

Rising from the Ashes (Andrew and Lauren) #Chapter 1701 - Read Rising from the Ashes (Andrew and Lauren) Chapter 1701

Mason's face lit up with joy. "Voice of the Oracle, you've arrived!"

His attitude was extremely respectful.

The figure in black was completely covered from head to toe. There was no telling if they were a man or a woman. Even their voice was deliberately raspy, like their throat had been brutally wrecked the entire night.

"Excellent, absolutely excellent! Mr. Ulrich, you haven't disappointed the High Oracle's faith in you. Keep up the good work, and someday, you'll become a person of immense power and influence!"

Mason's smile grew even wider. He bowed respectfully and said, "Thank you for your praise, Voice of the Oracle.

"Everything I've done to show my loyalty to the High Oracle. Fame and power are just secondary. As long as I can serve the High Oracle, I will die without regret."

Andrew watched with a deepening frown.

High Oracle? Who the hell was this supposed to be? Some kind of cult leader?

Looking at Mason's behavior, it was like he had joined a pyramid scheme and been completely brainwashed.

The Voice of the Oracle spoke again. "The High Oracle has sent me to relay his instructions. First, you must continue executing the plan here. You absolutely must destroy Andrew's reputation first.

"When he becomes isolated within the Gabo Creek Chamber of Commerce, with no allies and no credibility, that will be your moment to rise."

Mason nodded eagerly, eyes gleaming with ambition. "Thank you for the High Oracle's trust. I will give my utmost effort! I've already stirred Marcelo up. With any luck, Andrew could be eliminated within the hour."

The Voice of the Oracle nodded. "Marcelo is indeed powerful. But Andrew is a slippery bastard. He's cunning, shameless, and always manages to weasel his way out of impossible situations.

"That's why we can't rely on Marcelo alone. You need to use your father's death to keep manipulating public opinion. Turn Andrew into public enemy number one."

Mason replied coldly, "Understood. If it weren't for the Kellers backing him up, I would've handled him already."

The Voice of the Oracle lowered their voice. "There's something else, something even more important than Andrew."

Mason straightened up. "Please give the order, Voice of the Oracle."

The Voice of the Oracle spoke slowly. "Listen closely. The High Oracle is looking for someone... very special person. This individual was last seen somewhere in Gabo Creek. But now, they've completely vanished."

Mason looked troubled. "Voice of the Oracle, it'd help if you had a name. Or at least some information. Otherwise, trying to find them is like searching for a needle in a haystack."

The Voice of the Oracle pulled out a phone and opened a video. "This is the person. Watch closely."

Mason leaned in. "A woman. Got it. But with all due respect, Voice of the Oracle... why is the High Oracle so interested in someone so ordinary?"

The Voice of the Oracle's tone instantly turned sharper. "Don't ask questions that don't concern you. Just remember, you must find her no matter what She's absolutely crucial to the High Oracle."

The two of them kept talking in hushed voices for a long while.

However, for Andrew, nothing they said after that mattered anymore. His mind was spinning.

He had seen the woman in the video clearly-it was Shiloh.

Why the hell was this so-called High Oracle looking for Shiloh?

No way. He needed to hide her immediately.

The Voice of the Oracle eventually left the villa through the back, moving stealthily.

The sky had already darkened. Once outside the Ulrich residence, the Voice of the Oracle moved through alleys and side streets, deliberately choosing areas with fewer people.

Andrew quickened his pace and stopped concealing his movements.

The Voice of the Oracle immediately noticed someone was following and instantly picked up speed, breaking into a full sprint. Unfortunately, just as they began to accelerate, they were horrified to discover that they had run straight into a wall.

Somehow, Andrew had appeared in his path ahead.

"It's you!" When the Voice of the Oracle saw Andrew's face clearly, they were filled with terror.

Andrew walked toward the person step by step, his voice cold and menacing. "Who is the High Oracle? Why are you using Mason to frame me?"

The Voice of the Oracle snorted coldly. "A mere mortal like you has no right to know the name of the High Oracle!"

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The Voice of the Oracle sneered. "You've already been marked. I'm giving you one chance-get on your knees now and accept the baptism. Otherwise, you'll be dragged into a pit of eternal damnation!"

Andrew replied flatly, "Then I'll give you a chance-take off that stupid hood and show me your damn face! And while you're at it, drop to your knees and receive the gift of rebirth from me!"

The Voice of the Oracle exploded with rage and reached for a weapon. Just then, a whistling sound could be heard, and a golden needle pierced straight through their palm. They only had time to let out a miserable scream before

Andrew lunged in and landed a brutal kick across their face.

The Voice of the Oracle spun a full 180 degrees in the air before crashing heavily

to the ground.

Andrew stepped forward, stomped on the person's chest, and yanked the hood

off.

It was actually a bald man. Right in the center of his shiny scalp was a tattoo of a

red venomous snake.

The Voice of the Oracle, Nathan Fox, gasped, "Andrew, you're the prey that the

High Oracle has marked! No matter how much you struggle, you can't escape..."

After letting out a sinister laugh, Nathan threw up a mouthful of blood and died on

the spot.

Andrew crouched to inspect him. Just as he thought, the guy had poison hidden in

his molars, ready to end his life at the first sign of capture. Just like that, his only

lead was gone, and he did not find a single answer.

He clicked his tongue in annoyance. "How lame."

Scratching his chin, he debated calling Shiloh. She had a thing lately for flipping

corpses for profit. She might even want to harvest this bald guy's kidneys to sell

on the dark web. After a second thought, he decided to skip it and head back.

Just as he reached the mouth of the alley, a group of over a dozen men in black

suits rounded the corner. Each held a machete and moved in formation, their presence menacing and sharp.

Andrew smiled and quickly bolted the other way. However, at the far end of the

alley, another wave of men appeared, in the same suits, with the same blades.

He was boxed in with no way out.

From their ranks emerged Ezra, dragging a massive morning star behind him.

Sparks flew as it scraped the pavement.

This thing had to weigh over 100 pounds, and it was covered in jagged spikes.

This was not just a weapon; it was a murder device.

"You chose to walk into this disaster. Whatever, I'm not here to chit-chat. Save me

the trouble and bash your head against a wall, will ya? Don't make me do it."

Ezra spat into his palm and began cracking his knuckles, grinning like a maniac.

Andrew grinned right back. "Marcelo sent you?"

Ezra laughed. "You cocky little punk, calling Mr. Byrne by his name like you're pals? Are you going to kill yourself or not? If you're not, I'm about to help you out."

Andrew shrugged. "Then do it already. What are you waiting for?"

But let's be clear-I'm empty-handed, and you guys are swinging murder toys. Kinda unfair, don't you think?"

Ezra was taken aback and then burst into laughter. "Mr. Lloyd, are you so scared that you've lost your mind? Of course we're armed. We're gangsters, killers. That's kind of our thing, genius. And we've been ordered to chop you into pieces.

Showing up unarmed would be disrespectful to the occasion."

Andrew raised a brow. "You sound real proud of being a thug, huh?"

Ezra puffed out his chest, "Of course! Men in the underworld are nothing if not cool! And we can kill whoever we want, like you, Andrew.

Aren't you pretty arrogant? In a moment, you'll be nothing but a dead mutt under my hand!"

However, Andrew's expression suddenly shifted. He looked past Ezra and shouted, "Mr. Byrne! I knew you'd show up. What an honor for someone like me!"

Ezra flinched and spun around on instinct.

Andrew's expression suddenly changed dramatically as he looked behind Ezra.

"Mr. Byrne, so you followed along, too. You're really giving me quite the honor!"

Ezra was startled and instinctively turned to look behind him, only to find that there was no one there.

"You tricky bastard! How dare you trick me..." Ezra cursed angrily, turning back to

launch his attack.

He was furious at being fooled like that, but Andrew had already charged forward,

throwing a punch straight at his face.

Caught off guard, Ezra howled and raised his weapon to block. "Andrew, you dishonorable son of a-"

His cursing ended with a scream as he threw his head back, blood gushing out of

his mouth.

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Andrew's lightning-fast assault was completely overwhelming for Ezra. His chest took a direct kick, sending his blood churning violently. However, what truly horrified him was how Andrew could possibly hurt him at all.

As a martial king, his body should not be this fragile. Roaring in disbelief, Ezra spun his morning star wildly. His full strength exploded outward, tearing his leather jacket into ribbons.

However, Andrew remained cold and calm, weaving backward with dazzling footwork. No matter how Ezra's morning star advanced, he always managed to dodge safely at the last possible moment.

Ezra suddenly released his weapon with a thunderous shout, sending it flying straight at Andrew's head!

Yet, Andrew did not flinch. He raised his hand and struck the weapon with a thunderclap-like palm strike.

Ezra grinned wickedly and charged. That morning star was covered in hooked spikes, and one direct hit would surely shred Andrew's hand.

To Ezra's shock, Andrew looked completely unfazed. He bent backward, dodging the swing aimed at his face. Then, he slapped the ground with one hand. Using the rebounding force, his body launched upward, and two fingers jabbed precisely into Ezra's armpit.

Indescribable agony shot through his brain instantly, and Ezra felt half his body go numb. At the same time, he could not understand how Andrew's hand was not crippled.

Andrew did not let up. He closed the distance in two quick steps, locked both arms around the back of Ezra's neck, and drove his knee upward with brutal force.

Ezra's nose shattered with a sickening crunch, blood spurting everywhere. The pain triggered something deep in him, unleashing his raw power at last.

He slammed his morning star into the ground twice, carving massive craters into the stone. At the same time, he screamed bloody murder, spitting curses at Andrew as fury consumed him.

Even so, Andrew turned a deaf ear, like a predatory beast, coldly and calmly watching the rampaging Ezra before him. He seized the moment to pounce again, and with two dull thuds, his fists struck squarely against Ezra's weapon.

Ezra could not withstand the force and was dragged down toward the ground. At the last second, he abandoned his weapon and raised both arms in front of his chest, crossing them to block the next attack.

He roared like a charging bull and barreled forward, trying to ram Andrew down.

Andrew's smile did not have the

slightest trace of warmth. He placed one hand on Ezra's arm and allowed himself to be pushed back. The stone paved alley cracked under their feet; their clash had gone far beyond what any normal human could endure. Content bétongs to

"Just die already!" Ezra howled, chest expanding as he unleashed a move called Blooming Iron Tree.

His arms swung open like

floodgates, sending shockwaves crashing toward Andrew. He planned to blast Andrew back, catch his breath, and give the order for the guards on both ends to swarm in and finish the job.

Yet, when Ezra spread his arms wide, he realized something terrifying.

Andrew had not budged an inch. He was still standing right there, feet embedded deep into the ground like anchors.

"You..." The dread hit him like a sledgehammer, and his scream barely escaped

his lips before Andrew's fist crashed straight into his chest.

Then, Andrew's hand opened, his fingers flaring like a blooming flower. A rapid succession of cracks burst from Ezra's body like fireworks going off inside his flesh. He staggered backward, step by step, unable to stay upright.

His body was riddled with bloody holes, and not a single inch remained intact. Finally, he dropped to his knees, slumping forward in surrender, his head bowing low before Andrew.

Andrew walked over slowly, one hand tucked behind his back.

Ezra lifted his head with difficulty, his face now soaked and streaked with blood.

Blood foam dripped from the corners of his mouth, flowing continuously.

"You... have such terrifyingly powerful inner strength. With just one hand, you could shatter my heart. Andrew, you're definitely not an ordinary person. I-I underestimated you!"

After delivering these final words, the third-ranked fighter on the Underworld Index died.

The sound of machetes being brandished rose again from both sides as they closed in for the kill.

Andrew chuckled lightly and strolled forward, casually picking up two morning stars from the ground.

He tested their weight and frowned. "Too light."

Then, with a burst of force, his right hand launched upward. The first attacker, who had barely reached him, had his blade shattered and his body wrecked by a single blow.

The man was dead before he hit the ground.

With a low growl, Andrew spun the morning star in a clean arc, ignoring the blades all around him. The alley echoed with the clash of metal, and countless weapons were smashed apart in seconds.

His blood boiled, which was dangerous because it meant Andrew had truly given in to his bloodlust.

Ezra was down, but there were still about 18 of Marcelo's men nearby.

It had been a long time since Andrew cut loose like this. With two loud bangs, his weapons met two more skulls.

Their agonized screams were brief yet piercing.

These elite fighters under Marcelo were bloodthirsty and fearless of death, but unfortunately, they had picked the wrong target.

Being fearless was one thing-being capable of surviving was another. You could be as ruthless as you wanted, but before overwhelming power, that meant nothing.

In the dark alley, lit only by the neon haze of the distant nightlife, there were no pedestrians.

Not even the wind dared stir.

Only Andrew Stood among the bodies scattered everywhere. With two clanging sounds, he dropped

the morning star from his handsnet

Some blood had splattered on his body, which made him very uncomfortable.

There was no point in heading back to the Ulrich residence, so he turned around and walked toward the alley's entrance.

Just then, several off-road SUVs screeched to a stop, their tires screaming against the curb. Doors flung open, and a dozen men in black jumped out.

Leading them were Logan and Aspen.

"Mr. Lloyd, are you okay?" Aspen cried, her face pale as paper. She rushed toward him but stopped halfway, frozen in her tracks.

Behind Andrew was a blood-soaked scene.

Her wide, beautiful eyes trembled. She couldn't help but wonder if a massacre had just happened here.

Logan glanced past Andrew into the alley, and his eyelid twitched violently.

He said nothing, though. Instead, he looked Andrew straight in the eye and

grinned. "You're good? Great. Let's head back."

Andrew shook his head. "Before we go home, find me a place to shower. I'm not walking into the house like this. I'll freak out everyone."

Logan let out a booming laugh. "I know you're a clean freak, and you're way too soft on your pretty girls. No worries. Tonight, it's on me. We're hitting the spa!"

Andrew turned toward Aspen, noticing her shaking. "Why are you trembling? Cold?"

Aspen forced a smile. "Not cold... I-I'm just... not used to this."

Andrew spoke flatly. "You better get Seeing blood is just a used to in

warm-up for someone walking the assassin's path. One day, it won't just be blood. You'll see heads roll."

Her face turned ghostly white as she murmured, "Got it... honey."

Andrew let out a sharp grunt. "When we're in public, call me Mr. Lloyd." "Yes, Mr. Lloyd!" she chirped, trying to steady her voice.

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Shortly after Andrew and his group left, a black Mercedes slowly pulled up to the alley entrance and stopped.

The driver glanced inside and immediately showed an expression of utter disbelief. "Mr. Byrne, Ezra and the others... They..."

He trembled for a long moment, unable to get the words out.

Marcelo sat in the back seat, his spine straight, saying nothing. After a long silence, he coldly ordered, "Drive!"

The driver was sweating profusely. "But all our men are dead. Who the hell did this? Are we just going to let this slide?"

Marcelo replied indifferently, "It doesn't matter who did it. In the end, they'll all have to die! I underestimated Andrew, that's for sure!"

The driver kept swallowing hard, thinking this was not just a case of underestimating Andrew.

Ezra was a genuine martial king. He was fierce and battle-hardened, and he was not someone ordinary martial artists could handle.

Yet now, he was just lying there on the ground, his corpse probably stone cold by now.

In all these years, the three Dragon Kings of Blumedale's underground had never suffered such a massive loss. If word got out that one of them had actually lost a martial king, it would cause an uproar.

Cillian's wake would continue for a whole week. As time passed, more people joined in the verbal attacks against Andrew, the Chamber of Commerce chairman. Andrew could not have cared less and simply ignored them. Every morning, he continued his rain-or-shine training sessions with his four top students.

Meanwhile, Joe, the pride and joy of the Driscoll family, would still stand across the lake watching his training.

Andrew finally had enough and asked, "Mr. Driscoll, what exactly are you trying to do here?"

Joe frowned. "What do you mean? I'm not bothering you."

Andrew smirked. "Let's be real. Are you trying to steal my training techniques?"

Joe's expression turned stiff. "Andrew, you're insulting me! Your methods are undeniably solid. I can tell you have a military background, and your fundamentals are tight. But I've never needed to copy anyone. I don't need to."

Andrew chuckled. "Then why are you here every day, just loitering?"

Joe looked embarrassed and stammered for a long time, "Well... I wanted to ask you about someone!"

Andrew immediately refused. "If you're trying to ask about Lauren, then forget it! You remember our agreement, right? You lost, so this matter is finished!"

Joe replied, "Of course I remember. We're both men, and I won't be so shameless as to go back on my

word! And you have the ability to

make me respect you. When it comes to winning women, I admit I can't compete with you!"

These words made Andrew secretly wary. "Mr. Driscoll, you're suddenly being so reasonable and humble. You're not plotting something, are you?"

Joe's face flushed red with embarrassment, "Actually, it's not really a scheme! I just wanted to ask you where Ms. Greene went. I haven't seen her around lately."

Andrew was stunned. "So you're telling me that recently you've been staking out here shamelessly just to catch a glimpse of Shiloh?"

Joe looked even more embarrassed and did not speak, but he nodded.

Andrew suddenly burst into laughter, holding his stomach. "Mr. Driscoll, are you trying to kill me with

laughter? Don't tell me... you've got a thing for our Shiloh?"

Joe huffed, clearly annoyed, and stormed off. He acted cool, but Andrew could tell he was retreating with his tail between his legs.

Clapping the dust from his hands, Andrew turned back to his group and called out, "Alright, training's done. That's it for today. Dylan, you stay a minute."

Dylan jogged over, grinning. "Mr. Lloyd, I think I'm about to break through!"

Andrew nodded. "That's great, but hold it back a bit. Take a couple of pills later and push through that bottleneck in one go."

Dylan beamed. "You got it! And as a thank-you, Mr. Lloyd, tonight's on me. Spa package-full service, if you catch my drift!"

Andrew rolled his eyes. "Knock it off. Let's talk business. What's the update on that thing I asked you to look into?"

Dylan straightened up. "Already got the info. Mason's three sons are all complete weirdos!"

Andrew grinned, "Oh? How so?"

Dylan looked exasperated. "I can't really explain it in just a few words. Mr. Lloyd, you should come see for yourself!"

Later, Andrew called Rachel and Logan over. With Dylan driving, they immediately headed out!

In the car, Rachel looked puzzled.

"Mr. Lloyd, are you really planning to

help one of Mason's sons take over? We just helped Mason rise to power, and now we're supporting his son. Isn't the Ulrich family changing leadership a bit too frequently?"