

## The Ashes 561

Chapter 561 The name of Andrews new medical center was Moonlit Apothecary

The moment Andrew saw the sign, he could not help but chuckle and ask Francesca, Fran, how del you and Lauren come up with such a name? Francesca replied as if it were obvious, because its fitting and perfect! Andrew sighed and shook his head

Fitting? Dont you think this name is a little too pretentious, like its asking for trouble? Though Andrew was not a low key person by any means, even he found the name a bit too showy for a medical center. Francesca laughed, unfazed.

Its fine, Andrew.

Everyone knows how exceptional your skills are, she said confidently.

Cedric, standing nearby, chimed in with a grin.

Dr.

Lloyd, you absolutely deserve a name like this.

Youre a miracle doctor, after all! Before Andrew could respond, a cold chuckle interrupted the moment. Simon, Cedrics senior disciple, spoke up with a hint of sarcasm.

He said, Thats right, Dr.

Lloyd.

A name like this is tailor made for you. noveldrama

Soon, everyone in Jayrodale will know about you and your so called Moonlit Apothecary Andrew simply smiled

Thank you for the compliment, Simon, but that's too soon to say.

He ignored the thinly veiled sarcasm in Simon's tone, out of respect for Cedric and Francesca, who had been nothing but supportive.

Just then, the roaring sound of engines filled the air, and Natasha and Dylan arrived with an entourage of nearly a thousand people.

The scene was chaotic, with rows of luxury cars lining the streets, leaving no room to park near the building.

Many attendees had to park blocks away.

Simon glanced at the commotion and smirked.

Dr.

Lloyd, you're out of luck today.

With Jayrodale's underground leaders like Madam Vostokoff, the infamous Black Widow, and Mr. Garner showing up, nothing good can come of this.

Wherever they go, chaos is sure to follow.

Francesca frowned and corrected him.

Simon, you're mistaken, Madam Vostokoff and Mr.

Garner are here to celebrate Andrews' grand opening! Simon scoffed, his expression full of disbelief. Celebrate? You must be joking, Fran.

He added, They're the last two major players in Jayrodale's underworld.

Their influence is on par with the city's top families.

If you think they're here to celebrate, I hate to burst your bubble, but Andrew doesn't have that kind of pull

However, Simon's words barely left his lips when Andrew casually walked over to greet Natasha and Dylan.

The two greeted him warmly, chatting and laughing like old friends.

Natasha's usual venomous demeanor was replaced with playful banter, and Dylan's entrance was even more extravagant

He had two massive stone statues carried in by 20 men, placing them at the entrance of Moonlit Apothecary! as a grand gift.

Simon stood there dumbfounded, unable to process what he was seeing.

He muttered, 'What's happening?' It seemed that Dylan and Natasha were actually there to celebrate. However, Simon was still in denial

After all, he believed Andrew was just an unassuming doctor working at Jayrodale General Hospital.

How could someone like that have the influence to pull this off? Francesca shot Simon a sideways glance, her tone indifferent but cutting.

Still doubting, Simon? I think you're out of excuses now.

Simon's face darkened as he grumbled, 'Alright, fine'

He might have some sway with the underground, but that's nothing impressive.

Lets see if he has what it takes to gain the favor of the citys elite or even government officials.

Thats the real test of power.

Chapter 562 In Simons eyes, Andrew was nothing more than someone trying to show off beyond his means

The presence of Natasha and Dylan at the grand opening of Moonlit Apothecary surely came at a hefty price

To him, it was clear Andrew had spent a fortune just to get these big shots to show up and boost his event

Without the money, Simon believed they would not even glance in Andrews direction.

Feeling like he had figured everything out, Simon grew more dismissive, even letting out a cold laugh. However, his smirk faded when he saw the Rhodes family delegation arrive, led by Tiana herself, a woman with a legendary reputation.

If that was not shocking enough, Simons jaw dropped further as Jayrodales mayor, Mark, stepped out of

his car with his secretary, grinning warmly, he walked over to congratulate Andrew.

Unbelievable, Simon muttered to himself, his jealousy and frustration rising

Have these big shots really stooped so low to show up here for Andrew? Dont they care about lowering

their status ? Francesca, standing nearby, caught his reaction and smirked.

Simon, looks like weve got societys elites and even the mayor here.

What excuse do you have left now? Simon sneered in response.

Fran, youre obviously biased because hes your boyfriend.

But isnt he already with Lauren ? Francescas face flushed, her cheeks burning with anger and embarrassment.

So what if Andrew is with Lauren ? They make a perfect couple.

Are you seriously jealous of that too? Simon scoffed.

Jealous? Of him? Please, hes nothing but a facade.

Mark my words the Rhodes family will kick him out sooner or later, and hell end up on the streets like a stray dog

1 Francescas expression softened with pity.

Lets be honest, Simon.

Youre just jealous.

Her calm words hit a nerve, and Simon exploded.

Jealous? Youve been lying to me all along, Fran! You said you.

were with Andrew, but clearly, thats not true.

And now, youre defending him even though hes with Lauren ? Have you no shame ? Anger surged through Francesca as she slapped Simon hard across the face.

Youre right.

I lied to you about being with Andrew.

So what? Even if I'm not with him, that doesn't mean I'll ever be you! Her voice grew colder as she added

, The truth is, Simon, the way you act this petty, possessive, and ugly behavior it disgusts me

Without waiting for his response, Francesca turned and walked away, leaving Simon humiliated and fuming

He held his cheeks, his eyes filled with a dangerous mix of rage and humiliation.

He grumbled, Fine, Francesca

If I can't have your heart, I'll make sure I take the rest of you Simon's mind raced with resentment as he glared after her retreating figure.

Francesca had always been his in his eyes, a prize he believed he deserved

Now, knowing that she was not dating Andrew after all, his feelings of humiliation only grew.  
noveldrama

He vowed to make Francesca his, by any means necessary.

As for Andrew? Simon clenched his fists and smirked bitterly.

Taking Francesca away was not enough.

He wanted to see Andrew ruined, humiliated, and broken.

Chapter 563 E Cedric had silently observed the entire heated exchange between Francesca and Simon.

He said nothing until Francesca stormed off in anger, leaving him to fix Simon with a stern glare before finally speaking Simon, why do you insist on tormenting yourself over Fran ? Cedric asked, his voice calm but firm

Simons face flushed with both embarrassment and rage, Mr.

Aicker, its not that I want to bother her! She lied to me she made me think she was with Andrew when she wasnt.

How is that not a direct insult to me? Cedric let out a cold snort.

Youre my top apprentice, Simon.

If you have nothing to hide, why would someones words be enough to humiliate you? Simon gritted his teeth

Its not just that! Ill inherit everything from you one day, and the Aickers dont have any male heirs to carry on the legacy

If you promise Fran to me the Aickers will have a secure future and so will she ! Cedric was so furious he actually chuckled.

You ungrateful fool! Do you even hear yourself? Simon straightened up defiantly.

Mr.

Aicker, I know what just said was disrespectful.

But you know how much I care about you and Fran.

Ive always been loyal to both of you.

Im only speaking the truth, even if its unpleasant.

If Fran doesn't marry me, who else is going to support this family and its legacy? Cedric's eyes narrowed with cold fury.

Fine

Since you've decided to bare it all, let me make something very clear -you and Fran will never happen. Ever

Your so called loyalty to me? Don't make me laugh

What you really crave is my knowledge of medicine, our family's martial arts secrets, and Francesca's beauty! Cedric's voice grew harsher as he continued, his piercing gaze making Simon flinch. Simon stammered, M Mr.

Aicker.

You knew all of that? Cedric's voice was cold as steel.

You think I've been blind? I've known about your deceit for years! I only held back because I raised you and didn't want to destroy the future I had worked to build for you

But you've been sneaking into our training chambers, stealing forbidden techniques, and practicing dangerous, unapproved methods to boost your strength

Do you even understand the severity of your actions? By the rules of the Aickers, you should've been expelled long ago.

Your entire knowledge of our martial arts and medicine would've been erased

Simon's face turned pale before quickly twisting in defiance Fine, I admit it! I've been practicing those techniques.

I've learned from the darker, forbidden paths of medicine.



So what? I never used any of it to harm you or Fran ! Cedric roared in anger.

And you still dont think youve done anything wrong? Youre a disgrace, Simon! Simons eyes reddened as he shouted back, Im not wrong! You just dont have the guts to admit it! Youre too afraid to push boundariesnoveldrama

You refuse to study the power at your fingertips, and because of that, the Aickers have fallen behind! He gestured wildly as he continued Look at the Weller family! Look at the Rhodes family! Theyve left us in the dust because youre too timid

If it werent for me, the Aickers wouldnt even be considered part of the elite anymore.

Youve achieved nothing in years!

Chapter 564 Cedric was shaking with rage.

He raised his hand, ready to strike Simon, who sneered in defiance.

Mr, Aicker, look around

So many people are watching.

Are you sure you want to cut ties with me right here ? Simons voice dripped with arrogance

He continued, If you do, by tomorrow morning, every major and minor power in Jayrodale will know that the Aicker family has splintered.

Do you really think you can handle the consequences of that scandal? Without me, the Aickers wont even be relevant anymore! Simons bitter words were laced with hatred and conceit.

Cedric quivered with fury and hissed through gritted teeth, Youve gone mad! Youre blinded by greed and ambition

As soon as we return to the Aicker residence, youll pack your things and leave.noveldrama

From this day forward, you are no longer my apprentice ! Simons face contorted with rage

Fine! You want me gone? Then give me Fran as my wife, and pass the leadership of the Aickers to me. Otherwise, I wont leave ! Do you really think that will happen? Cedric spat.

Youre right about one thing the Aickers need an heir, and Fran cant shoulder the entire burden alone. But Id rather let the family dissolve or hand it over to Andrew than give it to a poisonous snake like you. Simons eyes burned with fury.

So thats it? Youd give everything to that pretty faced Andrew? What is it about him that makes you so biased? What does he have that I dont ? Cedric gave a cold laugh.

What do you lack compared to him? Everything.

You dont even come close.

I held back the truth all these years to protect your ego, but now that youve crossed the line, its time you heard it.

Compared to Dr.

Lloyd, youre an incompetent fool in every respect.

Cedrics voice grew even colder.

Id rather have Fran be Andrews mistress than let her marry you.

At least that way, her life wont be ruined under your control

With a final glare, Cedric turned on his heel and stormed off leaving Simon shaking with rage.

Simon stood there, his fists clenched as he watched Cedric walk away.

He muttered under his breath, You senile old fool! You're digging your own grave! His humiliation and

resentment surged in waves, consuming him with each passing moment.

He replayed Cedric's words in his mind, how Cedric would rather see Francesca with Andrew than with him

That thought clawed at Simon's pride like a searing wound.

As his mind spiraled with hatred, Cedric climbed the platform at the center of the crowd, drawing everyone's attention.

The platform was set up for the Moonlit Apothecary's grand opening ceremony, reserved for special guests.

The atmosphere shifted as Cedric ascended, his face clouded with frustration.

People sensed that something was amiss

Andrew, who had been welcoming Mark and other guests, noticed the tension and immediately found Francesca.

He asked, Fran, what's going on between your grandfather and Simon? Francesca sighed in frustration. I'm not entirely sure.

I argued with Simon earlier, but I left before things escalated.

I wouldn't be surprised if he tried to force my grandpa to marry me off to him again.

That's all that maniac ever thinks about!

Chapter 565 On the stage, Cedric grabbed the microphone and spoke coldly, Apologies to

Dr.

Lloyd and all the guests.

Ive come up here to announce something important.

From this moment forward, my eldest apprentice, Simon Gaal, is expelled from my family and teachings

! Gasps rippled through the crowd, followed by a flurry of heated discussions

Cedric just made a public announcernent like that at Mount Apothecarys grand opening.

The Aickers must have some serious internal conflict! Simon is Cedrics top apprentice and is also a well known figure in Jayrodale

What could have happened to make Cedric cast him out? Ive heard Simons been infatuated with Francesca for years, but shes never been interested

Maybe thats the real reason Cedric lost his temper? After making his declaration, Cedric walked off the stage without giving further explanation.

Francesca rushed over, clutching his arm with teary eyes.

Grandpa, what happened? Why did you drive Simon away? Whats going on? she asked in distress. Cedric huffed

Fran, today is Dr.

Lloyds big day.

I won't let that ungrateful scum ruin it

Just remember if he ever thinks he can have you, it'll be over my dead body! Andrew joined them and sighed

Dr.

Aicker, was that really necessary: Cedric shook his head apologetically.

Dr.

Lloyd, I lost my composure

I shouldn't have done that during your ceremony.

Andrew smiled faintly

I wasn't talking about the timing meant that if you expel Simon, it might weaken the Aickers future. Cedric's expression hardened

Even if the Aickers collapses, I won't allow that disgrace to remain under my roof.

Andrew glanced at Francesca.

Fran, stay with your grandfather for now.

We'll catch up after the ceremony.

Francesca wiped her tears and nodded.

Don't worry, Andrew.

I'll take care of him.

You go handle the guests.

As Andrew turned to leave, his eyes grew cold.

Natasha, who had been keeping watch from a distance, took the opportunity to approach him.

Need me to step in, darling ? she whispered playfully.

Andrew's tone was sharp.

Did you see where Simon went ? Natasha nodded.

He slipped away in a fit of rage while everyone was distracted by Cedric's announcement.

Andrew frowned.

Keep an eye out.

He's vengeful.

I wouldn't be surprised if he tried to harm Cedric or Francesca.

Natasha chuckled darkly.

If he dares make a move, I'll flay him alive

She immediately ordered her West End enforcers to secure the area around Moonlit Apothecary.

Just then, another commotion stirred as a group from the Rhodes family arrived.

Andrew raised an eyebrow when he spotted Tiana among them.

He composed himself and walked forward, greeting them with a polite smile. Lauren, Mrs.

Rhodes, welcome, he said.

Lauren returned his smile warmly.

Dr.

Lloyd, congratulations! She presented him with a pair of large posters.

Andrew unrolled them and read the bold words, Dedicated to Healing and Humanity! and The Best Miracle Doctor! Thank you, Andrew said with a laugh.

He handed the banners to Dylan, who took them to be displayed later

Tiana, clad in an elegant dress befitting her stature, gracefully approached, supported by Laurens secretary, Eunice.

Behind her, Jerry led a security team of elite guards, their presence both protective and intimidating. Mr.

Lloyd, looks like you went all out for this grand opening, Tiana remarked casually. noveldrama

I take it you spent a pretty penny hiring all these people for the show?

Chapter 566 Andrew responded calmly, Mrs.

Rhodes, youre quite funny, Guests like these dont come just because of money! Tiana glanced around the scene, taking in the notable faces Hmm, Impressive.

Dylan and Natasha, the two ruling powers of Jayrodale, are here.

Cedric and Francesca showed up too.

Even Mr.

Thatcher made an appearance.

Mr.

Lloyd, you certainly have influence

Lauren beamed with pride and interjected, Dr.

Lloyd has a wide network.

He once saved Mr.

Thatchers life

Tianas smile quickly faded, and she sneered.

Its all because of Marvins connections

Theyre just here to keep up appearances.

You might not see it, Lauren, but that doesnt mean Im blind to whats really going on

Just then, a sleek Rolls Royce quietly pulled up by the curb, An elderly man dressed in a distinguished

robe stepped out, immediately drawing a stir from the crowd.



Is that Mr.

Yates? Wow! Even the wealthiest man in Jayrodale showed up to support Moonlit Apothecary. Yeah, and Mrs.

Rhodes from Rhodes Corporation is here top.

This place has some serious backing! Feels like a battle of titans ... Too bad for the guy running this place.

Hes just a doctor from Jayrodale General Hospital

The big shots might be here, but none truly care about him, The atmosphere shifted entirely as Marvins presence overshadowed Tianas earlier arrival.

Marvin strode toward Tiana, his voice warm and inviting.

Mrs.

Rhodes! Its been a while.

Youre as stunning as ever.

Tiana returned a cool smile.

And you, Mr.

Yates, are clearly thriving.

Congratulations on grooming such a remarkable ... chess piece.

Hed make a fine successor for Wealthroller Investments.

Marvin blinked, caught off guard.

Chess piece ? Im not sure I follow, Mrs.

Rhodes.

What are you suggesting? Tianas gaze flicked toward Andrew with a knowing smirk Oh, come now, Mr. Yates.

You can play dumb with Lauren, but not with me.

Marvin glanced between her and Andrew, his face remaining neutral.

Mrs.

Rhodes, youre mistaken.

Im here today for the same reason as you just to celebrate the opening of Moonlit Apothecary.

Andrew sighed, visibly annoyed.

Marvin, please make sure Mrs.

Rhodes is taken care of.

Lets keep things moving, yeah? His tone made it clear he was fed up.

Tianas penchant for making baseless assumptions and attaching labels to him was starting to wear thin.

If she were not Laurens mother, he might have already asked her to leave.

Marvin chuckled obediently.

Of course.

Mrs.

Rhodes, this way, please.

Tiana's eyes narrowed slightly in suspicion as she felt something did not add up.

She wondered if she was wrong about their relationship

After all, why was Andrew giving Marvin orders like that and why was Marvin complying so easily? Hmphnoveldrama

Marvin and Andrew.

You think your little act can fool me ? Tiana thought coldly as she followed Marvin to the VIP area.

They're playing some twisted game, but I won't let Lauren become a pawn in their schemes.

She bit her lip in frustration, her thoughts racing.

The high society families in Jayrodale had always been locked in -subtle battles with Marvin, the outsider turned mogul.

For her, this event was not just a ceremony but another move in that ongoing game of power and influence.

Nonetheless, Tiana was confident that the Rhodes family would not fall into Marvin's hand, especially with her

Chapter 567 Andrew had not expected his clinic's grand opening to draw such a large crowd.

The flow of congratulatory gifts from different guests kept him busy

Fortunately, Dylan acted as his de facto manager, overseeing the collection of gifts and seating arrangements for the visitors.

Meanwhile, Francesca and Lauren threw themselves into hosting duties

They moved gracefully through the crowd, ensuring everyone had enough food and drinks, their faces glowing with joy

Both women were determined to make the event a success.

However, Tiana watched all this with a growing scowl.

Seeing Lauren, the celebrated heiress of the Rhodes family and the city's most admired beauty her own daughter acting like a mere server was more than she could tolerate.

Jerry, Tiana snapped, go get Lauren.

My daughter is not meant for menial tasks like this! Before Jerry could move, Marvin chuckled from his seat next to her.

Come now, Mrs.

Rhodes.

They're young and enjoying themselves.

Let them have this experience.

Tiana's tone hardened

If she wants experience, she should be learning to manage Rhodes Corporation as its future CEO, making strategic decisions.

Not acting like a country maid at Andrews beck and call! Marvin shook his head, unfazed.

With all due respect, I think youre missing the point.

Lauren seems to be genuinely happy.

And besides, whats wrong with helping Mr.

Lloyd ? Theyll be family soon enough Tianas face darkened with fury, and she slammed her hand on the table, causing the tea to spill

Marvin ! Ill warn you now Andrew thinking he can pursue Lauren is a delusion.

Who does he think he is? And dont think I dont see your game.

Youre using Andrew to bait Lauren and drag Rhodes Corporation into your schemes.

I wont allow it! Her cold, commanding voice silenced nearby conversations.

Even Jerry looked uncomfortable

Everyone knew Tiana had a volatile temper cold as ice but quick to ignite like wildfire.

Few dared to challenge her, not even her husband, the head of the Rhodes family.

Despite her outburst, Marvin remained calm and unbothered Mrs.noveldrama

Rhodes, you truly believe Lauren is lowering herself by being with Andrew? Its not about lowering herself , Tiana hissed

Its degrading and absurd! Let me be clear Lauren is already engaged to someone from the Driscoll family in Blumedale

Andrew isnt even close to being worthy.

Youd do well to control him! Marvin smirked

I hate to disappoint you, but thats not something I can do.

Tianas eyes narrowed with cold rage.

Marvin, youre mocking me! This isnt a game.

Marvin raised his hands in feigned surrender.

I wouldnt dare mock someone as powerful as you, Mrs. Rhdoes

But you misunderstand Andrew doesnt answer to me.

Its quite the opposite.

Tiana growled, Dont twist the facts with your riddles, Marvin ! I see right through you.

Whatever youre plotting with Andrew, Rhodes Corporation and my daughter are off-limits.

At that moment, Cedric approached with a friendly smile.

Mr.

Yates, Mrs.

Rhodes, mind if I join the conversation? Despite his eccentricity, Cedric's reputation as a renowned miracle doctor gave him significant influence.

After all, people often needed a skilled doctor more than money or power.

Chapter 568 Tiana maintained her composure out of respect and nodded slightly.

Please, have a seat, she said, signaling Cedric to join them.

Marvin chuckled and chimed in, Cedric, you're different from Mrs.

Rhodes here.

Your granddaughter Fran is running around just as much as Lauren, but you don't seem to mind it one bit

Cedric stroked his beard with a content smile.

A little hard work never hurt anyone.

Once this medical center gets going, I plan to have Fran here often to lend a hand.

Working alongside Dr.

Lloyd will be invaluable for improving her medical expertise.

Marvin grinned and glanced at Tiana.

See, Mrs.

Rhodes? That's what I call vision.

Sure, the girls are hustling around and probably exhausted, but they're happy.

And frankly, Mr.

Lloyd seems to have that kind of charm, doesn't he? Tiana's jaw clenched as she spat through gritted

teeth, Nonsense! Both Cedric and Marvin shared an awkward look, knowing how touchy Tiana could be

Despite their equal standing in age and status, neither wanted to cross her volatile temper.

Speaking of Fran, Tiana began, shifting gears with an icy calm.

She and Lauren are close in age

Fran is a respected chief doctor in Jayrodale General Hospital and a well-bred lady from a prominent family.

Have you arranged a marriage for her? to have an Cedric smirked confidently.

I leave that up to the young folks.

However, I have noticed that Fran seems to Interest in Dr.

Lloyd, and the two get along splendidly.

So I'll let them develop things naturally.

Tiana's eyes widened in shock.

You want Fran and Andrew to end up together? Cedric's gaze hardened.



Why not? Is there a problem with that? With a firm tone, Cedric continued, Let me make one thing clear , Mrs.

Rhodes.

Fran and Lauren are like sisters, and if they both have feelings for Dr.

Lloyd, theyll compete fairly.

We, as their elders, should stay out of it.

And for the record, Fran wont be stepping aside just because Lauren has your backing.

Tiana looked incredulous and said, Cedric, have you lost your mind? Who told you Lauren is even interested in Andrew ? She shook her head and scoffed, That boy is lucky Im toleating his presence.

Hes not worthy of Laurens attention, and III never allow any relationship between them! Cedric, however

, broke into a broad grin, clapping his hands.

Perfect! Thats excellent news! If Lauren is stepping aside, that clears the way for Fran and Dr.

Lloyd ! What a cause for celebration! He chuckled heartily.

In fact, once this grand opening is over, the Aickers will host a three day feast to celebrate! Marvin laughed along

Cedric, your shameless enthusiasm is something else! Ive got to hand it to you.

Tiana was fuming

Her chest rose and fell in frustration, and her eyes narrowed in disbelief

Was Cedric out of his mind? He seemed all too eager to push his granddaughter toward Andrew as if the man were some priceless Treasure.

Her thoughts darkened as she observed Marvin and Cedrics camaraderie.

She thought bitterly, Marvin must have sunk his claws into Cedric too.

This old fox is manipulating everyone, even dragging the Aickers family into his schemes.noveldrama

Inwardly, she cursed Andrew.

Not only had he enchanted her daughter Lauren, but now Francesca and even Cedric seemed captivated by him.

Chapter 569 Good evening, everyone! Welcome to the grand opening of Moonlit Apothecary, Lauren announced gracefully from the stage.

Laurens beauty was legendary in Jayrodale, and all eyes were instantly drawn to her radiant presence. She smiled warmly and continued, III keep it brief thank you for coming, and I hope youll continue to support Moonlit Apothecary.

Now, lets get the feast started! With that, cheers erupted from the crowd as the celebration reached its peak.

Over a hundred large banquet tables were packed with guests enjoying the spread of delicious food and drinks.

Laughter and conversation filled the air as people dove into the feast.

Andrew glanced at the lively scene, unsure how to respond Francesca, her dimpled smile glowing, approached and teased, So, Andrew, how did we do? Lauren and I pulled off this banquet pretty

well, right? You did a great job, Andrew replied, grinning Thanks for saving me from spending a fortune. Francesca puffed her chest proudly.

Exactly! Think about it just the guys from West End and South City who cause to celebrate are over a thousand.

If we had taken them to a fancy hotel for dinner, youd be out hundreds of thousands.

Lauren soon joined them, holding the hem of her dress as she walked over and looped her arm through Andrews

Frans right, she said playfully.

Even though youre not burting for money, Andrew, Fran and I will be your future financial advisors. Well make sure you dont waste a dime.

Francesca blushed and waved her hand.

Oh, please! Youre the one marrying him, not me.

Lauren raised an eyebrow and chuckled.

Really? Then why do I feel like youve been the most involved today? You came up with the whole

banquet idea and worked harder than me! Francescas face reddened further as she stammered, Thats because the Rhodes family is loaded, so you dont worry about these things.

But the Aickers arent that rich.

Weve learned to be more frugal.

Lauren grinned mischievously and turned to Andrew.

Hear that, Dr.

Lloyd? Frans got great money sense

Maybe you should marry her as your second wife so she can manage your finances.noveldrama

Andrew chuckled nervously, knowing better than to engage in that conversation.

Francesca, however, glared at Lauren in embarrassment.

Lauren, stop it! People are listening! Lauren giggled.

Okay, okay.

Ill behave.

Lets grab some food.

Francesca clapped her hands in excitement.

Great idea! This is my first time attending a banquet like this.

Its actually a lot of fun! Just then, a sleek motorcade arrived, drawing everyones attention.

The convoy of over ten black luxury cars, including Mercedes and Audis, moved in smoothly and commanded the crowds curiosity.

As the car doors opened, a group of men in martial arts uniforms swiftly exited, forming an orderly line. Each wore a headband with the words Madblade Martial Academy boldly displayed

The bustling atmosphere quieted momentarily as people turned to observe the newcomers.

The Madblade Martial Academy was infamous for its arrogance in Jayrodale.

Even prestigious events, such as Kanes funeral and Harveys rise to power, had not been important enough for them to attend

From the VIP table, Tiana took a slow sip of tea and smirked Well, well ... looks like someones here to stir up some trouble.

Marvin, I think were in for a good show.

Chapter 570 Tiana smirked, and it was obvious from her tone that she was eager to watch Andrew embarrass himself.

She said, With the way the Madblade Martial Academy operates, its impossible for this Moonlit Apothecary to get through the day without some trouble

Even with you sitting here, Marvin, I bet Andrew will end up with a few slaps across the face. Marvin chuckled coldly

If they dare cause trouble, Ill have a word with Vince.

Well see if his academy is tougher than my Wealthroller Investments.

Cedric scoffed

Vince has gone into seclusion to focus on martial arts training.

If anyones leading this charge, itll be his son, Rodney.

That brat is trouble, Vince, the academys founder and an infamous martial arts master, had long been feared for his domineering presence in Jayrodales martial arts scene.

Tianas eyes glinted with amusement.

Ah, Rodney, huh? With his temper, bloodshed seems inevitable today.

Down among the crowd, many underground figures eyed the academy members warily.

Under the subtle direction of Dylan and Natasha, over a thousand of their men were already watching the Madblade representatives like .wolves ready to pounce

If anyone dared make a scene, it would be a death sentence

In a shadowy corner, Finley sat with a few men from Hidden Dragons, who had been sent to support him

One of them sneered.

Mr.

Moore, I thought you said Andrew was something special, but he doesnt look like it to me.

The academys stomping all over him, and hes not even making a peep

Exactly! Whats stopping us? We should just flip these tables and go after him! another one added.

A third person nodded eagerly.

No need to rush

Let the Madblade guys break him first.

Once Andrews lying half-dead, then we can show up and prove Hidden Dragons are the real power here

The men laughed and traded comments, convinced that Andrew and Moonlit Apothecary were finished Since Atlas death, Finley had become more cautious, having learned from multiple humiliating defeats at Andrews hands.

He had once been the loudmouth, flashing his familys Hidden Dragons connections everywhere, but now he knew better.

Dont get me wrong, Andrew and I have a blood feud, Finley whispered.

But right now, we play it cool.

There are some serious players here we shouldnt mess with today.

Keeping a low profile is the smart move.noveldrama

His words stunned his men into silence, One frowned and asked, Mr.

Moore ..

are you scared now? Yeah! Whats there to be afraid of? Were the Hidden Dragons ! Andrew has defied us too many times already.

He deserves to be taken out ! Another enforcer, face red with excitement, urged, Come on! Lets make a scene.

Burn this place to the ground, beat Andrew until he cant stand, and boom our name will be feared across

all of Jayrodale ! The group grew restless, eager for violence.

They just waited for Finleys order to strike.