

The Ashes 411

Chapter 411 The female bodyguard cried out in panic, Mr.

Ramsey, whats wrong? Please dont joke around! She rushed to Ernests side and quickly retrieved the cigar from his lap while he clutched his chest in agony.

My chest hurts so badly, Ernest groaned, his face contorted with pain.

Oh God, my head too -everything hurts! Get me to the hospital, now! Within moments, Ernests pain had spread throughout his entire body.

He collapsed to the ground, convulsing violently with white foam spurting from his mouth.

The two bodyguards frantically carried Ernest out the door and rushed him to the hospital. They knew every second counted

This is incredible, Natasha remarked with amazement.

The moment you finished counting down, that pervert just collapsed! She could not help but feel increasingly awed by Andrews abilities.

Andrew said coldly, He brought this upon himself.

Anyway, theres no rush.

Once he discovers the hospital cant help him, hell come crawling back to us.

Natasha giggled flirtatiously while gazing at Andrew with sparkling eyes

So, did you mess with Ernest just to get revenge for me? she asked, touched by the gesture. Andrew smiled.

Ernest is arrogant and untouchable to most people, but I won't stand for it.

More importantly, he dared to set his sight on someone who belonged to me.

I could easily make him disappear from West End without leaving a trace if I wanted to.

Natasha felt a sense of peace wash over her as she noticed the cold glint in Andrews eyes.

She knew she had not misjudged this man.

Meanwhile, Ernest was rushed to Jayrodale General Hospital after leaving West End, and Francesca personally attended to him.

With a grave expression, she explained, I apologize, sir, but we can't determine the cause of your unusual condition.

It's extremely serious, and if it continues, your life could be in danger.

I recommend you wait here while our deputy chief comes to treat you.

Ernest could barely speak clearly, coughing up blood with every word.

Wait? You're making me wait? Do you know who I am? I'm Ernest Ramsey from the Ramseys of Canraville! If your deputy chief can save me, get him here now! He doubled over, vomiting an impossible amount of blood.

Francesca frowned, disliking this vulgar old man's attitude.

Nonetheless, she knew saving lives came first, so she immediately called Andrew.

Andrew, we have a patient who's vomiting blood uncontrollably and convulsing

, she reported urgently.

Hes critical

Can you come right away? Back at West End, Andrew was surprised by Francescas description.

He asked, Is this patient an unruly old man with two bodyguards one male, one female ? Francesca exclaimed

Yes, exactly! How did you know? C Andrew chuckled at the coincidence.

Thats not important.

Im busy with something urgent right now, but give him this message: theres no cure he might as well prepare for death.

Francesca stared at her phone in shock, speechless.

Andrews words seemed incredibly harsh.

However, she quickly realized that given Andrews usual compassionate nature, he would not carelessly dismiss someones life.

Combined with the fact that he had known the patients identity, she concluded that Andrew must know this old man and there was clearly bad blood between them.

Chapter 412 Francescas expression hardened as she delivered the news to Ernest.

She said coldly, Our deputy chief has a message for you.

Ernest was desperate, willing to do anything to save his life.

What is it? Tell me quickly! he demanded before another violent bout of blood coughing seized him.

He clamped his mouth shut afterward, trying to minimize his speech to reduce the bleeding

He cant return to the hospital, Francesca stated professionally, softening the harsh message out of her medical duty to do no harm

You should prepare yourself this mysterious condition could be fatal.

The news hit Ernest like a ton of bricks, and he nearly passed out from shock

A terrible realization dawned on him as he turned to his bodyguards with a blood stained snarl What are

you idiots standing around for? Get me back there to find that guy, hurry! Ernest could feel his life force draining away with each passing moment.

The taste of death was upon him, making his head spin with genuine fear.

Andrew was his only hope now.

Despite his distrust of the young man, he had no choice but to try.

With his bodyguards support, the three of them rushed back to West End in desperate haste.

Mr.

Ramsey, were you ... ambushed while you were out? Natasha asked with feigned innocence, already knowing from Andrew what had caused Ernests condition.

She was amazed at how severe his symptoms were he was barely breathing, and his shirt was drenched in blood

S Save me ... please, help me! Ernest gasped like a fish out of water, making his final plea.

The female bodyguards voice rose to a threatening pitch.

If anything happens to Mr.

Ramsey, you'll all pay for it! Kid, save him now, the male bodyguard added menacingly.

If Mr.

Ramsey dies, the Ramseys of Canraville will tear you apart and destroy your entire family! Andrew shrugged casually

I was about to help, but your threats made my hands shake.

Sorry, but I can't save anyone with shaky hands guess we'll just have to watch him die.

The bodyguards were furious but helpless

Ernest, somehow finding a last burst of strength, leaped up and slapped both bodyguards hard across their faces.

Ernest snarled through gritted teeth.

Get out of my way, you idiots! Are you trying to get me killed? The bodyguards retreated, faces stinging and still Canraville would certainly come after Andrew to protect Ernest.

Having dealt with his incompetent guards, Ernest! Andrew with pleading eyes.

The bodyguards retreated, faces stinging and silent.

They knew if Ernest died, the Ramseys of Canraville would certainly come after Andrew but they would also be executed for failing to protect Ernest.

Having dealt with his incompetent guards, Ernest collapsed to the floor and looked up at Andrew with pleading eyes.

Chapter 413 Well, Mr.

Ramsey, now do you believe what I told you earlier wasn't a lie? Andrew asked with an exaggerated sigh, shaking his head.

Ernest wanted to kill him here he was at death's door, and this kid was making small talk.

However, his body had no strength left as the blood loss had nearly drained him completely.

Ernest wheezed, I was blind before, unable to see your true capabilities.

I'm thoroughly convinced now, so please, Andrew, show some compassion and save me! Andrew nodded reluctantly.

Fine

Since you've recognized your mistakes, I'll help you.

Ernest's eyes lit up with joy as hope returned, but Andrew suddenly slapped his forehead.

No, wait I still can't save you.

The light in Ernest's eyes immediately died out.

His heart was screaming, but all he could manage was a weak cry: Why? If he had the strength, he

would have strangled this kid who kept toying with him between life and death.

Andrew said with feigned concern, Well, Mr.

Ramsey, you havent agreed to give me the Aurora Lotus yet.

This is a matter of life and death especially your life, which is priceless.

I cant just save you without getting anything in return.

life Ernest nodded frantically.

Take it ! The Aurora Lotus is yours! Please, stop wasting time! Im dying! You can have all my assets if you just save ne ! The two bodyguards were stunned

They had never seen their arrogant superior act so pathetically, begging like a madman.

Meanwhile, Natasha was delighted, silently cheering, Well done, my darling! Take that pervert down! Andrew held out his hand

One last condition my rule is payment first, treatment second.

You know what to do, Mr.

Ramsey.

Ernest immediately understood and ordered his female bodyguard to hand over the Aurora Lotus. Though reluctant, she had no choice under Ernests murderous glare.

After confirming the Aurora Lotus was properly stored in its silk lined box, Andrew handed it to Natasha. Then, to everyones shock, he began stomping on Ernests chest repeatedly, causing him to howl in pain

What are you doing? Are you seriously trying to kill him after taking the payment? the female bodyguard screamed, her eyes wide with age

The male bodyguard lunged forward.

You double crossing snake ! Ill fight you to the death! Even Natasha was horrified as Andrews brutal kicks landed on Ernests face, distorting it.

Suddenly, Ernest coughed up one final mouthful of black blood and slowly got to his feet, groaning.

My chest... my head... the pain is gone.

I feel so much better ...

Chapter 414 Despite his bruised and swollen face, Ernest wasting with pay as he felt his body recovering After checking himself thoroughly to confirm he was really okay, he burst no laughter.

Im alive! I actually made it! The bodyguards looked at him in dishelled before turning to Andrew. They could not comprehend how a few kicks could save someones life was this guy some kind of mice worker ? Andrew explained clinically, Mr.

Ramseys mainproblem was blocked pressure points causing blood congestion.

My kicks cleared those blockages at restored groper dialaton, which naturally resolved the issue.

But Andrew, why do I feel so weak even though the pain is gone? mest as you holding his head.

I feel like Im about to pass on Andrew smiled knowingly.

Thats normal.

Most people would have died from losing that much blood.

You survived only because of your strong constitution and all those supplements you take. Ernests face turned pale.

Are you saying my life force is severely depleted? Not just depleted, Andrew corrected him.

You're like a candle in the wind one wrong move and your light could go out permanently.

Cold sweat broke out on Ernest's forehead.

Are you exaggerating? Andrew gestured casually.

You don't believe me? Try moving around a bit and see for yourself.

Ernest attempted to take two steps forward.

His legs trembled with weakness, and after those mere steps, he was panting heavily with his tongue hanging out like an exhausted dog.

Why? Why am I like this? Ernest raged, unable to accept his condition.

How am I any different from a frail old man now? The bodyguards pointed accusingly at Andrew.

Mr.

Ramsey, this guy must have done something to you.

He's definitely behind this! Mr.

Ramsey, you should be thanking God that I managed to save your life, Andrew sighed as Ernest glared at him with bloodshot eyes.

He continued, Instead of showing gratitude, you're treating me like an enemy.

Maybe I shouldn't have saved you after all.

Ernest shouted, I don't care! You saved me, so you're responsible for fixing everything! How can I live if I can't eat, drink, or even touch women? Andrew nodded matter of factly. You're right, Mr.

Ramsey.

In your current condition, you can't drink alcohol, overeat, or engage in any strenuous physical activities

, especially with women! Ernest staggered, nearly losing his balance.

Without these pleasures, what's the point of living? Life without his favorite indulgences—fine food, expensive liquor, and beautiful women—seemed worse than death to him.

Chapter 415 Actually, things aren't as bad as you think, Mr.

Ramsey, Andrew explained calmly.

You can return to Canraville and rest quietly for a few years with proper restraint and the right supplements, your body will recover.

Ernest immediately perked up at this suggestion. Yes, yes, you're right! I may be weak now, but it's temporary.

I just need some time to recuperate. However, Mr.

Ramsey, there's one crucial rule, Andrew warned.

You must absolutely avoid any intimate relations with women.

Ernest's face fell dramatically as though he had just received news of a death in the family.

He could handle giving up fine food and drinks, but this restriction was one he just couldn't bear. Andrew added gravely, Don't take this lightly, Mr.

Ramsey.

In your condition, any intimate activity will instantly drain what little life force youve managed to rebuild When that happens, youll become nothing but an empty shell not even the worlds best doctor could save you then

Ernests face turned ashen

With his bodyguards support, he left West End in a daze, abandoning even his plan to stay in Jayrodale and choosing to return directly to Canraville.

Despite his desires, he valued his life more no momentary pleasure was worth dying for.

After Ernest left, Natasha asked Andrew eagerly, Darling, is his condition really that serious? Of course not, Andrew replied flatly.

Half of what I said was just to scare him

But you sounded so serious and convincing! Natasha exclaimed in disbelief.

Andrews performance had been so convincing that she had believed every word.

Andrew shrugged

I wasnt entirely lying

His body is severely depleted, nearly half dead.

Once your life force is damaged this severely, it causes permanent harm.

Unless he finds some miracle cure, hell always have underlying health issues.

Natasha laughed incredulously

Then why did you traumatize him by saying he can never be with women again? For a sex addict like Ernest, that's basically a death sentence ! Andrew snorted.

That's what he gets for constantly pursuing you.

If I didn't teach him a harsh lesson, he'd just come back to bother us once he recovered

I decided to get rid of this annoying pest once and for all ! Natasha smiled seductively, touched that Andrew's scheme had been for her sake.

Her cheeks flushed as she gazed at him with sultry eyes

Well darling, I may not want Ernest, but I'd give myself to you... Are you really that desperate ? Andrew frowned at her obvious attempt at seduction.

Natasha's blush deepened with anger.

You're the desperate one! You promised to make me your woman! Why are you getting angry so quickly ? Andrew sighed.

How can I not be angry? Natasha's eyes reddened.

You never give me a straight answer.

If you're just playing with me, who will want me when I'm old and gray?.

106 Andrew countered, Don't you have all of West End? With so many people under your command, you can live quite well even without a man!

Chapter 416 Natasha glanced at him and turned away, her voice filled with frustration as she said, I used to be obsessed with power and martial arts, always wanting to be above others.

But now, I dont care about any of that anymore if you just say the word, Id give up my position head of West End right away to serve you.

Andrew was stunned.

What did you just say? I said Id give up everything just to be with you, Natasha replied irritably.

as the Andrews heart skipped a beat as he realized the widow had developed feelings for him.

As he wondered if he really had to sleep with Natasha, anger washed over him.

Just then, the pouting Natasha burst into laughter and looked at him triumphantly

You fool, couldnt you tell I was just messing with you? You think this is funny? Andrew asked, slightly annoyed

Natasha stood tall and challenged him, It is funny... Unless youre man enough to take control of the situation.

Your provocations wontwork on me, Andrew said with a smirk.

Then youre not much of a man, Natasha retorted.

Andrews jaw tightened as he controlled his rising frustration with the widows taunts.

Natashas expression turned serious as she added, Dylan has already contacted me.

Our two organizations are the only ones left in the underground world of Jayrodale

Since Dylan already your man, and youve recently won me over, darling, what are your plans for us? Andrew realized this was indeed a pressing matter.

Heres the deal youll both continue managing your own territories

Since Northern District and East Side are vacant in Jayrodales underground, you and Dylan can discuss how to divide them.

Natashas eyes lit up.

Perfect! I wont beat around the bush I just want the Northern District territory.

Is Northern District larger than East Side ? Andrew asked, raising an eyebrow. Of course it is

Not only is it bigger, but its also wealthier, Natasha explained

After a moments consideration, Andrew spoke slowly, Fine, Northern District is yours

Youre really agreeing to this? But wont Dylan have concerns? Natasha asked, surprised.

Hell be uncomfortable, but out of respect for me, hell accept it quietly, Andrew said calmly.

Ill give him some rare elixirs to help advance his skills.

Thats not fair! What about me? Natasha protested

Andrew looked at her coldly.

Your greed shows youre not even considering my position.

So naturally, you get nothing

Natasha immediately backed down.

Alright, I was wrong.

You decide how to divide the territory.

Seeing her curb her greed, Andrew smiled.

Dont worry, youll both get the elixirs.

As for Northern District and East Side, you and Dylan will manage them together.

Alright, Ill do as you say, Natasha replied obediently.

She had initially tried to get the better deal, but Andrews attitude quickly made her wiser

Besides, Now that she was under his leadership, she needed to put aside her old cunning ways.

territory meant little compared to Andrews elixirs, which were more valuable than gold in their world

Chapter 417 Seeing that everything was settled, and Natasha had no objections, Andrew asked, Is there anything else? If not, I need to head back.

Natasha replied seriously, Oh, darling, theres one more thing.

Although Atlas Northern District has fallen apart, several of his top fighters have gathered over 100 followers and are starting to gain influence again.

When it comes to eliminating threats completely, you and Dylan are more skilled than I am, Andrew replied calmly

From now on, you dont need my approval for these matters just discuss it between yourselves. Natasha flashed a seductive smile

Perfect, thats exactly what I wanted to hear.

Andrew shook his head, thinking how Natasha truly lived up to her Black Widow nickname.

With him, she was charming and submissive, even offering to warm his bed, but as a crime lord, she definitely had blood on her hands.

It was necessary though.

How else could a beautiful widow establish her position and protect her West End territory without being ruthless? From Andrews perspective, her submission to him was only because of his overwhelming power.

Hence, Andrew didnt want to stop Natasha from clearing out Northern Districts remnants.

In the underground world, that was simply how things worked the strong dominated the weak Or rather, that was how the entire world operated those with power always had the final say.

Later, Andrew left West End with the Aurora Lotus but did not return to Jayrodale General Hospital. Instead, he headed straight to Rhodes Corporation.

While Andrew was busy dealing with Ernest earlier, Lauren had called him several times.

He had not had the chance to ask what the temptress wanted, but he had learned from Marcus that Lauren was in trouble and needed help

So, he decided to go and ask her personally.

After parking his car, Andrew strode toward Rhodes Corporations entrance.

Well, well, a mere doctor driving a G Wagon worth over 200 grand.

Andrew, youve really mastered the art of gold digging even Im jealous! Michael appeared out of nowhere with about a dozen corporate executives, looking smug.

Andrew gave him a quick glance and said flatly, Mr.

Rhodes, have you already forgotten the lesson from last time? Wasnt that beating at your hotel enough

Michaels face darkened at the reminder of his humiliation.

Andrew, I know you had something to do with Atlas roughing me up that day.

Andrew smiled

Of course I did

To be honest, Mr.

Rhodes, I was the one who orchestrated Atlas raid on your hotel that day.

Michael exploded with rage, veins bulging on his forehead.

He snarled, Andrew, youd better watch yourself

You probably dont know this, but Im now the CEO of Rhodes Corporation.

With my power, crushing you would be childs play.

He had expected Andrew to be shocked and frightened by his new position, but all he saw was Andrew looking at him like he was an idiot.

Sorry, but why should I care that youre Rhodes Corporations CEO ? Andrew asked mockingly.

Is being Rhodes Corporations CEO supposed to be impressive? Michael froze, then burst into laughter.

Ladies and gentlemen, did you hear what this gold digger just said? He asked if being the CEO of Rhodes Corporation was impressive.

Someone, please educate this country bumpkin about just how impressive I am!

Chapter 418 A man in a suit and glasses stepped forward with a sneer.

Let me tell you just how impressive Mr.

Rhodes is he has complete control over Rhodes Corporation now, and he's as powerful as any other head of the prominent family in Jayrodale

Another executive rushed forward to brown nose Michael, looking down at Andrew with contempt. Young man, in this business, Ignorance is a sin.

The fact that you don't know how powerful Mr.

Rhodes is just proves you're a small fry who can't see beyond your own limited view you're less than an insect in his eyes.

Marcus, who had been standing quietly in the back, stepped forward to mediate .

Sir, it's time for the noon meeting, and Ms.

Rhodes is here today.

Perhaps we should head up.

Michael scoffed

Ah, right, I forgot Lauren was coming to the company today.

Fine, let's meet with her, but remember what I said earlier choose your sides carefully.

I dont want my catching any foolish bystanders in the crossfire.

After that, Michael swept his threatening gaze across the executives, causing them all to bow their heads in submission.

Dont worry, sir, were forever your followers.

Mr.

Rhodes, youre the future leader of this company wed be fools not to know who to follow

We old timers will always be loyal to you, the rightful heir! rew? Michael laughed triumphantly and glanced at Andrew with amusement.

See that, This is the respect and treatment I command in the company now.

While your precious Lauren is already yesterdays news, relegated to the sidelines.

You seem capable enough why not leave Lauren and work for me instead? I might even make you a

team leader with a five figure monthly salary, Michael taunted, causing his suckups to burst into mocking laughter.

So you really did steal Ms.

Rhodess CEO position? Andrew asked coldly.

Michael looked at Andrew condescendingly.

Thats right, I stole it.

I wanted to show her that Rhodes Corporation belongs to me.

Shes just a woman.

Shell eventually marry off and be someone elses problem.

Andrew nodded slowly.

Good, since youve admitted it, let me be clear you wont be CEO for long, you piece of trash.

Ill help Ms.

Rhodes take back whats rightfully hers, and this time, Michael, Ill put you in your place.

Andrews words triggered another round of laughter from Michael and his entourage, followed by a chorus of jeers.

You? Help Lauren take back the CEO position from me? Who do you think you are, Andrew ?
Arent you overestimating yourself? What an idiot! He doesnt know his limits,

spouting such nonsense without considering his own capabilities

Come on, Michael, dont waste your time with this hotheaded kid its beneath you.

Why bother letting a nobody get to you when you can just crush him? }

Chapter 419 Michael adjusted his designer suit with an air of superiority.

He said, Andrew, Im done.

playing games with a nobody like you.

Watch yourself if youre foolish enough to side with Lauren, I might have to eliminate you along with her. With a contemptuous smirk, Michael led his group of executives through the corporate entrance. Marcus, who was the last to leave, looked at Andrew with a sympathetic smile.

Didnt I tell you to stop coming to see Ms.

Rhodes? You not only showed up openly but also challenged our CEO arent you just digging your own grave? He was particularly concerned about Andrews bold declaration to take Michaels position. Marcus felt that Andrew was still naive about how the real world worked

With Michaels current position, all it would take was a nod of his head for his lackeys to destroy this young deputy chiefs life.

Thanks for trying to help back there, Mr.

Chapman, Andrew said with a smile.

Marcus waved his hand dismissively

I did what I could, but thats all I can do

Dr.

Lloyd, please dont provoke Michael from what I know, he can be quite ruthless.

Im not provoking him Im going to deal with him, Andrew replied firmly.

Marcus hesitated before speaking again.

Dr.

Lloyd, you have a promising future ahead of you I think theres no need to fight a losing battle against Mr. Rhodes

Also, Ms.

Rhodes has returned to the corporation, but her situation isn't great.

Anyone who dares to support her will face Michael's wrath, Marcus added meaningfully before entering Rhodes Corporation.

Andrew stood there, smiling to himself.

Marcus was a decent person who genuinely meant well, which was rare for a chance acquaintance

What Marcus did not know was that when Andrew said he would deal with Michael, he meant he would make Michael unrecognizable even to his own parents

Under the hostile gazes of several security guards, Andrew casually entered the corporate building and took the elevator to Lauren's office on the 12th floor

When Andrew entered, Lauren was discussing pending work with her secretary, Eunice, and her face lit up with surprise and joy.

She asked, Dr.

Lloyd, what brings you here? Andrew placed a bouquet of red roses he had bought on the way on her desk.

I was worried, so I came to check on you personally.

I hope I'm not disturbing you, Ms.

Rhodes

Lauren smiled gracefully as she picked up the flowers.

They smell wonderful thank you for the roses, Dr.

Lloyd.

You're not disturbing me at all

I'm actually thrilled you came to see me.

While Lauren was delighted, Eunice's expression darkened with concern.

Just say what's on your mind, Lauren said calmly.

Eunice glanced at Andrew and whispered.

Miss, Mrs.

Rhodes doesn't want Dr.

Lloyd appearing at the corporation.

That's her problem, not mine, Lauren replied sharply.

Besides, I've already told her that I'm going to have Dr.

Lloyd help me prove myself to her, so you don't need to worry about it.

Chapter 420 Very well, Eunice replied

Even so, she felt Lauren's decision lacked foresight.

The entire Rhodes Corporations upper management disapproved of her relationship with Andrew, and Michael especially despised him bringing him to the company under this double pressure would only invite trouble.

0 Andrew clearly sensed Eunices aversion to him but chose not to comment on it.

He asked, Ms.

Rhodes, now that youre back working at the company, is there anything I can help with? Lauren playfully chewed on her pen cap and replied flirtatiously, I couldnt bear to have do anything strenuous,

Dr.

Lloyd.

Just be my personal assistant here in the office.

Andrew deliberately ignored her teasing, thinking this temptress really was not afraid he might lose control and take advantage of the situation.

Lauren quickly switched back to her professional demeanor.

Then, she said decisively, Lets do this III hire youas my driver for now.

In a few days, Ill arrange a management position for you starting at the executive level

Eunice protested, Miss, executive positions cant be assigned casually they require multiple rounds of selection

Plus, Mr.

Rhodes needs to sign off on it.

If I say its fine, its fine.

Dont worry about it, Lauren stated firmly

Ms.

Rhodes, Ill pass on the executive position, Andrew interjected.

Ill just bel and part time bodyguard

your driver Eunice misinterpreted Andrews refusal as cowardice and self awareness

She assumed he knew he would make a fool of himself and face Michaels targeting if he took Laurens offer, so he chose the safer option of being her inconspicuous driver.

That works too.

Whatever position you want, I can arrange it, Lauren said

Now come with me to the central conference room Michael has called a noon meeting, apparently planning some tactical moves

Lauren led Andrew toward the conference room.

Along the way, corporate executives hurrying to the meeting showed uncomfortable expressions upon seeing Lauren.

As the Rhodes family heiress and former leader of the company, they were well aware of Laurens capabilities and feared her authority.

However, several veteran executives displayed a different attitude.

They barely acknowledged Lauren with superficial nods before strutting into the conference room. Lauren remained silent at this display, but her eyes grew colder.

Andrew observed these veteran executives thoughtfully.

It was clear that Rhodes Corporations key leadership had defected to Michaels side, which explained his arrogance.

Yet, Andrew did not consider these opportunists worth his attention.

After all, they were merely pawns in the game.