

Chapter 2948 Something Hidden

The central seat and flanking chairs remained unoccupied, a testament to Isambard's thorough planning. Not only had he briefed the hotel staff in advance, but he'd also provided them with a photo of Matthew, along with clear instructions to alert him upon the prince's arrival.

The hotel manager, familiar with Matthew's renown due to his elixir's popularity in Seraphis, promptly recognized him from television appearances. Thus, he wasted no time in contacting Isambard upon spotting Matthew.

This explained the vacant seats that met Matthew's gaze, evoking a wry smile. Isambard had orchestrated everything meticulously.

Yet, alongside his acknowledgment, a tinge of curiosity stirred within Matthew. What was the purpose of this dinner invitation, and what awaited them as the surprise?

Seated at the table, Matthew and his companions watched as Isambard poured wine for them with a warm smile, surprising the Stubbers with his uncharacteristic deference towards the young man.

The sight left them astonished; accustomed to Isambard's demeanor, they found it unexpected to witness such a display of servility towards someone of Matthew's youth. While such respect might be customary for an elder, it seemed out of place for a young man like Matthew.

"Delighted to have you here, Young Master Larson. Your presence elevates this meal to a new level. Allow me to offer the first toast to you!" Isambard raised his glass, draining it in one swift motion, then smiled warmly.

Matthew remained composed, remembering the importance of courtesy in all situations. He lifted his cup, matching Isambard's gesture by finishing his wine in a single gulp.

With their glasses emptied, Isambard's demeanor shifted. "I heard you're here for the Martial League?" Matthew detected a subtle change in tone, sparking a hint of suspicion about the purpose of this dinner.

However, he maintained his calm exterior, masking any unease. "Indeed, I'm here for the Martial League," he affirmed, keeping his tone casual.

Isambard's smile widened as he gestured towards a young man seated at the table, a member of the Stubbers. This young man exuded confidence with his keen gaze and strong presence, standing tall and unwavering.

"Meet my nephew, back from studying abroad, Boston Stubber! He's got some martial arts know-how! When I heard about your plans for the Martial League in Seraphis, I knew I had to introduce him to you!"

Isambard shot a pointed look at Boston. "Come on, raise your glass and toast to Young Master Larson."

Boston stepped forward eagerly. "I'm Boston. Count me in for the Martial League. I'll serve Young Master Larson with all I've got!"

Matthew's initial surprise faded into a cold demeanor. He wasn't naive enough to believe Isambard's intentions were purely helpful in gathering talent for the league.

It was evident that Boston was a pawn Isambard intended to place within the Martial League.

The crown prince bristled with irritation, but Matthew intervened before any outburst could occur.

Observing their scheme, Matthew merely offered a faint smile and raised his wine glass.

"Excellent! The league could certainly use someone like you."

Boston's face brightened with joy at Isambard's words.

Isambard's eyes betrayed a glimmer of surprise.

While Matthew was occupied with his drink, Isambard discreetly signaled a member of the Stubber Family across the room.

Observing this, the individual feigned a need to use the restroom and excused himself.

Matthew sensed a shift in the atmosphere but was interrupted as Isambard approached once more.

"Young Master Larson, my granddaughter was oblivious to your status and inadvertently caused offense. Today, I've brought her here to offer a sincere apology."