation suffused him, and he hastily exclaimed, "My father is coming out, and I'm sure he's here to inform us that we can go in!"

With Sandy in tow, he rushed up to Yoel.

"Why did you come out, Dad? Was it to tell us that we can go in now?" Leyton asked in excitement.

"Keep on dreaming! Even I've been kicked out!" Yoel huffed.

Leyton was startled for a moment before he demanded, "What happened, Dad? Why were you kicked out?"

"How am I to know that? Anyway, let's leave instead of making a fool of ourselves here!"

Yoel had come in high spirits, but he could only return with his tail tucked between his legs then. Leyton and Sandy, on the other hand, didn't even get to take a step in the door at all.

The banquet had already begun. About two hours later, it drew to an end.

Everyone's faces were flushed bright red, and they all conversed among themselves in high spirits.

"When did you make Mr. Grange's acquaintance, Kai? What's more, he's so polite to you! And you didn't even tell me that you're the guest of honor of the banquet this time!" Josephine grumbled in chagrin. She had pulled Kai aside when she saw her opportunity at long last.

"You didn't say that you were bringing me to attend a banquet when you dragged me away in a hurry back then. When I later learned about it, I planned to give you a surprise!" Kai explained, grinning from ear to ear.

"Your surprise is really too much! I just about had a heart attack from the fright back then! You're simply too mean! In the future, you're not allowed to keep any secrets from me!"

Josephine thumped his chest, but she didn't put much strength into it. In fact, it was no different from a display of affection between lovers.

Unexpectedly, Kai grabbed her hand, and they both locked gazes.

Neither said anything nor communicated in any way save the interchange of their gazes.

Kai gradually leaned closer to Josephine. Josephine wanted to dodge, but she didn't move as conflict brewed within her.

Seeing that the man's lips were mere inches away from her, she closed her eyes and waited for the kiss to arrive.

"There's a smudge on your face," Kai murmured out of the blue when she was anxiously waiting.

Josephine opened her eyes, only to see him regarding her with a devilish smirk on his face.

"Ugh! You're so mean! I'm not talking to you anymore!"

Smacking him hard on the chest, she ran off with a blush staining her face.

When William saw that, a faint smile bloomed on his face, and he headed toward Kai.

"Do you have any plans for your future, Mr. Chance? Are you interested in

establishing your own company?" he asked the younger man.

Kai shook his head at once. "Nope."

All I want to do right now is to train and improve as soon as possible! As for establishing a company and doing business, I really have no interest in that, nor am I suited for that!

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"Huh?" William was momentarily stunned by Kai's negative reply that came so swiftly, but in the next instant, he remarked smilingly, "That's fine. While Josephine is a girl, she's very skilled at running a company and doing business, so she can handle it alone!"

The man then left after saying that.

As Kai gazed at his back, a wry smile manifested on his face since he could understand William's concern.

Josephine is his only daughter, so she'll be inhering the family business in the future. If I were to truly end up with his daughter, someone would need to bear the heavy burden. Alas, I really don't have much of an interest in business! Soon, everyone had had their fill and bid each other farewell in preparation for leaving.

But at that precise moment, the door of the banquet hall was pushed open, and dozens of men rushed in with weapons in their hands. The man in the lead appeared savage and radiated a faint aura, so one could tell that he was a martial artist at a single glance.

At the sight of the people who abruptly barged in, shock swept over all the guests there. In a trice, Walter's expression turned chilly. Beside him, Luca instantly whipped out a half-foot-long machete from his waistbelt and stood before Walter.

"Security! Where's security?" William shouted at the top of his lungs when he saw the men charging in.

Alas, not a single security guard appeared.

"Save it, Mr. Sullivan. None of your security guards will be coming in," the man in the lead stated coldly.

"Why did you suddenly barge in with so many men, Steven? Do you know that this banquet is hosted by Mr. Grange?" William chided loudly.

It turned out that the men were from the Crimson Dragon Gang, and the person in the lead was the gang leader, Steven Fisher.

Steven strode over to Walter and bowed low, murmuring, "I don't mean to intrude, Mr. Grange. I'm just here to look for Tommy!"

By then, Tommy's hands had long since clenched into fists. From the second Steven stepped in the door, he knew that the man was there for him.

The Templar Regiment and the Crimson Dragon Gang were mortal rivals. The two of them were likewise sworn enemies, but neither could do anything to the other for the time being.

Usually, Tommy brought a large number of men along whenever he attended an event. Unfortunately, he was a tad careless in attending Walter's banquet this time, for he didn't bring anyone with him. There was another reason for that—he

wasn't worried since Kai would be there.

He must have caught wind of it somehow, so he rushed over with his men. As long as he kills me, the Templar Regiment would be left without a leader and end up being annexed by the Crimson Dragon Gang in no time!

"I don't care about that! How dare you barge into my banquet?" Walter barked, his expression icy.

"As I said, Mr. Grange, I'm only here to settle the score with Tommy! I had no choice but to break in!" Steven replied respectfully.

"Nonsense!" Walter slammed his hand onto the table without warning. "Are you going against me?"

"I don't wish to do so, Mr. Grange. However, I also don't want to allow Tommy any chance of escaping as this is a rare opportunity. Besides, the fact that you only invited him to such an important banquet without extending me the invitation makes it clear that you look down upon the Crimson Dragon Gang," Steven countered in a tone that was neither servile nor overbearing.

It was plain as day that he was resentful that Walter hadn't invited him.

On the other hand, Walter didn't invite the man because the enmity between him and Tommy ran too deep, so much so that his appearance would pose a problem.

"Steven, don't tell me—"

His face flushed bright red with rage when he saw that Steven wasn't giving him any quarter.

But before he could finish speaking, Tommy stepped forward. "It's my problem, so I'll handle it by myself. Since you're here for me, let's have a duel!"

After saying that, he dropped into a fighting stance, ready to face Steven's attack anytime.

"I laud your guts! In that case, I'll kill you today before taking over your Templar Regiment!"

While saying that, Steven charged at Tommy.

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"What insolence!"

Walter slammed his hand on the table as he went through the roof.

All the guests present were terror-stricken at his wrath. Beside him, Luca leaped up and landed squarely before Tommy when he saw Walter going off the deep end.

"You're courting death to challenge even Mr. Grange, Steven!"

Sheer menace radiated off Luca, and his bones popped audibly.

Halting in his attack, Steven eyed the man with a frown. "You might not necessarily be able to defeat me if we were to battle it out today. Furthermore, I have dozens of lackeys with me!"

"Hmph! We'll only know about that after giving it a try!"

Snorting, Luca dropped into a fighting stance right away.

"I initially didn't want to make an enemy out of you, Mr. Grange, but you keep forcing my hand. Let me tell you that the Crimson Dragon Gang is no easy prey either! If worse comes to worst, we'll all fight to the death! If that happens, no one will be leaving this place alive!"

Steven's eyes glinted coldly, seemingly long since prepared to go as far as risking his life.

Walter's face was bright red, and he shook with rage. No one in Horington has ever dared to go against me, but today, he humiliated me thoroughly! Nonetheless, he was caught in a dilemma at the sight of the dozens of men who exuded murder behind Steven. He came prepared, so it'd be really tricky if things were to come to a head.

"Let me end things with Steven today, Mr. Grange. You don't need to intervene in this matter."

Tommy naturally discerned the man's hesitance. With that said, he made the first move and attacked Steven.

He punched his fist forward with a whizzing sound as it cut through the air. The speed was lightning fast, and its force was the maximum he could manage. After all, he knew that he couldn't show the slightest reservation when he dueled with Steven.

When Steven saw him attacking, a sneer showed on his face. He made no move to dodge but faced the man's blow head-on.

Bang!

Tommy's fist struck Steven's chest hard. The forceful recoil had the former stumbling back three steps, but the latter remained rooted to the spot without even a single scratch on him.

Tommy's face paled, and he stared at Steven with trepidation in his eyes. His capabilities actually grew again!

"Haha... Tommy, your punch was nothing more than a tickle! Don't stop. Go on and hit me!"

Steven threw his head back and roared with laughter, not taking the other man seriously at all.

Tommy was a formidable figure, so he couldn't possibly withstand Steven's public insult and challenge.

With a bellow, he again charged at Steven, but he snagged a wooden chair this time.

Smash!

The chair came down on the man hard and instantly splintered into smithereens, yet he remained standing there without moving an inch.

"I've already mastered the Impenetrable Skill, so you can't injure me. Now, it's my turn!"

No sooner had Steven finished speaking than he swung his leg out at Tommy. Having no time to dodge, Tommy was sent flying by that kick. He coughed up blood and collapsed onto the ground, his face contorting from the excruciating pain.

When Kai saw his condition, he frowned and wanted to get to his feet, but Josephine stopped him from doing so. "Don't be a hero! He seems to be exceedingly skilled, so you might not be his match!"

She was worried that he couldn't defeat Steven and would end up injured instead. She was still unaware of the relationship between Kai and Tommy, thus having no idea that the former wouldn't sit idly by no matter how powerful Steven was.

Before Kai could act, Walter ordered, "Teach him a lesson, Luca!"

Nodding, Luca balled his fists and lunged at Steven.

In the face of the man's attack, Steven wasn't as relaxed anymore, nor did he dare stand there and allow the blow to land on him.

After all, Luca's punch was far more superior than Tommy's in terms of both force and speed. In fact, it had already reached its ultimate extent.

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Shifting sideways, Steven dodged Luca's blow. After having done so, he didn't make a move but cast his gaze at Walter and asserted, "As I said, I don't want to make an enemy out of you, Mr. Grange. Are you really going to force my hand?" Walter's expression was grim, and he didn't say a single word.

Luca, on the other hand, felt humiliated that Steven managed to dodge his blow effortlessly. His temper spiked, and he thundered, "Stop yakking! Here I come!" Pulling back his fist, he swung it right at Steven. If that blow found its target, the man's head would likely explode on the spot.

Steven's gaze narrowed, and fury reddened his face. "Since you insist, I'm not going to pull my punches anymore!" he spat.

After saying that, he reached out and grabbed Luca's wrist before throwing a left uppercut at the man.

Shocked, Luca jerked his head to the side and kicked his leg out to force the man back.

To his surprise, Steven didn't dodge but allowed the kick to land squarely on his chest. However, the forceful recoil sent Luca flying instead.

It took considerable effort before he finally regained his footing. Upon noticing the astonished expressions of the people around him, he instantly roared, "One of us must die today, Steven!"

While saying that, he charged at Steven once more.

"Stop!" As he was streaking toward the man, a figure abruptly appeared in front of him and brought him up short.

"You're not his match, so it's pointless to continue fighting him. I'll fight him instead," Kai stated, blocking Luca's path.

A wave of mortification inundated him, and Luca snapped, "Step aside! You'll probably die from a single punch, considering your physique!"

At that moment, he had lost all sanity, which was why he dared speak to the man so impudently, forgetting that Kai was someone even Walter revered.

That said, he had never witnessed Kai's capabilities, so he hadn't much respect for him in truth. He merely treated him politely because of Walter.

One's capability in martial arts increases by natural progression in time. He's just a snot-nosed kid in his early twenties, so how skilled could he be even if he had started training while still in his mother's womb?

"Shut up! How dare you insult Mr. Chance, you b*stard?" Walter lambasted when he heard Luca's insolent remark toward Kai.

He seldom reprimanded Luca and had never regarded him as someone inferior to himself, but he didn't dare allow the latter to act so audaciously when he dared to speak to Kai in such a manner.

Luca went silent, but there wasn't much respect for Kai in his eyes. He feared Walter, but not Kai.

At that exact moment, Josephine rushed up and tugged at Kai, urging, "Don't be a hero! Didn't you see that even Tommy and Luca weren't his match? You're just a medical practitioner, so don't poke your nose into this matter!"

She presumed that he was only well-versed in medicine and wasn't good at anything else.

"I should showcase my capabilities since there's such a fitting occasion today. Otherwise, how am I going to be worthy of an heiress like you when I'm a pauper?"

The second Josephine heard that, a shy look appeared on her face. This is the first time he's ever uttered such a remark in public! Isn't this tantamount to a confession?

"I don't care about that! I just don't want you to take any risks!"

She clutched at his arm so that he couldn't make a move.

"Hurry up and step aside! You might get caught in the crossfire, so this isn't the time for you to be a hero!" Luca growled with a disdainful expression when he heard that Kai was stepping forward to flaunt his capabilities.

After saying that, he leaped up again and lunged at Steven.

"Oh well. I already told you that you're not his match, but you just want to go and get yourself beaten up! What an idiot!"

Kai shook his head in exasperation.

"Stop commenting! Come, let's go back quickly!"

Josephine proceeded to drag him back to their seats.

This time, Luca had just reached Steven after leaping into the air when he was kicked in the chest squarely by the man. Blood trickled out the corner of his mouth.

At that sight, Walter and the others were all stunned to the core.

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Luca could feel his face burning hotly. He distinctly sensed that Steven had held back when the latter kicked him. But as Walter's bodyguard, he was beyond mortified, especially when a crowd was watching. Right then, he would rather be beaten to death than admit defeat.

After all, martial artists regarded their dignity as of far greater import than their lives. If I were to admit defeat today, my reputation would be thereby tarnished! Not only will I be unable to survive in this circle in the future, but Walter will also probably terminate my services!

"You don't have to hold back, Steven. I don't mind dying today, but I can't lose!"

As soon as he finished speaking, his face turned bright red, and his body started swelling.

"Storm Fist!"

Following that bellow, his body seemingly deflated in the blink of an eye and returned to normal. However, his body flew out like a cannonball.

Steven frowned and snapped, "It looks like you're not going to give up unless I use my ultimate technique!"

He crouched slightly, upon which the marble floor under his feet promptly cracked, and his clothes billowed though there was no wind.

"Here I come!"

Luca's eyes started turning scarlet, and he struck the man hard.

Boom!

The earth-splitting sound sounded just like thunder, causing everyone to cover their ears at once.

Steven remained unmoved, his body as still as a statue. In other words, the blow hadn't hurt him in the slightest.

Luca was nonplussed, but his fists then started raining down on the man in the next moment.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

"That's about enough!" Right after saying that, Steven threw his fist out.

The two men's fists collided. Luca flew out, slamming heavily on the ground, unable to get to his feet for some time.

"What?"

At that turn of events, everyone was staggered. Even Walter was so shocked that his jaw dropped.

A shudder went through Tommy, for he didn't expect Steven to have grown so much stronger. Trembling inwardly, he surreptitiously fixated his gaze on Kai.

Right now, he's probably the only person who can defeat Steven!

Luca, who was on the ground, struggled to get up. Alas, he failed even after trying twice.

"F-From whom did you learn your Impenetrable Skill?" Luca asked in utter shock.

"Francis Yancey. Do you know of him?" Steven replied as he straightened to his full height.

When that name rang out, Luca's expression changed drastically, and he appeared very much fearful. Tommy, on the other hand, shook like a leaf.

It was clear as day that they both knew of that man, and the person was exceedingly powerful.

The others, however, hadn't much of a reaction, making it abundantly clear that they were unfamiliar with that name.

"W-Who is Mr. Yancey to you?" Luca inquired.

"He's my mentor. I learned the Impenetrable Skill from him."

When Steven's answer drifted into Luca's ears, he became morose. Sighing, he shook his head and remarked, "No wonder I'm not your match. It turns out that you've gotten Mr. Yancey to be your mentor. I admit defeat."

The man surprisingly admitted defeat. He initially wanted to fight to the death, but he yielded after hearing Francis' name.

Kai's brows furrowed slightly, and he turned to Tommy. "Who's this Francis Yancey?"

"He's an expert in ancient martial arts and possesses great internal energy. No one knows his true capability, but rumor has it that he can injure someone with a mere leaf!"

When Tommy spoke of Francis, fear lingered within him.

"Injure someone with a mere leaf?" Kai chuckled softly. "Like this?"

As he said that, he picked up a toothpick. With a flick of his finger, it shot right at Steven.

Steven hadn't even the time to react when the toothpick penetrated his arm with only a tiny bit sticking out.