

## RISING FROM THE ASHES (ANDREW AND LAUREN)

### Chapter 1507

Axel's face had gone pale, his voice rising in anger. "I warned them repeatedly not to enter the mountains after dark, but they didn't listen. And now look what's

happened."

The Patoajo warrior, Buzz, spoke in a deep, rumbling tone. "Chief Flintspire, we found the bodies right outside the forbidden zone. I think those city folks may have entered the sacred area."

His voice grew quieter with each word as if even speaking of it filled him with fear. By the end, he was barely audible, and he cast a wary, guarded glance at Andrew and the others, suspicion clear in his eyes.

The moment the word "forbidden" was mentioned, Axel visibly flinched. His whole body tensed with dread. He muttered, "This is bad. Really bad. Buzz, take our best warriors and head into the mountain immediately.

"If you find that group, bring them out by force if necessary. We cannot allow these reckless outsiders to disturb the resting souls of our ancestors."

Buzz hesitated, eyes darting anxiously. "Chief Flintspire, the sun's gone. It's pitch black now. If those people really did enter the forbidden grounds... Our men won't go. Not at night. Even if we made it there now, there's no telling if anyone's still alive."

Axel started pacing in frustration, his expression dark and stormy.

Andrew and Tiana exchanged a look. They were just about to speak when Ralph suddenly stepped forward.

The ex-special forces soldier puffed out his chest and said with contempt, "Seriously? You Patoajo warriors sure get scared easily. Where's this so-called forbidden ground? Just point the way. Whatever bogeymen you've got in there, I'll take care of them."

Axel stared at him, clearly unsettled. "Sir, I wouldn't joke about this. The forest is already dangerous enough at night, but our village's sacred ground is a death trap. I strongly advise against such recklessness."

Ralph planted his hands on his hips, looking eager for action. "If there's no danger, then there's no point in exploring it. Lead the way to mysterious sacred grounds.

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about."

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Then, he turned to Chantelle, his face lit with pride. "Ms. Garcia, leave this to me. Nighttime mountain treks? That's light work for a survival expert like me."

Chantelle frowned. "Mr. Sutton, are you absolutely sure about this?"

With a dramatic flair, Ralph drew a curved blade from his hip and licked the edge with his tongue. "This baby has drawn real blood. Even if a bear shows up, I'll gut it clean. Besides, I'm fully loaded-armed and ready."

He proceeded to show off his grenades, night vision goggles, and sidearm, all strapped around his belt like a walking armory. Then, he swept his gaze across the group, wearing a smug grin.

"Remember this-fear only exists when you're under-armed. With enough firepower? Hell, anyone would drop to his knees and beg for mercy!"

However, Axel still looked deeply troubled. He shook his head and said, "Sir, conventional weapons won't help you in the sacred ground."

Ralph sneered. "Unless your sacred ground is crawling with literal ghosts, I guarantee one high-explosive grenade will turn whatever's in there into ash."

He burst into loud, conceited laughter-only to realize none of the village warriors were laughing with him. In fact, they were all staring at him like he was an absolute idiot.

Buzz, the warrior captain, stepped forward and saluted Axel. "Chief Flintspire. I take a team into the mountains. But we're only going as far as the perimeter. If you want to go deeper... I'm sorry, Chief. won't let my men risk their lives like that." Cóntent

Axel nodded solemnly. "Understood, Buzz. But you must be cautious."