

## RISING FROM THE ASHES (ANDREW AND LAUREN)

### Chapter 1862

Seeing Riker make direct threats, Aspen's temper flared up instantly as she snapped coldly, "Big-head freak, quit trying to intimidate people! If you've got the guts, try laying a finger on us!"

Lauren looked completely unafraid of stirring up trouble and snorted coldly. "That's right! Are the Hidden Dragons really that impressive? Go ahead and touch us. Let's see what happens!"

Francesca's eyes turned menacing as she declared, "Honey, why should we be scared of these worthless Hidden Dragons? Lead us, and we'll fight our way out of here together!"

Andrew felt a wave of secondhand embarrassment. These three ladies had gotten way too bold, or maybe just way too reckless.

This was not really surprising, though, since their martial arts skills had made decent progress recently.

They had been constantly frustrated by not having anywhere to really show off their abilities. Taking advantage of this opportunity, they wanted Andrew to take charge so they could have an epic, all-out brawl.

Riker chortled. "Looks like your three women think they're even tougher than you are! Why don't you listen to them and go full throttle? Try your luck. This is the Hidden Dragons headquarters. Even if a martial saint showed up here, they'd have to think twice before making a move!"

The Hidden Dragons fighters surrounding them all broke into contemptuous smiles.

One scoffed. "Idiots! Do they really think all three major gangs in Gabo Creek are pushovers?"

Another chimed in, "These three women might have pretty faces, but damn, talk about beauty without brains!"

"Damn it, Mr. Lamar! If this punk doesn't pay the ransom and behave himself, let's just cripple him and let us have our fun with the ladies!"

Andrew chuckled slightly and said, "Mr. Lamar, I've given your conditions some thought. How about this... Not only will I give you the formulas for both miracle drugs, but I'll also bump up the three billion ransom to five billion and present it all to you as tribute!"

Riker stared at Andrew with suspicion. He could not figure out why Andrew was not resisting and was actually raising his own offer instead.

What kind of game was he playing?

Andrew clasped his hands behind his back with a relaxed expression. "What's wrong? I'm willing to pay extra money, and suddenly you can't handle it? Looks like both you and the Hidden Dragons are nothing but show after all!"

Riker gritted his teeth and snarled, "Who the hell do you think you're looking down on?! Since you're volunteering to pay more, I couldn't be happier about it! Now, make good on your promise!"

However, Andrew waved his hand dismissively with a sly smile. "Not so fast! Let's not even mention the fact that I'm here empty-handed. Where would get five billion dollars? Even if I had it, I couldn't possibly band it over to you right now."

Riker frowned and asked, "Then what exactly are you proposing?"

Andrew got straight to the point. "It's simple. I've added an extra two billion as travel expenses. The- Hidden Dragons need to escort my

people out of Goldridge

immediately!"

Riker rejected this outright. "Andrew, do you think i'm some kind of fool? Money might be important, but my life is probably worth a lot more, don't you think? Mr. Fischer has specifically ordered that you stay in Goldridge!"

He scoffed and added, "Escort you people out? Do you take me for a fool?"

Andrew shook his head calmly. "I'm not leaving. I just need you to escort my people out safely."

Riker fell silent, his expression becoming uncertain and conflicted.

The three women grew visibly nervous.

"Honey, if you're not leaving, then we're not leaving either!"

"That's right. We came here together, so we should leave together!"

"We can't feel safe leaving you here all alone!"

Seeing the extreme worry in the three women's eyes, Andrew smiled reassuringly.

"Don't worry. As long as you're all safe, I'll be fine too."

Riker huddled with several of his trusted aides for a quick strategy session.

"Mr. Lamar, that's easy money falling out of the sky. There's no reason to say no."

"Yeah! Andrew's loaded in Gabo Creek. The guy's printing cash."

"Mr. Fischer only asked us to hold onto him. Those ladies are totally irrelevant." Riker was immediately swayed by their arguments.