

## **The Girlboss 531**

### Chapter 531 -

Frustration.

That was the only thing Aria felt as she strolled through White Hall's gardens, unable to appreciate the bright flowers blooming around her.

She could not forget Kim's calm smile, her knuckles clenching as she cursed, "Fuck them all! Jean, Winter, the White family... All of them! None of them can bear to see me living better than them! Did I hurt them or something?!"

Her grief grew as she rambled on, before she finally cracked and dropped to a crouch, sobbing. "What did I do wrong? I just wanted a better life! You all had to go all out to mess with me!"

As her sobs grew louder, she drew Eron's attention.

His first look at her was one of contempt, though he soon had an idea.

Clapping his hands while grinning smugly, he put on a kindly face as he asked, "Aria Lond, was it? Aren't you Mr. Lawrence's girlfriend?"

Aria was sobbing even as she looked up, on the verge of a breakdown. "I won't be soon enough."

"Hoho..." Eron chuckled as he stood, clasping his hands behind his back and cutting straight to the chase. "That's terrible. Given Mr. Lawrence's temper, if he found out you lied to him about something so serious, you'd probably be dead."

"What?!" Aria's heart was left pounding. "H-He's not like that... I did lie to him, but he said he won't do anything to you. I..."

She started panicking—while she was merely bemoaning losing her life in riches and glamor before, Eron’s words left her worried about her life.

After all, Frank had shown his moves before. And he was certainly savage when he beat up those thugs, be it at the bar or the street. Even now, those memories were fresh in Aria’s mind.

“I mean, he didn’t know the truth before, so he would have to cajole you first.” Eron continued to gaslight her. “Just think about it—it was all your fault, right? If you were in his place, would you stand someone who deceived you like that?”

Aria was clutching her head as she screamed right then, “Noooo!!! I don’t want to die! I-I’m still young... I can still marry rich! I-I can’t die!”

What an idiot.

Eron looked on as Aria panicked with disdain, though his gaze soon turned gentle.

“Don’t worry. He won’t do anything to you as long as you’re in my house.”

“W-Who are you?” Aria asked, finally realizing she never asked.

“Me?” Eron smiled. “Eron White, head of the White family here in Southstream. Don’t worry, Ms. Lond—even Frank Lawrence would have to show me due respect in my house.”

“Thank you so much!” Aria’s mood improved a little.

## Chapter 532

Soon however, Aria flinched as she remembered something else and quickly asked, “What about after I leave White Hall? C-Can you still protect me after that, Mr. White?”

“Oh, well...” Eron shook his head as if troubled. “I’m sorry, Ms. Lond... But if you leave, Mr. Lawrence isn’t going to play to our tune.”

Aria was shocked, her heart sinking rock-bottom again despite just finding some sense of comfort.

“Mr. White, please, you have to help me,” she pleaded. “Please talk to Frank. I-It was just a mistake, I didn’t mean anything bad. I just love him so much, I...”

Seeing how gullible Aria was, Eron could not feel more disdain for Aria at this point.

Still, he kept his thoughts from showing because he needed her for his plans.

Pretending to be deep in thought, he then walked up and helped her to her feet and whispered into her ear, “Actually, there’s no way to get Mr. Lawrence to forgive you... But I have a proposal. I’ll only tell you if you’re willing to do it, but if you refuse, you just have to suffer Mr. Lawrence’s wrath... which I’m sure would be a fate worse than death.”

“Tell me, Mr. White! What is it?”

Aria’s nerves could not be stretched thinner, and since Eron was clearly keeping her on tenterhooks, she quickly added, “Just save me, Mr. White. I’ll do anything you ask!”

“Hoho...” Eron’s eyes narrowed as he smiled, knowing that the time was right. “In that case, I’ll say it: Mr. Lawrence would be taking part in a martial tourney tomorrow, and that’s your chance at saving your own skin.”

Aria was completely puzzled. “Frank’s going to a tourney... is this my chance?”

“I have a poison here.” Eron held up a small packet, smiling faintly. “It’s odorless and tasteless, but it will numb Mr. Lawrence’s nerves while he takes part in the tourney. It’s nothing malignant, or Mr. Lawrence would notice it easily given his knowledge in medicine. Just poison him with this, and he’ll lose the tourney and be too hurt to come after you.”

“Poison?” Aria gathered herself as she took the packet from Eron.

She mused to herself for a while, but her eyes soon flashed viciously. “Don’t you have a more potent poison? Something lethal.”

Her request left Eron taken aback, though he almost laughed out loud.

She was far more vile than he thought! Was she not just declaring how much she loved Frank earlier? And now, she wanted him dead?

Still, he held back a smile as he said, “That’s unnecessary. I’m sure you’ll understand what it means to not overreach. Like I said, Frank is well-versed in medicine and would notice a poison that’s too obvious. On the other hand, this is budsnuft—a family recipe that almost wouldn’t qualify as poison. It only numbs the nerves and is used as a painkiller. Just make Mr. Lawrence drink it tonight, and you’ll understand tomorrow.”

Aria’s fingers clenched around the small packet, her eyes flashing viciously.

It was Frank who insisted on finding the truth, and he could not blame her for this! She had no choice!

“By the way...”

Before he left, Eron leveled a twinkling gaze at Aria. “You can come to my bedroom if you’re not too busy—there’s plenty more to discuss, see?”

Eron’s meaning was obvious, and Aria did not hesitate as she grinned coquettishly. “Of course.”

## Chapter 533

In the afternoon, Liv went to Frank’s room while he was training and said bluntly, “Frank Lawrence, you’d better keep your hands to yourself.”

Frank frowned, confused by her words. “Keep my hands to myself? Why?”

“Don’t even get me started.” Liv snorted as she planted herself on the couch, crossing her legs as she continued haughtily, “Kim’s father has already found a fiancé for her. Keep your distance from Kim if you know what’s good for you.”

“And what does that have to do with me?” Frank merely found Liv mystifying.

His retort stung Liv, and she leapt up, pointing at his nose as she snapped, “Can’t you see?! Kim likes you! I can’t even tell what you have going for you, but she’s obsessing over you so much every passing day! So you’d do well to stay away from her for the sake of her happiness!”

“Then talk to her about it. Why me?”

Frank was left speechless and gestured for her to leave. “What Ms. White does is none of my business, whether she’s engaged to the Yaffes or someone else. And I was never interested.”

“Fine. I guess you know your place.” Liv snorted but stopped at the door as she remembered.

Pursing her lips as she turned to Frank, she asked, “Do you know anything about Flying Sword Sect being destroyed?”

“No,” Frank lied.

“Knew you wouldn’t.” Liv snorted. “You’re just a healer who’s a little better than the rest. Know your place—don’t think we owe you just because you saved Kim. And we’re equal after you took the Earthen Dragonheart.”

Before she could leave, Frank sighed, “I saved you too when I saved Ms. White, didn’t I?”

“What was that?” Liv’s eyes flashed warily as Frank mentioned it.

“Nothing,” Frank said. “I’d just rather you show me due respect because I did save your life too.”

Liv flushed right then and snorted as she strode out of his room.

Still, Liv's outburst aroused Frank's suspicion. "Fiance... Does that mean that Kim's fiance is from Sage Lake Sect?"

That explains why the White family would receive word so quickly, though Frank doubted that Kim would conspire with Sage Lake Sect against him.

In his mind, Kim was an upstanding person—she showed her decisiveness when she accepted his treatment and her integrity when she scolded her own father over the Earthen Dragonheart.

Frank remembered Eron then and how disrespectful he was the last time they met at the drawing room of this very residence. It was assuredly a far cry from his attitude when he visited Frank yesterday...

As the pieces fell into place, Frank called Carol, saying he would not be going back tonight and told them to sleep early.

Winter snatched Carol's phone just then, mumbling irresolutely for a long while before telling Frank to stay safe while apologizing for her poor behavior over the last two days.

"Haha..." Frank chuckled, a warmth unfurling in his heart when he heard her voice. "Yeah, I'll be back tomorrow.... Oh, and let's go out on a trip in two days."

## Chapter 534

Over at Skywater Bay, Winter was taken aback.

"A trip? What about Aria..."

"Don't worry, Winter," Frank assured her. "It turns out that it was just a misunderstanding—nothing happened between Aria and I."

Winter froze and dropped Carol's phone with a loud thud.

“Winter? Winter?” Frank called out from the other end.

Winter turned toward her mother in disbelief. “Mom... Did I hear that right? Pinch me! Is this real?”

“Silly girl.” Carol smiled, shaking her head as she left to make dinner.

“Oh, I’m still here, Frank,” Winter exclaimed as she scrambled to pick up the phone from the floor, her usual liveliness instantly restored. “In two days, was it? No problem—I have the day off.”

“Then it’s a promise.”

“Yes!”

Winter whooped in joy once she hung up, throwing herself on the couch, and promptly told Jean about the good news.

Jean, however, was not surprised.

[Hah! I knew Aria deceived Frank, and you doubted me before! See? When I asked her if he actually liked her, his reaction made it clear he didn’t. I knew right then they’d split up eventually.]

Still, Winter felt sympathy: [Doesn’t that mean Aria would be sad?]

Jean’s reply was predictably annoyed.

[Who, Aria Lond? That’s enough from you, princess—you had no idea how high-and-mighty she held herself the other day, and she even said we’re no longer friends. Why bother?]

Then, she added: [By the way do you remember? Our professor applied for sick leave. And you're saying Frank knows medicine? Why not invite him as a guest lecturer?]

[I'll think about it.]

Winter was hesitant since she would need Frank's permission.

[Fair enough. See you tomorrow.]

[Yeah.]

Winter sighed as she lowered her phone.

After musing to herself for a while, she went against Jean's advice and sent Aria a text.

[I don't know what happened, but we're still friends, right?]

—

In White Hall, Aria's phone jingled in Eron White's bedroom just as she finished her bath.

Thud!

Her visage contorted with fury as soon as she read Winter's text, and she even stamped on it for good measure. "That fake bitch! Sending texts just to mock me?!"

"Oh, don't worry, Aria." Eron grinned in his bed, resting his chin on his hands as he lay on his stomach. "Just do what I tell you to tonight, and no one will be laughing at you."

"Yeah..."



Aria walked up to his bed, her hips swaying flamboyantly as she gazed lovingly at the man who was old enough to be her father.

“You’d take responsibility for me, right?” she purred.

“Of course.” Eron smiled, with a hint of disdain Aria could not see.

In his mind, she could not be dumber, believing herself to be a rich mistress when she was just a disposable tool!

## Chapter 535

There was a grand banquet in the evening at White Hall, and Frank sought out Aria.

“I won’t hold you accountable for what you did,” he said. “You can keep everything I gave you, but I have one request—once we return to Riverton, you’ll tell Winter that nothing ever happened between us.”

Aria was taken aback. “I-I can keep your presents? You’re not upset?”

Noting her disbelief, Frank nodded. “I had lost myself that night, or that wouldn’t have happened at all. Don’t worry—I’m not upset, but no more dirty tricks like these, okay?”

Aria nodded repeatedly as she saw the clear warning in Frank’s eyes. “Oh, are you going for a tourney tomorrow?”

“Yes.”

“Then...” Aria appeared to be at a loss, but soon resolved herself and picked up the glass on the table and poured in wine. “Thank you for forgiving me, Frank. Cheers.”

Frank sighed in turn—while Aria had clearly made a mistake, he was responsible too.

It was the first time in a long while since he passed out drunk, and he really should be more careful from now on.

With that in mind, he took the glass from Aria and chugged it.

When he was done, he said, “I hope you’ll clear the air with Jean and Winter, so that you’ll still be friends.”

“Yeah, sure.” Aria quickly nodded, having been staring wide-eyed as Frank finished the glass of wine.

She breathed a clear sigh of relief when he was done before turning toward Eron.

Seeing his nod of approval, she flashed a smug smile...

“Thank you for staying in White Hall, Mr. Lawrence. It’s an honor of a lifetime,” Eron said, quickly toasting Frank while cursing Aria under his breath.

She was so ignorant that she did not know enough to hide her reactions—it would be all over if Frank caught on!

If his family did not contribute, Sage Lake Sect would never agree to betrothing his daughter to the sect chief’s son!

“You’re acting strangely today, Dad.”

On the other hand, Kim found her father’s fawning over Frank bizarre.

After all, he had been badmouthing Frank endlessly after Frank took the Earthen Dragonheart and only stopped when the Yaffes vanished without a trace.

There was no telling who destroyed the Yaffes, but Eron felt threatened since they were clearly made an example of.

He was constantly being eaten by his own insecurities, and since Kim was his only trump card, he needed to get her a better husband.

Since he could not count on the Yaffes now, the only candidate that caught his eye was Maron Ocean, the son of Sage Lake Sect's chief.

It was alleged he recently reached Birthright rank, and Eron himself was especially sure.

After all, there was that freak thunderstorm he and his daughter witnessed before—the omen that Maron had ascended, even though he was only in his twenties.

To cause such omen, it went without saying how profound the man's talent was.

That was why he was bootlicking Sage Lake Sect so hard—as long as they had Maron's favor, the White family would inevitably become the top family of Southstream!

That was why he volunteered to lure Frank over to his house without Kim's knowledge.

“Haha! Frank Lawrence... You asked for it!” Eron could laugh right then.

## Chapter 536

Even as Eron smiled warmly, he was drawing up plans in his mind.

He had given Frank his chance to walk away, but Frank had to take away his Earthen Dragonheart anyway. If Frank had not, it would not have been so difficult for Eron to arrange a marriage between Kim and Maron!

If anything, Frank taking away the Earthen Dragonheart and Eron letting Sage Lake Sect have their way with him made them even!

Kim was at once uneasy to see that look on his father's face.

After the banquet, Kim went to his study. "What are you up to, Dad?"

Eron scowled since she was being very blunt.

"Nothing," he said quietly. "It's late. Go to bed already."

"Does it involve the fiance you mentioned before?" Kim pressed worriedly. "If you're planning to harm Frank, I'd suggest you stop right now."

"What would you know?!" Eron snapped sternly. "Everything I do is for your sake and for our family! What, did you think Frank was the one who destroyed the Yaffes? I've looked into him—he might know medicine and martial arts, but he has nothing else going for him. He's now no more than Vicky Turnbull's gigolo, and to be frank, insignificant."

"So you are up to something. Dad, I'm begging you, just listen to me once—don't mess with him, alright?" Kim pleaded.

Eron only grew sterner. "You're too young, and I understand you're attached to the brat, but you'll be marrying a man better than Frank Lawrence or Seth Yaffe soon. That's all I'll say."

"Dad!" Kim despaired to see her father's stubbornness.

Be it with the Yaffes or whoever he had in mind now, he never considered her opinion, forcing her to marry someone without her agreement.

She obviously did not like it, but Eron remained stubborn.

Still, she came up with a bold idea, balling her knuckles as she strode out of Eron's study.

"I'm running away!" she growled.

Instead of being treated as her father's puppet and leverage, she should take fate into her own hands—even if it killed her!

That's why she did not hesitate to knock on Frank's door and enter.

As soon as she saw him, she held her gaze and said, "Let's run away, Mr. Lawrence."

"What?" Her sudden request and wounded look left Frank utterly confused, especially since he did nothing to warrant it either. "Is everything alright, Ms. White?"

"My dad's planning to harm you, Mr. Lawrence," Kim pressed. "Just run and take me with you. I can't stand this place for another second."

Frank raised a brow.

Amazing—Eron's entire plan was exposed by his own daughter.

Liv just came this afternoon to warn Frank, and now Kim was asking him urgently to take her away...

Nonetheless, Frank shook his head. "You shouldn't joke about things like these, Ms. White."

"I'm not joking!" Kim's eyes were red, and she stubbornly refused to budge. "Take me, or I'll shout for help and tell them you're molesting me!"

"Really...?"

Frank was actually surprised that a polite and soft-spoken heiress like Kim could get so drastic, threatening him like this!

## Chapter 537

However, Frank was not pushover himself to be threatened by such a cheap move.

Seeing that Kim was not budging, he folded his arms before his chest and said quietly, "Go ahead and yell. I'm fine with it."

"I'll do it!" Kim snapped tempestuously.

Frank snorted. "Go on."

"Help! Someone... Frank Lawrence... touched me! Help!!!"

Not expecting this turn of events, Frank had to leap up and clasp his hand over her mouth, feeling defeated just then. "Don't you know no shame? Is this how you treat your guests, Ms. White?!"

"I don't care," Kim snapped, too indignant to be bothered. "I'll keep yelling, and you're not getting away once everyone hears me!"

Kim appeared totally harmless, but she was certainly tough once she got stubborn.

Exasperated, he invited her over to Riverton the next few days after he acquired the Goldeater Cane.

It was only then that Kim left, while Frank was left speechless for an entire night.

Frank woke up early the next morning, practicing his usual return before heading out alone with the directions Kim gave yesterday.

He was heading for the secluded Silver Spring Dojo, which was built deep within the mountains for some reason.

It would appear they wanted to keep themselves free from the mundane and put their heart and soul into pursuing martial arts. Even so, they could not escape Sage Lake Sect, as the sect was using them as bait to lure Frank to a quiet place.

The road there was bumpy, and Frank's car could not advance any further once he reached the mountain.

He alighted and walked up the mountain, and he had just arrived at a thick bamboo forest when he heard the clashing of metals.

As dried leaves settled, he saw an elderly but spirited white-haired man fighting several black-clad assassins.

"How dare you attack me! Where did you even come from?!" he bellowed.

"Beat them up, Grandpa!"

A young girl cheered on the old man as he fought.

"Rising Boltsucker!"

The old man danced around the black-clad man, his palm technique vicious and leaving audible shockwaves in its wake.

He would hit the black-clad men's weapons, causing the metallic sound Frank heard before.

Pow!

The old man's palm eventually landed on one of the black-clad men's shoulders. He reared his head as he coughed blood, before rolling over the ground and turning to flee.

"We got the wrong man. Run!" he cried, and the other black-clad men turned to run as well.

The old man was going to chase after them but stopped only at cursing them since he would be leaving his granddaughter undefended.

However, he turned to see Frank standing behind his granddaughter and bellowed, "Are you with them?!"

His granddaughter flinched and turned to find that Frank had appeared behind her before she knew it.

"Who are you?" she demanded, even pointing rudely at him fearlessly.

"I'm Frank Lawrence, a nobody." Frank nodded politely, able to tell that both the old man and his granddaughter were trained outside a sect and were therefore not hostile.

"Oh, you..."

Seeing that Frank did not have any screws loose, the old man moved for a closer look and asked, "You're joining the recruitment tourney too?"

Chapter 538

Frank nodded. "Indeed I am."

The old man clicked his tongue in turn. "What a mess, allowing all sorts to join this party."



Still, he could read through Frank's spirited gaze to tell that he was one who could hold his own, through his spirited eyes alone. He might even be an elite in wielding vigor.

However, judging from the old man's black-clad assailants from earlier, Silver Spring Dojo's recruitment tourney was not just a tourney—Birthright rank elites might even show up in droves.

A young man like Frank would die before seeing what hit him without any sort of protection.

Clicking his tongue, the old man raised a hand to stop Frank. "Mr. Lawrence, I suggest you return to where you came from—you could see that I was attacked just because I was heading to Silver Spring Dojo. Would you be able to stop them in my place?"

Before Frank could answer, the old man's granddaughter giggled. "Sir, you have the looks, so don't die here senselessly. Listen to my grandfather and go!"

Frank was not actually annoyed despite being belittled by grandfather and granddaughter, even smiling. "Actually, this whole tourney was a trap in the first place, and it's meant for me. From where I'm standing, you should both be leaving!"

"Hey!" The old man's granddaughter stood akimbo, clearly disgruntled. "How'd you know the tourney was a trap, and who the hell are you? Who would anyone bother to go through such lengths for you?"

The old man narrowed his eyes in turn, stroking his beardly as he said, "Mr. Lawrence, you're saying you're aware this is a trap meant for you... Then why are you walking right into it?"

"They have something I want. Forgive me for not elaborating on the rest," Frank said and nodded at the two again before striding past them, heading further into the first.

"Hey! Honestly, how could someone be so full of himself, Grandpa?!" The old man's granddaughter huffed even as she turned toward the old man.

The old man, however, was staring fixedly and thoughtfully in the direction where Frank was leaving.

Soon, he said, "Come, we're going after him."

"What?! Are you really buying into his crap?!"

—

The mountain's forest was actually a long stretch of land, but the scenery was picturesque and the waters clear.

As the trio traveled together, the old man kept trying to probe Frank, intent on finding out his history.

Frank, however, only mentioned that he was from Riverton and nothing else.

On the other hand, the old man's granddaughter had different ideas.

"Why don't you take up tutelage under my grandfather?" she suggested earnestly. "You'll learn a thing or two, and at least you won't get killed if you start boasting again."

Frank simply smiled but said nothing, which left her further annoyed. "Hmph! Looking a gift horse in the mouth!"

Soon, they were standing at a quiet clearing, looking out at the gates of Silver Spring Dojo.

The dojo's surroundings were serene, but it lacked people and could well just be a part of the scenery.

"Hahaha! You fell for our trap, Frank Lawrence!"

A familiar shrill laughter greeted Frank just as they stepped through the front gates, and the gates shut behind them on their own.

“Heh...” Frank, however, remained calm as he looked up in amusement. “Actually, I’m surprised you’re still after me Quinn Ocean. Coming for your death again? After you had to feign insanity to escape me before?”

“What? Quinn Ocean?!” The old man beside Frank did a double take.

As his granddaughter looked on in confusion, he gulped and stuttered in fear, “Quinn Ocean is the daughter of Sage Lake Sect’s high elder... And this is really a trap meant for Mr. Lawrence, just as he said?!”

## Chapter 539

Quinn strode out from the inner hall of the dojo, shaking with rage as she bellowed, “Silence!”

She had never told anyone she feigned insanity just to escape Frank, but it was assuredly the lowest point of her existence, and she would never tell anyone about it!

If anyone found out that the daughter of Sage Lake Sect’s high elder would stoop that low to save herself, her reputation would be dragged through the mud!

“What, did I hit a nerve?” Frank chuckled coolly and nonchalantly. “Did it never cross your mind that I spared you because you looked that pathetic?”

“Keep talking, Frank Lawrence!” Quinn shrieked. “You’ve killed my fiance and now you’ve insulted me! I won’t show mercy!”

She had to say something since the Sage Lake Sect pawns standing nearby were already avoiding her eyes.

Waving at them, she bellowed, “Go! Anyone who takes him down will be taught Sage Lake Sect’s esoteric techniques and win the Goldeater Cane!”

“Charge!”

Upon hearing the rewards, all the black-clad men lurking outside the walls of Silver Spring Dojo kicked open the door as they charged inside, encircling Frank, the old man, and his granddaughter.

And there were over a hundred of them!

“What...” The old man was actually petrified when he saw their numbers and quickly turned toward Quinn, begging, “Please, Miss Ocean. I merely met Mr. Lawrence by chance—we’re not friends!”

“You’re so embarrassing, Grandpa.” His granddaughter snorted, actually unable to stand him just then.

Naturally, her attitude left the old man fuming. “You ignorant whelp!”

Those black-clad men were all vigor-wielding elites who serve the high elder of the Sage Lake Sect, and the old man could actually sense from their presence alone that some were above that!

They were on a completely different level compared to the black-clad men who ambushed them before, and given their numbers, the old man naturally chose not to put up resistance.

“Hmph, I don’t care! You came with that bastard, and that means you’re with him!” Quinn shrieked from the front. “Go! Capture Frank Lawrence alive and kill the spare!”

As the black men brandished their weapons and closed ranks around the trio, the old man could see there was no turning back.

Scowling, he grumbled at Frank, “Mr. Lawrence, you’ve killed us all!”

“You’re really embarrassing, Grandpa—you’ve already lost out to Mr. Lawrence in style.” His granddaughter was suddenly no longer his fan and turned towards Frank. “You’re not a coward like my grandpa, right?”

“What, with this lot? Never.” Frank chuckled coolly.

“Nice.” The granddaughter nodded in approval. “Though I think you should give up already. Tell what’s-her-name... right, Ms. Quinn-pretended-to-be-nuts-to-run-away to spare us this one time.”

Frank almost burst out in laughter at the old man’s granddaughter’s sarcasm, while Quinn’s face darkened.

Almost losing it right then, she screamed so hard her voice almost broke, “What are you spacing out for?! Get them already!”

The black-clad men finally gritted their teeth and ceased their probing as they charged.

Frank did not take them lightly—his eyes flashing, he invoked Five-Peat Archeus with his meridian nexus, turning vigor into pure vigor that enveloped his entire self.

Chapter 540

Clang!

A black-clad man’s machete struck Frank squarely in the neck, only to resound with a metallic clang.

“What?! Projecting your vigor... You’re actually Birthright rank?!”

The old man’s jaw could drop from shock as he looked on.

But it was not over yet—Frank seized the black-clad man’s wrist and crushed it, while seizing his chipped machete and sending two other black-clad men’s head flying before landing with their shocked faces intact.

“I’m here to help, Mr. Lawrence!”

Suddenly, there was a burst of wind as Burt Yorkman, wearing a ragged black suit, charged inside.

He vaulted like a crane before assuming a tiger's pose, quickly dispatching two black-clad men.

"Burt Yorkman! You traitor!" Quinn shrieked, shaking with rage when she saw Burt helping Frank.

"Hah!" Burt snorted. "I've been serving at Sage Lake Sect's beck and call for years, but all of you kept me at arm's length as if I were a common thief! Frank Lawrence here has not only spared my life, but he actually taught me martial techniques too! You're all getting your just deserts! Tiger Fists!"

Burt was definitely gifted—with just some pointers from Frank a couple days ago, he immediately mastered new techniques.

In fact, Tiger Fists was one of the most common techniques found even in the black market. And yet, Burt wielded it with the ferocity of a real tiger, unstoppable even as he charged through the ranks of the black-clad man.

Nonetheless, that was when Frank suddenly felt an aching between his brow and a bizarre sensation welling up the pit of his stomach—his meridians felt blocked even as he tried to project his vigor.

"What? What is going on?" His heart skipped a beat.

Had he been poisoned?!

His consciousness stagnated even as the thought struck him. He could not move in time as a black-clad man's fingers reached his shoulder, almost breaking his protective vigor.

It took Frank great effort to stabilize his breathing while Quinn looked in with glee.

"Haha! Eron White was actually telling the truth. He did manage to poison Frank Lawrence, and his vigor's circulation is being impeded."

"Get down and beg already, Frank!" She laughed coldly. "It'd at least spare you pain!"

Frank clenched his teeth, realizing what was wrong just then—in his meridian nexus, there was a turbidness that kept affecting the flow of his vigor. Wherever his vigor reached, that turbidness followed suit, numbing his body and slowing his movements.

“Frank Lawrence, you’ve slain one of our brothers and insulted Ms. Ocean! You’ll be begging for us to end you soon enough!”

The black-clad man who struck Frank just now bellowed, his fingers hardening with vigor as he attacked Frank with a Lotus Poke!

“Fuck off!”

Frank’s vigor may be blocked, but he was not someone whom anyone could walk all over.

He spread his fingers, clearing his numbness.

At the same time, he arched his back to charge the bursting punch, which he launched at the black-clad man’s oncoming fingers.

Before he realized it, the man who just vowed to have his revenge had all his fingers pulverized.

But he did not even have time to scream when Frank’s second punch struck him violently in the face.

Poof!

Blood splattered everywhere as the black-clad man’s head burst open like a watermelon.

The other black-clad men around him were stunned, their assault on Frank suddenly halting.

In fact, they were already backing away in terror—none of them was eager to die so horribly!