

Rising from the Ashes (Andrew and Lauren) #Chapter 1661 - Read Rising from the Ashes (Andrew and Lauren) Chapter 1661

Just like that, three days had passed.

Andrew turned down everyone's offer to come with him. He only brought Shiloh and Lauren. Meanwhile, Aspen was tied up with Freya, busy launching their new entertainment company.

Francesca looked at him with worried eyes and said, "Honey, please, you can't get hurt. If anything happens to you, I don't think I can go on living!"

Andrew rolled his eyes. "Relax, I'm not about to leave you all widowed."

Shiloh urged, "Let's go already. The sooner we deal with Joe, the sooner I can get back to making money!"

Lauren groaned. "Shiloh, you're living in the best place in the capital. You eat well and have everything you need, and Andrew, who's practically loaded, is covering it all. So why do you still need to make money?"

Shiloh shrugged like it was the most obvious thing in the world. "Do I need a reason to make money? Even if I owned all the money in the world, I'd still go out and earn more! Besides, I can't rely on Andrew forever. I want to buy my own house, my own car, and eventually, I want to get married and have kids too!"

Everyone froze and stared at her in shock, including Andrew.

Shiloh glanced around and asked calmly, "What? Is there something wrong with what I said? Lauren, Fran, Aspen... you all have someone. But I don't. I still have no idea who I really am or where I came from. My whole past is a blank slate."

She added, "That's why I need to work harder and make more money! Also, a lady can't just keep dragging things out forever. At some point, we all have to settle down. And honestly, all that stuff is just really stressful."

Andrew and the others all got a headache just listening to her. What she said made sense, completely logical, even.

It was natural for a woman to want marriage and kids at some point. However, it was still weird hearing it from a nun with amnesia who did not even age like the rest of them.

Aspen could not help asking, "So, Shiloh, who exactly do you want to marry? Who do you want to have kids with?"

Shiloh stared Jazily out the window at the sky, her eyes dreamy as she sighed. "Honestly? I have no idea. But lately, I've started to remember these fragments of my past. And in one of those blurry memories, I think I had a fiancé!"

Andrew's expression darkened just slightly. "Shiloh, do you remember what he looked like? Or what his name was?"

Shiloh frowned and shook her head

"It was just this vague image, nothing clear. And every time I think about him, my chest starts aching so badly it's hard to breathe."

Lauren said with concern, "Then stop thinking about it, Shiloh. You're perfect just the way you are now. Seeing you in pain like that breaks our hearts."

Francesca nodded frantically. "Yeah, don't force it. Trying to dig through traumatic memories when you have amnesia can seriously mess up your brain."

Shiloh smiled sweetly. "Lauren, Fran, Aspen... you guys are the best."

Andrew chuckled and said, "Alright, let's head out. We've got to get to Nova Fight Club. That's where I agreed to meet Joe."

Lauren hesitated. "Honey, I-I have a small favor to ask."

Andrew said, "Go ahead."

She paused, clearly embarrassed. "If

you two end up fighting, and Joe

can't keep up, could you maybe

little easy on him? He helped the Rhodes family out in the pas

And

with me, he's always been respectful and polite. But if that makes you

uncomfortable, just ignore my

request. I'll support you either way."

Andrew waved her concern away. "Don't worry, Lauren. I'm not out to kill him.

Honestly, I've never had a bad impression of him in the first place."

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The three drove straight to the agreed location without wasting a second.

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Meanwhile, inside the Nova Fight Club, Liliana, Gary, Leon, and the much- anticipated star of the hour, Joe, were already waiting.

Liliana said, "Joe, just like you asked, we've shut the club down for today. No one else is getting in."

Joe had already changed into his gear. He gave a quiet nod, looking calm and aloof.

Gary chuckled coldly, one hand in his pocket. "This is it. Today's the day Andrew meets his end. That bastard's finally about to taste his first humiliating defeat since stepping into Blumedale."

Liliana glanced at Joe with a mix of admiration and concern. She lowered her voice and said softly, "Joe, I won't let anything happen to you. Not a single scratch."

Joe smiled faintly. "Don't worry, Liliana. Nothing's going to happen to me. The one who ends up destroyed is always my opponent."

Liliana smiled sweetly. "Joe, once you've dealt with Andrew, I want you to come with me to Blue Island in Eastonia to relax. The ski season just opened there. It'll be so much fun!"

Joe shook his head. "Let Gary or Leon take you instead. After I beat Andrew, I'm putting everything into winning over Lauren."

Liliana's smile froze right on her face. She forced a bitter grin and tried to stay composed. "Joe, is she really that important to you?"

Joe grew serious. "Her family isn't the most impressive, but I know, without a doubt, she's the best woman in the world. No one else even comes close. I still remember how it felt... that instant spark the first time I saw her."

Liliana suddenly broke down. She grabbed her hair and screamed, "Then what about me, Joe?! You've ignored my love for you this whole time! What am I to you?"

Her sudden outburst startled Gary, Leon, and the others, leaving them visibly shaken.

"Ms. Peck, what's wrong?"

"Mr. Driscoll was just joking around. Please don't cry!"

Liliana wiped at her tears, her voice full of anguish. "Joe, do you even realize how hard this is? I can't take it anymore! I can't bear watching you play the perfect prince, chasing after Lauren, that little slut! What does she have that I don't? Why would you fall for her and completely ignore me?"

Joe's expression turned slightly colder. He looked at Liliana for a

moment, silent, then stood up. "Enough, Liliana. I don't want to hear that again. Lauren is irreplaceable, at least not by you, and you've known that for a long time. So, I hope this is the last time you bring it up."

With that, he turned and walked off without even glancing at her tear-streaked face.

"Joe, don't go! Please! I won't let you walk away!" Liliana sobbed like a madwoman and spun around to chase after him.

Yet, it was no use. Joe leaped effortlessly and landed squarely at the center of the ring.

At that moment, Andrew, Lauren, and Shiloh stepped into the club.

Joe's eyes instantly locked onto Lauren, growing hotter by the second.

On the other hand, Andrew gave Liliana a strange look as she wept uncontrollably. The heiress of the Peck family was clearly having another one of her wild emotional spirals.

Up in the ring, Joe called out in a deep voice, "Andrew, let's end this. All of it— right here, right now."

Andrew gave a light chuckle and stepped forward, ready to climb into the ring. However, Shiloh quickly stopped him. "Wait! There's someone up there."

Andrew looked up and spotted a lone figure seated in the dark shadows of the upper bleachers. Even though the dim lighting and the distance made it hard to see he instantly recognized the man.

It was Walter, the man who led the Driscoll family's Shadow Division.

As Andrew looked up toward the upper bleachers, a figure cloaked in black with hands tucked inside wide sleeves gazed back down at him.

Walter's eyes were expressionless, like a still, bottomless lake. He had not come today to interfere but was simply here to witness Andrew's sudden and brutal downfall.

Andrew had no idea what kind of venom Walter harbored in his heart. Even if he knew, he would not have cared.

He climbed up into the ring, shrugging off his jacket to loosen up before the fight.

Lauren stepped forward, caught his coat, and gave him a fist bump. "You got this, honey!"

Andrew grinned. "Don't worry."

Joe remained expressionless, but the slight twitch at the corner of his lips betrayed the storm brewing inside him.

"She even calls you 'honey'. So, you two are already that close?" His voice was cold.

Andrew chuckled. "Mr. Driscoll, have you ever even been in a relationship?" Joe snapped, "Answer me. Otherwise, I might not be able to hold back later."

Andrew shrugged. "No need to lose your cool, Mr. Driscoll. You really ought to experience a serious relationship. When two people are in love, they call each other 'honey' or even treat each other as husband and wife. It's totally normal!" Joe barked, "Ridiculous! You two aren't married. There was no ceremony, no vows, no official status. Treating each other that way is disrespectful to tradition!"

Andrew smirked. "Tradition? You mean that old-fashioned conservative stuff? Please, that stuff's long outdated. And even if we haven't signed papers, Lauren is still my wife in every way that matters. That's not up for debate."

Joe's stance shifted. His aura surged intensely around him. "Andrew, congratulations. You've officially pissed me off, and that's going to cost you."

Andrew tilted his head with a weird look. "Oh, wow, Mr. Driscoll. Is this what rage looks like from the heir of a luxury family? Sorry to disappoint you, but I'm a guy. I don't swing that way. If you're trying to look sexy and intense, you might want to save that for the ladies!"

Joe growled, "Enough chatter. Let's settle this with our fists!"

Andrew kicked off his shoes and rolled his shoulders. He cracked his neck, then narrowed his eyes as a sharp, focused energy lit up within them.

"You said it. I've been itching for a real fight. It's been way too long since I got to let loose in a brawl like this. Just don't disappoint me."

Joe glanced sideways, surprised for a second by the sheer presence and power Andrew suddenly gave off.

It was unexpectedly impressive, but that was all.

"Get ready!" Joe called out.

In a blur, he crossed 20 meters in a flash, vanishing like a phantom as he appeared right in front of Andrew. With a thunderous roar, he launched a punch straight toward Andrew's face.

Thunder seemed to crack across the ring.

Lauren, Liliana, and the others all held their breath, eyes wide, palms slick with sweat.

From the shadows above, Walter's

mouth curled into a cruel, satisfied smirk. "Nothing but a weak nobody. How delusional. Mr. Driscoll's strength has grown again... his progress is frightening."

A loud bang echoed as Andrew raised both arms and blocked Joe's punch head-on. The force behind it was brutal, and pure power surged through him and sent him skidding backward across the ring.

Joe shouted, "Let's go again!"

He raised his fists, his stance sharp and flowing like a crane in mid-strike. His footwork danced between feint and force, trailing afterimages as he moved.

In just seconds, Joe fired off over a hundred strikes at Andrew, moving with the speed and intensity of a hurricane.

Shiloh yawned and watched lazily from the side. She curled her lip and muttered, "Didn't expect the Driscoll pretty boy to hit this hard."

Lauren clutched her hands nervously. "What about Andrew? Shiloh, can he really hold him off?"

Shiloh replied casually, "Relax. Your man's just playing with him right now."

Finally, Andrew struck back. His back foot touched the very edge of the ring. One more step and he would fall off, which would mean losing the match.

But right in that narrow space, Andrew's right hand curved into a spiral, tracing a perfect arc before he thrust it forward with force.

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Joe's fierce, unrelenting barrage suddenly hit a wall, and his blows landed like fists striking water, dissipating without power. It was as if he had been hammering the surface of a still lake, all force absorbed and neutralized.

"Impressive... using softness to counter brute force. But Andrew, you're still nowhere near good enough to impress me!" Joe shouted, eyes sharp with disdain.

With a fierce roar, he opened both arms wide and slammed them down with explosive force.

Andrew dodged just in time, but the steel post on the side of the ring shattered under Joe's blow, crumpling like it had been hit by a wrecking ball.

Gary was the first to cheer. "Hell yeah, Mr. Driscoll! That was insane!"

Liliana clenched her fists tightly as she stared at her prince in shining armor, eyes glued to him without blinking.

Then, she glanced sideways at Andrew and sneered coldly.

"Just wait. Joe will drag you through the dirt until you're humiliated beyond saving.

I warned you, but you refused to listen. Now face the judgment of the Driscoll family's pride and fury."

Andrew stepped left twice, and each step sank the reinforced ring two full centimeters into the ground beneath him.

"Mr. Driscoll, you really don't hold back, huh?"

Joe's expression shifted as he caught Andrew's easy smile. His carefree attitude made Joe narrow his eyes.

"Cut the act. I know you deflected every ounce of my force. My energy didn't even reach you. I'll admit that you're indeed worthy of a real fight. But Andrew, the gap between us is still far too wide to cross."

As he spoke coldly, Joe suddenly planted his feet firmly, his entire body going eerily still.

Andrew's eyes sharpened, his stance coiling with silent tension as the light in his gaze turned darker and more focused.

Down below, Shiloh finally looked mildly interested. "Now we're talking. These two are finally about to stop fooling around."

From the shadows in the upper bleachers, Walter murmured, "Andrew, you should be honored to witness Mr. Driscoll unleash his true killing move. You can now die without regrets."

A sudden shift stirred the air around the 15-foot radius of the platform.

A powerful aura burst from Joe's body, invisible yet forceful, like flames radiating from him in waves.

Even Andrew had to nod slightly.

Joe really was a natural-born warrior, someone fate clearly favored. Once a martial artist entered the martial king realm, they had a slim chance to cultivate what was known as an external energy shield, an aura dense enough to serve as armor.

However, to manifest that aura visibly? That was a rarity among even the elite.

In fact, out of every hundred martial kings, maybe one would achieve it.

Take Tiana, for example. She had recently stepped into the realm of martial king: However, unless she received external aid or stumbled across a powerful opportunity, she would likely never develop the outward aura Joe had just displayed.

At best, she was a solid mid-tier martial king.

Even the monstrous fighters Andrew had faced before, such as Grand Viper or even Stanley, who was practically knocking on the door of martial saint, had never shown this kind of aura.

That alone proved just how terrifyingly real Joe's title of 'prodigy' truly was.

"Andrew," Joe said arrogantly, his tone freezing cold, "either you concede now, or I'll leave you broken... maybe even dead."

He hissed, "I'll give you a choice. Step down and walk away. Honestly, I don't want

to kill you, especially not while Lauren is here watching."

Andrew chuckled. "Mr. Driscoll, bring

it on. If you have the strength to kill me, then do it. And here's my message: come at me with everything you've got. If you can't make me bleed by the end of this, I'll be disappointed in you!"

Joe's face remained unreadable, but his heart boiled with rage. He could not stand the mockery or the disrespect.

As someone born at the very top, a golden child of legacy and talent, he should not have been riled up by someone so far beneath him.

Yet, right now, Joe could not take it.

Andrew was getting way too cocky, and he had no idea what kind of opponent he was actually dealing with.

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With a devastating strike like a raging dragon breaching the sea, Joe obliterated the spot where Andrew had just been standing. The ring's foundation exploded, leaving a gaping hole beneath the floorboards.

However, Andrew vanished in a blur. He dodged again and again, his speed suddenly soaring.

"Mr. Driscoll, what's the matter? Didn't you take your protein shake today?" Andrew taunted, his voice light and teasing.

Joe's face darkened as he gave chase relentlessly.

Their fight had already reached a level where even the spectators could barely track their movements, and every exchange was a blur of speed and power.

Waves of violent energy rippled across the ring, so intense that even those watching below felt their breath catch from the sheer pressure.

Gary's mouth hung open in disbelief. "Is this what peak martial arts looks like? This is unreal! Mr. Driscoll's insane. He's like one of those legendary fighters you only see in old-school movies! But Andrew is holding his ground too! He hasn't gone down at all!"

Liliana snapped, glaring at him. "Shut up, Gary! Joe is the strongest, and Andrew is about to get pummeled into the floor!"

Andrew spun back around, palms clashing directly with Joe's in a brutal impact. Both fighters were knocked back a step, but they instantly lunged forward again like two bloodthirsty gladiators.

Joe's footwork shifted subtly. He threw a right feint, but his center of gravity suddenly swung left, delivering a vicious, surprise strike aimed straight at Andrew's ribs.

Caught off guard, Andrew's shirt ripped at the side as blood streaked across his left torso. That was the ruthlessness of the external energy shield. Even without full contact, the sheer force could still cut like a blade.

Lauren let out a sharp gasp, heart pounding with panic.

Shiloh finally dropped her casual attitude, her expression turning serious. "Relax. Don't underestimate Andrew. He still hasn't gone all-out yet."

Meanwhile, Liliana, Gary, and the other lapdogs were all cheering and celebrating like a home team scoring big.

High in the stands, Walter's lips curled in satisfaction. This was exactly the kind of dominance expected from the Driscoll family's prized prodigy.

Yet, Joe's face only grew darker, his expression colder. This was not the outcome he wanted.

With his strength and pride, Andrew should have already collapsed. But instead, the man still had enough energy to evade and counter.

It was a direct insult to Joe's confidence.

"Enough. Stay still!" Joe growled low, suddenly erupting into a storm of strikes.

A rapid barrage of blows closed in around Andrew, sealing off every escape route. Then came a leaping pounce.

Joe descended from above with both fists aimed square at Andrew's head, the crushing force behind it enough to shatter concrete.

However, Andrew's face remained eerily calm. Even with death bearing down, his expression was as serene as still water. Inside his body, a second seal continued to suppress his power.

Nonetheless, this fight was exactly what he needed to not only defeat Joe but also use Joe's attacks as a hammer to crack through that second seal.

So, he did not need to go full throttle just yet.

With one step back, Andrew tilted his head, letting Joe's crushing palm slam into his chest instead.

A splash of blood burst from his mouth, but his face did not even register pain, only a strange flicker of satisfaction.

That blow had done it-it had loosened the seal even further.

Grabbing Joe's wrist with one hand, Andrew yanked it down.

Joe sneered, the scorn on his face quick but sharp. "You're already injured, and you still want to wrestle? How delusional can you be?"

He raised his other hand like a cleaver, slicing it toward Andrew's neck with lethal intent.

Andrew simply smiled.

A loud bang sounded as he struck Joe's wrist with a brutal counter of his own, a move called Blooming Iron Tree. It was a straight-up pain bomb to the nerves.

Joe did not flinch, proving to have an iron will.

Ignoring the searing pain, he kept driving his hand toward Andrew's throat.

Andrew snorted coldly and did not even dodge. He let Joe's hand grab his neck, but in the same motion, he clamped his own fingers around Joe's throat as well.

And just like that, both men gripped each other by the most vulnerable spot, neither backing down, locked in a savage deadlock.

First, they exchanged explosive kicks beneath their feet, advancing and retreating dozens of times. Then, they applied force with their wrists, each trying to crush the other's throat.

However, whenever this happened both would simultaneously twist their bodies, forcibly dragging the other person to constantly change positions to dispel the force.