

The Sun 321

Chapter 321 – Friends

Nick watched as Wyntor's eyes exploded with rage.

For almost ten seconds, Wyntor didn't say anything.

Then, he took a deep breath and sighed.

"I'm sorry."

Nick was taken aback when he heard that apology.

That was not what he had expected Wyntor to do.

Nick had thought that Wyntor would argue about the definition of a friend or something like that.

Instead, he apologized after nearly exploding with anger.

"I shouldn't be angry at you," Wyntor said with exhaustion. "After all, you don't know anything about my past."

Nick realized that Wyntor was right.

Nick only knew that Wyntor had gotten the Blinding Light's ability and that he had learned a lot in the Melfion's mansion.

That was about it.

"Nick, despite what you believe, I genuinely view you as my friend," Wyntor said.

Nick raised his brows in uncertainty.

"Before you say anything," Wyntor said with a raised hand, "let me explain."

Nick nodded and remained silent.

"Ever since I was small, my time was occupied by teachers teaching me about all these things."

"Politics, economics, psychology, Spectology, biology, and so on."

"I wake up at six a.m., run for an hour, wash, eat breakfast, learn things, eat lunch, learn things, fight with my coach, eat dinner, prepare for tomorrow, sleep."

"That was every day."

"The entire day, I was busy learning things, and the only people I had contact with were experienced and intelligent adults."

"The only other people I had around me were my family and servants."

"Did you know that I haven't talked to a single kid of my age until I was twelve?" Wyntor asked, looking to the side.

"That was when I accompanied my father to a visit to Anatomy, and I saw the daughter of one of their Extractors."

"My entire life consisted of teachers, family, and servants."

"I didn't have a single friend until Pator was assigned to me."

"And you know how that went."

Nick looked with concern at Wyntor.

Nick also didn't have any real friends since nobody in the Dregs wanted to be friends with a suspicious kid.

The parents of the few kids in the Dregs even told their kids to stay away from Nick, thinking that he was trying to worm his way into their family to have his blood tax paid.

And when Nick finally started to look like an adult, no one wanted to come close to him because everyone knew that he and the gangs didn't like each other.

The first friend Nick had ever had was Horua, and that friendship wasn't even a real one since there was a massive power imbalance and age gap.

The first person that Nick had viewed as his friend was Wyntor, but Wyntor had always felt so distant.

"That was my life until I met you, Nick," Wyntor said.

"I've been taught how to run an entire Manufacturer business on my own."

"I've been taught how to read people."

"I've been taught how to manipulate people to do my bidding."

"I've been taught how to fight, build connections, get favorable trade deals, influence the government, and so on and so on."

"But I've never been taught how to make a friend..."

Silence.

The two of them just looked at each other.

"I don't know how I should act and what I should do with friends."

"When I first came into contact with you, I thought that you were an idiotic simpleton who had no idea what he was doing."

"I thought I was better than you and that you were only the means to an end for me."

"But when I saw you jumping into the sewers, I was genuinely impressed."

"The idiotic simpleton was able to do something that I could never imagine doing myself."

"I thought quite a lot about that while you were in the sewers, and when I saw you getting attacked by the Dreamer, I realized something."

"Yes, jumping into the sewers was also to catch the Dreamer, but another reason was that I didn't want to say goodbye to the first person in my life who didn't belong to my family, servants, or teachers."

"Over the following months, I saw more and more things that you can do, which I never imagined I would be able to do."

"In a way, I felt inferior to you."

"That's nonsense!" Nick interrupted with furrowed brows.

"You, inferior to me?" he asked with ridicule.

"You are the one that runs this entire thing. You are the one that's always in control."

"If I have an issue, you solve it."

"If we need something, you get it."

"You have your life under control."

Nick looked at the table.

"While I don't."

"I don't even know how to live," Nick said.

"Nick," Wyntor said. "I am talking about emotions, not logic. You can argue and use logic all you want, but it won't change emotions."

"Also, that wasn't my point," Wyntor said. "My point is that I view you as my first friend."

"Today, I made a couple more friends, and I wouldn't have been able to make them if you hadn't taught me how to make them."

Nick snorted.

"Me? Teach you how to make friends?"

"How can I teach you if I don't even have any?" Nick asked.

Wyntor looked at Nick with genuine confusion. "What are you talking about?"

"What about Jenny, Constanze, Marvila, Larry, Kerry, and Taren?"

Nick looked to the side. "They're my employees."

"Nick, you might be their superior, but they are treating you as their superior only secondarily."

"Primarily, they treat you as their friend."

"All these people I mentioned would voluntarily help you in an extremely dangerous battle, and I'm certain that most of them would do that even if you didn't belong to Dark Dream."

"They would risk their lives for you."

"I don't know what standards you're applying for Extractors, but it is not common for Extractors to voluntarily put their lives on the line for the business."

"In the end, this is just a job, and most people wouldn't risk their lives for their job."

"If someone that's willing to risk their life for you isn't a friend, then nobody in the world has any friends."

Chapter 322 – Guilt

?Nick just looked at Wyntor with uncertainty.

"It sounds like it makes sense, but it doesn't feel right," he said.

"As I've said, Nick. Logic and emotions don't always go together," Wyntor said. "The fact is that many of our Extractors would be willing to fight for you with their lives on the line, and I don't think they would be doing that for every person superior to them."

"For example, I'm not sure if they would fight with their lives on the line for me."

Nick could see where Wyntor was coming from, but he just didn't feel it.

He only talked with the Extractors whenever it was related to business or when they were meeting each other in a hallway by coincidence.

Nick couldn't consider someone like that a friend.

"How can someone like that be a friend?" Nick asked. "They don't even know anything about me."

"Because you don't let anyone get close to you, Nick," Wyntor said.

Nick raised his eyebrows.

"Due to the power imbalance, they are scared of asking you personal questions. They most likely consider you their friend, but they are also intimidated by your status as their superior."

"I'm sure that many of them would jump at the opportunity to get to know you better."

Wyntor sighed.

"It's so easy when you see it from the outside," he said as he looked to the side. "But when you are in the middle, you often can't see what outsiders see."

Nick was still a bit uncertain about all of this.

He had friends?

He thought he was alone.

"Nick," Wyntor said, making Nick look at him. "I'm sorry that I couldn't be the friend that I wanted to be."

"It's just that, for my entire life, all the adults around me told me to never unveil more of my life than necessary. Any piece of personal information I give others can be used by a potential enemy."

"If I tell someone that I consider you my friend, they might try to capture you to get to me."

"If I tell someone the identity of one of my teachers, they might try to get more information out of them."

Wyntor sighed again.

"It's difficult to change that habit," he said.

Nick looked at Wyntor with concern and sympathy.

With all of this context, Wyntor's personality made a lot more sense.

He actually wanted to be Nick's friend, but the distance that Nick always felt between them was something that Wyntor couldn't easily get rid of since he didn't know how to make friends.

Sadly, this revelation just didn't have the impact that it should have had.

'Is this his real self, or is it just another way to manipulate me?' Nick thought.

Wyntor was so good at manipulating people that Nick wasn't confident in his ability to tell the difference between his real self and his fake self.

It was possible that Nick was viewing Wyntor's real self right now, but it was also possible that this was just one of Wyntor's masks that he put on to keep Nick working for him.

Did Wyntor consider Nick his friend or not?

Nick couldn't tell.

Sadly, there was something else that made this entire situation almost feel meaningless.

It was great that Nick had a potential friend, but what did that change?

His goal had still been invalidated, and Nick had still been the reason for the deaths of over a thousand innocent people.

His entire reason for wanting to save the Dregs was to get rid of his guilt and redeem himself, but in the end, his guilt only grew heavier.

What was the point of having a friend when Nick had turned into an irredeemable monster?

He was responsible for more deaths than most Specters.

So, what made him better than just another Specter?

His intention of helping people?

Sadly, intentions did not affect reality.

Actions did.

And Nick's actions spoke for themselves.

Wyntor saw Nick's expression and sighed.

"Nick, what's going on?" he asked.

Nick just looked at Wyntor in pain.

'What's the point of telling him if I can't even be certain that he gives a shit?'

'This might as well just be a random obstacle for him that endangers his profits.'

"I want to know," Wyntor said.

"Please."

"The only thing I could do to prove my friendship to you in the past was to solve your problems and to give you the things you need."

"But now, maybe I can help you by giving you advice."

"It doesn't matter whether or not you believe that I am genuinely your friend. In both cases, I can still help you with advice."

Naturally, Wyntor had noticed what Nick had been thinking about earlier.

He had known Nick for years, and reading Nick wasn't very difficult for him.

Wyntor knew that something was troubling Nick, but he couldn't help him as long as he didn't know what Nick was actually worried about.

Nick took a deep breath.

"You know," Nick started as he looked to the side without any care, "for years, my goal has been to improve the lives of the people in the Dregs."

"Because of me, Horua died. I was the one that's responsible for his death."

"Sorry to interrupt," Wyntor interjected. "But who was Horua again?"

Nick's eyes shot open as he looked at Wyntor with shock.

Horua occupied Nick's thoughts almost daily.

Meanwhile, Wyntor didn't even remember who that was.

'I shouldn't be surprised,' Nick thought. 'He barely came into contact with him.'

"The young boy that I sent to the Dreamer."

When Wyntor heard that, his eyes shot open.

The room turned silent.

Wyntor's expression became concerned.

"You care that much about him?" he asked.

Annoyance appeared in Nick's eyes, but he didn't voice it.

"His death is the reason why I've been working so hard," Nick said.

"I killed an innocent kid when that kid saw me as his only companion."

"My responsibility was to protect him."

"Instead," Nick said with a low voice as he looked at the wall, "I killed him."

"I killed an innocent child, Wyntor."

"How am I supposed to continue living without trying to somehow redeem myself?"

Wyntor looked at Nick with an uncomfortable expression.

Below the table, he clenched his fists.

Silence.

Wyntor looked at the ceiling.

Then, he took a deep breath.

"You didn't kill him," Wyntor said.

Chapter 323 – Hatred

?Silence.

Nick looked at Wyntor with an unreadable expression.

"What do you mean?" he asked, a slight bit of agitation audible in the back of his voice.

Wyntor took a deep breath.

"I killed the kid," Wyntor said, looking at Nick.

Nick just looked into Wyntor's eyes without blinking.

"I told the Dreamer to kill him."

"If he somehow woke up, I was sure that he would try to take revenge at some point. On top of that, I was sure that he would hate you, which would cause issues for you."

"If he survived, you would never be able to come to terms with your past. Only if he-"

BOOOOM!

Nick grabbed the desk between them and threw it against the wall before his hand moved towards Wyntor's neck.

Instantly, a blue gleam appeared around Wyntor's body.

However, his Barrier couldn't hold for more than two seconds against Nick, and it broke into pieces.

Nick grabbed Wyntor's neck and pushed him to the wall.

Wyntor couldn't breathe and looked into Nick's eyes.

Hate.

Rage.

Nick's eyes were filled with nothing but hatred.

"It was you!" Nick shouted, pushing Wyntor so hard against the wall that the steel started to bend.

"You killed Horua!"

"You made me believe I killed him!"

"I nearly killed myself!"

"I nearly said the Sentence!"

"You took my happiness from me!"

"I took care of him for months!"

"I was willing to make my mistake right for years!"

"But you made it impossible for me to ever do that!"

"Because of you, I have to live with this guilt for the rest of my life!"

Nick watched as Wyntor's eyes moved upward and lost focus.

He was unconscious.

But Nick kept squeezing.

His eyes were still filled with hatred.

He hated Wyntor!

He kept squeezing.

He hated Wyntor!

Nick's arm shook.

His teeth were gritted.

He watched Wyntor's face change color.

He had killed so many people.

What made this one different?

It wasn't difficult.

Just use a bit more power, and his neck would break.

Just a bit more.

But then, Nick's eyes lost most of their intensity.

Instead, they became icy.

BANG!

Nick threw Wyntor at one of the walls.

Wyntor's body hit the wall and slid to the ground like a puppet.

Nick looked at Wyntor with coldness.

The next moment, Wyntor started to cough and move.

Meanwhile, Nick walked out of the office before leaving Dark Dream.

He didn't pay attention to anyone greeting him.

After jumping from building to building for a while, Nick finally stopped.

He was near the edge of the city.

The outermost perimeter of the city was cut off by a wall since it was possible to see the edge of the Crimson Sea from that location.

Nick just stopped on top of a building in front of the wall, just watching the red wall of mist in front of him.

This was an isolated location, and Nick sometimes came here if he didn't want to talk to anyone.

He just looked at the red wall with cold eyes.

Why had he left Wyntor alive?

There was only one reason.

'I wish I could kill him,' Nick thought.

'But if I kill him, his family will kill me.'

Self-preservation.

That was the sole reason why Nick had stopped choking Wyntor.

Friendship?

Humanity?

Morals?

None of these things mattered to Nick right now.

Wyntor had fucked Nick's life!

For the past three to four years, Nick had always been plagued by nightmares.

He dreamt about murdering Horua.

He dreamt about accidentally killing him.

He dreamt about Horua getting killed by something and Nick being unable to save him.

And in nearly every dream, Horua cried out to Nick, telling him that he was sorry.

If the Parasite hadn't come to talk to Nick, he might have gotten the courage to actually say the Sentence back then.

Nick hadn't felt happy for even a single fucking minute for four years.

He felt happy for a couple of seconds whenever anything positive happened, but then, he was immediately reminded of what he had done in the past.

His entire life was consumed by this overpowering feeling of guilt and self-loathing.

He couldn't enjoy food.

He couldn't enjoy company.

He couldn't enjoy getting stronger.

Everything had been absolutely miserable and horrible for almost four years!

Nick had genuinely hated himself for years!

And what was the reason?

Horua's death.

'Yes, I fucked up by considering Horua as a Zephyx Extractor!'

'Yes, that was dumb as fuck!'

'But he didn't deserve to die because of that!'

'And if it were up to me, he wouldn't be dead right now!'

'As soon as he ran out of the Containment Unit, I wanted to drop the matter.'

'Maybe, we can slowly teach him?'

'Maybe, we can give him some time to acclimate to working with the Dreamer?'

'And why couldn't we do that?'

'Wyntor!'

Nick remembered the day like it was yesterday.

Wyntor had said that since Horua had signed the contract, he had to work.

Wyntor was also the one who said that he would have Horua killed if he quit.

After all, Horua knew about the Dreamer.

'Bullshit!' Nick thought with gritted teeth.

'If knowing about the Dreamer was so bad, why the fuck did you name our company after it just two weeks later and tell every single employee about it?'

'The Dreamer is and was our flagship Specter, and these kinds of Specters are never kept secret!'

'So, why is it suddenly a fucking issue that a random kid knows about that Specter?'

'What's so bad about waiting?'

'What's so bad about allowing him to quit?'

'Would anyone even believe an 11-year-old when they claim that they were once an Extractor?'

'Yes, I fucked up by asking him, and I was willing to take responsibility!'

'But you were the one that killed him!'

'Twice!'

'I was the one that took Horua to Dark Dream, but you were the one that forced me to throw him to the Dreamer!'

'And when he survived, and when we finally had the opportunity to make it right, you killed him again by telling the Dreamer to kill him!'

'Why?'

'Because you didn't want your favorite little toy to get distracted!'

Chapter 324 – Wish

? 'You fucked me, Wyntor!'

'You fucked my life!'

'And why?'

'You wanted to teach me a lesson, right?'

'You wanted to show me that my actions have consequences, right?'

'Great, but I already realized that when I saw how Horua reacted to the Dreamer.'

Nick just kept looking at the red wall with narrowed eyes.

'And then, you made it impossible for me to ever make things right!'

'You even made me believe that I maybe shouldn't have shaken Horua's body after the Dreamer tried to help him!'

'I thought that I might have gotten too worked up and somehow interrupted the Dreamer in helping him!'

'When, all this time, he was supposed to die!'

'You told the Dreamer to kill him!'

Nick remembered the conversation he had with the Dreamer.

The Dreamer had confirmed that it had only killed people that it was told to kill.

In truth, Nick had actually noticed that the Dreamer's answer hadn't fully been accurate with what Nick had thought to be true.

However, Nick had just thought that the Dreamer might not have considered the little boy from years ago.

Or maybe the Dreamer had planned to save Horua, and it was Nick who ended up killing him?

Lastly, Nick also didn't want to believe that Wyntor would order the Dreamer to kill Horua.

But, of course, things always had to turn out in the worst way imaginable.

For several minutes, Nick just kept looking at the red wall as his mind focused on how he had felt for the last four years.

'What should I do?' Nick thought.

'How can I take revenge?'

'Wyntor fucked my life, and I want to take revenge.'

'But how?'

'I can't kill him since I would die as well.'

Nick just kept thinking.

This was probably the first time in a month when the incident with the Crimson Sea was actually not forgotten but put in the back of Nick's mind.

For a month, Nick's thoughts had only been in two states.

Either he completely forgot about the Crimson Sea, or the thought of it consumed Nick's entire mind.

But for the first time, Nick thought of the Crimson Sea but didn't put much importance or emphasis on it.

Right now, Nick's mind was not filled with guilt but with the desire for revenge.

Nick might not have considered Wyntor his friend, but he had still been the most significant person in his life.

And this person had betrayed him.

The pain Wyntor had caused him was unforgivable.

Wyntor caused Nick the worst pain in his life and made it impossible for that pain to vanish.

'You know, I actually believe you,' Nick thought with narrowed eyes.

'I actually believe that you view me as your friend.'

'There is nothing positive you can gain out of telling me about Horua.'

'You felt guilty, right?'

'And you told me about what you have done to alleviate that guilt.'

'You wanted to make things right.'

'Isn't that just like me?'

'Are you willing to atone for that act for the remainder of your life?'

Nick snorted.

'You're not such a person.'

'If I don't forgive you, you will drop the matter and continue living.'

'No point in wasting resources on something unachievable, right?'

'Sucks that you can't get it, but there's no point in lamenting over something that was impossible to achieve in the first place.'

'You said that I'm your first friend.'

'I also believe that you consider me your closest friend.'

'Isn't that just like the situation with Horua and me?'

'I did something horrible to Horua and want to make things right, and you did something horrible to me and want to make things right.'

'What irony.'

'However, there are two key differences.'

'First, you are actually also mainly responsible for Horua's pain, not only my pain.'

'And second, you still have an opportunity to alleviate your pain and earn forgiveness since I am still alive.'

'I can't.'

'Horua is dead.'

'I can never earn forgiveness.'

'You made it impossible for me to earn forgiveness.'

'So, why do you deserve any forgiveness from me?'

'Even if, for some reason, I stopped hating you, forgiving you and letting you live this thing down is an injustice to me and the situation you put me in.'

'I can't escape my situation. So, you don't deserve to escape yours!'

Nick's rage started to increase again.

'I will find a way!'

'Somehow, I will find a way to kill you!'

'Oh, is killing an overreaction? You don't deserve to die for that?'

'Well, sucks to be you! You made me think I killed Horua! You made me kill Pator!'

'You wanted me to be a killer!'

'Well, there you go!'

'I've killed thousands of people now!'

'And killing one more won't make a fucking difference!'

"Someone seems upset," someone from behind Nick said.

Nick recognized the voice, and while he was a bit happy to hear the voice of said person, he also didn't care.

"Can we talk some other time, Julian?" Nick said.

Behind Nick stood a man with blue hair.

"Nick, I have a question," Julian said.

Nick got a bit annoyed. "What?" he asked.

"If the Dregs were still there, would you still want to improve the lives of everyone?" he asked.

That sentence made the guilt inside Nick return again.

After some seconds, he sighed.

"Of course," he said.

Silence.

"Alright," Julian said. "A deal's a deal."

"We had a wager."

"If you still wanted to improve the lives of the people in the Dregs when you finally got the power to do so, you win."

"If not, I win."

"While the destruction of the Dregs should result in our wager becoming void, I don't want to take any chances."

"So, here you go. You win."

Nick furrowed his brows and turned to look at Julian.

That was when Nick's eyes widened.

Julian's face was nowhere to be seen.

Instead, Nick only saw countless mouths.

He knew what this meant.

"You're a Specter?" Nick asked in shock.

"Yes," the mouths answered, "but that's not important right now."

"What's important is that you won the wager."

"If you lost, I would consume you."

"But since you won, I won't consume you, and you also get a prize."

"One wish."

"You get one wish."

"So, tell me."

"What do you wish for?"

Chapter 325 – Want and Need

?At this moment, the shock Nick felt after realizing that Julian was a Specter outweighed the rage he felt for what Wyntor had done.

Nick had always looked forward to talking to Julian, and he had definitely enjoyed their talks.

And he was a Specter?

Nick immediately stopped considering Julian as a friend and narrowed his eyes.

"Why are you not just killing me?" he asked.

"I can't," Julian said. "I will lose quite a lot of Zephyx if I kill you. What worth is a bargain if you end up dying either way?"

The mouths all started to smile.

"But just because I'm not killing you right now doesn't mean that it's impossible for me."

"I just don't want to lose that much Zephyx."

"So, be careful about what you do."

"This is my city, and if you try to change that, you will no longer be part of it."

Nick just watched the mouths talk for a while.

At the same time, he thought about what it meant for Julian to be a Specter.

Julian had many friends, and he walked freely through the Inner City.

On top of that, he could even enter Kugelblitz and walk through their building.

Julian was a Specter who could do whatever he wanted.

This might truly be his city.

Of course, that was only true if one ignored the Crimson Sea.

With the Crimson Sea here, things seemed very different.

However, Nick was not about to provoke a powerful Specter.

"Why are you telling me all of this?" Nick asked with furrowed brows. "Why would you unveil your status as a Specter to me? What do you have to gain from this?"

"Nothing," the mouths on Julian's face spoke. "I just don't have the ability to keep my identity a secret from people who won a wager against me."

"As long as you don't try to unveil my identity, nothing will happen to you. I will leave you alone, and you will leave me alone."

Nick didn't know how much Zephyx Julian would lose if he killed Nick, but it seemed to be quite a significant sum if he was willing to take such a risk by leaving him alive.

Of course, one also had to remember that Julian was the one in control.

If Nick didn't cooperate, Julian would still kill him.

"You're a Fanatic, right?" Nick asked.

"Stop wasting my time," the mouths said with a bit of annoyance. "Tell me your wish."

Nick looked at Julian for some time before turning around to look at the red wall again.

There was no reason for Nick to keep watch over Julian or be careful around him.

Julian was much more powerful than Nick, and if he wanted to, he could kill Nick easily.

Being prepared for an attack or not being prepared made no difference.

"You have to fulfill the wish?" Nick asked.

"Technically, yes," Julian said. "But if it's more expensive than the Zephyx I would lose by killing you, I might not fulfill it."

Nick's brows furrowed, and his heart rate increased.

With the shock of Julian's revelation having passed, Nick's rage and hatred towards Wyntor returned.

Just earlier, he had wished to have a way to kill Wyntor.

And now...

A way had presented itself.

He could do it now if he so chose to.

No one would be able to link Wyntor's death to Nick.

The mouths on Julian's face had crafty smiles on them.

Naturally, it wasn't a coincidence that Julian just so happened to show up now.

Ever since the Crimson Sea had broken free, Julian knew that he would lose the bet as soon as he talked to Nick again.

So, he had avoided Nick ever since then.

However, he knew that he would need to pay his debts at some point.

Because of that, Julian kept a close watch over Nick from afar.

He had to choose the right moment to appear.

Naturally, when Julian had seen Nick charging out of Dark Dream, exploding with anger and hatred, he knew that the perfect time had come.

There was only one thing that could make Nick this angry.

Another human.

If Julian approached Nick while he was calm, he might ask to work with Julian several times, which would increase his power by quite a lot.

However, Zephyx couldn't just appear out of nowhere, and Julian would need to put a lot of effort into the sessions.

Or what if Nick asked for an Adult Specter?

That would be quite expensive since Julian would either need to find a wild one, which was almost impossible with the city's current state, or spend tens of millions of credits to buy one.

Sure, as a Specter, Julian didn't need credits, but since he lived amongst humans, the credits were still extremely useful.

Of course, if Nick asked for something like an Elder, Julian would just kill him.

That was way too much and also basically impossible for Julian to get.

After all, since Julian was just acting like a Zephyx Extractor, he wasn't really working with Specters, which meant that he wasn't actively producing Zephyx.

That meant he actually had fewer credits than one would think.

Buying an Adult would already strain his pockets quite a lot.

An Elder would be impossible for him to buy.

Luckily, humans were very emotional creatures.

Since Nick was so angry right now, chances were that he only had revenge on his mind.

Killing a random human was way easier than working with Nick or getting him an Adult.

And right now, Nick was evaluating just that.

'I could ask him to kill Wyntor,' Nick thought.

'But what then?'

'With Wyntor dead, Dark Dream will collapse, and I will lose everything that I've built.'

'I want to kill Wyntor, but I also need him.'

'I can't have it both ways.'

Nick was lost in thought for several minutes.

He had such a great opportunity, but he just didn't know how to make use of it.

Eventually, Nick made a choice and looked at Julian.

Chapter 326 – The Situation

Nick walked back into Dark Dream.

He didn't seem different from usual at first glance, but if one looked a bit closer, one might notice a slight difference.

Nick was still friendly, but there was a certain coldness to his gaze now.

However, no one took notice of that difference.

As soon as he returned, he went back to work.

He was hiring new people, evaluating Specters, collecting Zephyx, and so on.

It was almost like nothing strange had happened today.

Everything had returned to normal.

For the next couple of days, Nick avoided Wyntor.

Whenever they accidentally saw each other, Nick looked and walked away.

Wyntor could only sigh.

If he had known that Nick would have been so hung up about Horua, he wouldn't have asked the Dreamer to kill him.

At the same time, Wyntor also regretted telling Nick.

'Did I do the right thing?' Wyntor asked himself.

'Should I have told him?'

'In due time, he might have recovered.'

'But he also deserves to know the truth.'

At this moment, several different facets of Wyntor's personality clashed.

Wyntor had been taught to put profits and power first, and he had always acted according to these principles.

But when he had seen how much Nick had suffered from everything, he just felt guilty.

Nick was his first real friend, and Wyntor felt horrible about putting him through so much pain.

Wyntor felt like telling him was the right thing to do, but that might have also compromised his profits.

'I just didn't expect that he would be so hung up about this. I thought he would have gotten over it already,' Wyntor thought.

Wyntor remembered when Nick had choked him until he was unconscious a couple of days ago.

At that moment, Wyntor had believed that he would die.

That had probably been the most terrifying moment of his life.

Of course, facing the Blinding Light when he was a child was also terrifying, but he knew that he wouldn't die from that.

Yes, jumping into the sewers and fighting the Dreamer was also scary, but Wyntor knew that he could get away thanks to his ability.

But when Nick squeezed Wyntor's neck, he felt like there was nothing he could do.

Since his Barrier had been broken, he couldn't even activate his ability.

Nick's extreme reaction had taken Wyntor by surprise.

Sure, Nick would probably get angry and shout at him.

Maybe he would avoid him for a couple of days.

But then, everything should return to normal.

That was how Wyntor had envisioned things would go down.

But instead, Nick nearly killed him.

That was not what Wyntor had expected.

Wyntor generally viewed Nick as a friendly but melancholic person.

Sure, Nick also had the capability to kill many people, but these people were all his enemies.

And Wyntor wasn't his enemy.

Right?

Yes, Wyntor had made a mistake when he was younger by essentially forcing Nick to grow up quicker, but he had just been 17 years old back then.

Nick couldn't fault him too much for that.

He had also been just a child.

'Just leave him a couple more days to calm down,' Wyntor thought. 'The worst part is behind us. Eventually, things will return to normal.'

An entire month passed, and it was time for the yearly meeting of Manufacturers again.

This year, it was Kugelblitz's turn to host it again.

Wyntor wanted to use the trip to the Inner City as an opportunity to talk to Nick.

After all, they hadn't talked even once in over a month, and things needed to return to normal at some point.

There were several job-related matters that Wyntor needed to tell Nick.

Wyntor had worked more than usual to compensate for the lack of communication, but this couldn't continue indefinitely.

Sadly, when he arrived in Dark Dream, he heard from the receptionist that Nick had already gone to Kugelblitz over 30 minutes ago.

Wyntor could only sigh and walk to Kugelblitz alone.

Meanwhile, Nick was in Vernon's office, drinking some coffee.

"Alright," Vernon said after sitting down on his chair again. "What did you want to talk about, and why are you saying that you don't want Wyntor to know of it?"

Nick sighed and looked at Vernon.

"Some things have happened," Nick said.

Vernon looked at Nick with a raised eyebrow, but he didn't say anything.

Then, Nick told Vernon everything about what had happened with Horua.

Vernon's expression didn't change much as he listened.

Eventually, Nick was done retelling his story.

"And why are you telling me this?" Vernon asked.

Nick looked to the side and sighed.

"I can't work with Wyntor anymore," Nick said.

"I realize that, when all of this happened, Wyntor was only 17 years old. While I probably won't be able to forgive him, I can't ignore the fact that he was just a kid who made a mistake."

"For a month, I tried to get over this fact."

"But whenever I see him, this unending rage comes out, and the only thing I can do is to walk away."

"Otherwise, I might do something I will regret."

Vernon nodded as he kept listening.

"And after thinking about all of this for a long time, I've come to a decision," Nick said.

"Wyntor owns 70% of Dark Dream, which means that he might as well own all of it."

"Additionally, Dark Dream will eventually be sold to Kugelblitz."

Nick took a deep breath.

"I've decided to quit Dark Dream."

Vernon had already expected something like this.

"What are you planning to do?" he asked.

Of course, Vernon already had an inkling.

"I'm selling my 30% of Dark Dream to Wyntor," Nick said.

Vernon's eyes shone.

"And at the same time, I am applying for a job at Kugelblitz as Zephyx Extractor."

Vernon looked at Nick with an interested expression.

That was an interesting proposition.

BANG!

Suddenly, the door shot open, and Vernon immediately frowned.

People were supposed to knock before coming in!

Vernon looked over and saw one of their receptionists.

He wanted to admonish her, but her face was white, and she seemed like she had something urgent to say.

"Yes?" Vernon asked, keeping his annoyance at her intrusion secret.

"Sir!" the receptionist said urgently.

Vernon looked at her as he started to get worried.

Nick just looked forward.

His eyes were cold.

Chapter 327 – Death

?Vernon looked with a shocked expression at the scene in front of him.

Vernon and Nick had immediately run towards Kugelblitz's entrance when they heard what happened.

Right now, there were over 20 people standing in front of Kugelblitz.

To the side were several guards who were currently harshly interrogating a young-looking woman.

The guards were Experts, and based on her uniform, the woman was a Veteran working for the city.

Her eyes were showing deep panic and fear.

A couple more guards were standing in the middle of the area.

A couple of them were looking around, while some others were using complicated devices to inspect the body in front of them.

Everything from the toes to the bottom of the head looked normal, but the same thing couldn't be said for the top of the head.

The head ended at the top of the nose.

Everything above that lay beside the body in bloody chunks.

When Vernon saw the body, his face turned white, and he ran forward.

"Wyntor!" he shouted.

Yes, it was Wyntor's body.

The guards would have stopped anyone who was trying to get close to the body.

But this was Vernon Melfion.

Most of the present guards worked for Kugelblitz, and Vernon was one of their Senior Directors.

They didn't dare to tell Vernon what to do while he was emotionally unstable.

So, they allowed Vernon to pass.

Vernon's hands shook as he carefully kneeled beside the body.

He slowly reached forward and touched the body.

It was still warm.

When Vernon held his son's hand, he felt like he was still alive.

Sadly, that was only an illusion.

Wyntor was dead, and it was impossible to revive him.

The guards just sighed as they paused their investigation.

In the distance, Nick just looked at Wyntor's corpse with a conflicted expression.

Wyntor's fate had been decided about five weeks ago during Nick's conversation with Julian.

Naturally, if Nick hadn't told Julian to kill Wyntor, Wyntor would still be alive.

Nevertheless, Nick felt conflicted.

Yes, the person that had caused him so much pain had died.

He had finally gotten his revenge.

However, Wyntor was also the closest person to a friend Nick had.

The two of them had been working together for over five years now.

They had created Dark Dream with their own hands.

Nick thought about the time when Wyntor jumped into the sewers and how he had paid for Nick's recovery bath afterward.

But then, that scene was juxtaposed with the scene of Wyntor telling Nick that he would kill Horua if he didn't work with the Dreamer right now.

Nick thought about the time Wyntor had given Nick his weapons in exchange for a favor.

Yet, that scene was contrasted with the time Wyntor told Nick to kill Pator.

Nick thought of the time Wyntor told him that he genuinely was Nick's friend.

However, the next scene was of Wyntor telling the Dreamer to kill Horua.

Nick's opinion of Wyntor was very mixed.

He had done a lot of good things for Nick, but he had also done a lot of horrible things.

On one hand, Nick felt vindicated after seeing Wyntor's corpse, but on the other hand, he also felt regret.

Did Wyntor deserve to die?

In Nick's opinion, yes.

If he didn't, he would still be alive.

Nick didn't think that he made a mistake by telling Julian to kill Wyntor, but he regretted that he had to do it.

'You've always been so careful,' Nick thought as he looked at the corpse, which was being hugged by Vernon.

'You kept everyone at arm's length and had everyone in your control.'

'As far as I know, I'm the first person that you let close to you, and that person is the reason for your death.'

'Maybe it would have been for the better if you never told me the truth.'

'With your manipulative conduct, you took on so many emotional debts that you couldn't possibly repay them.'

'I guess the only way you could have survived was to take on more emotional debts to repay your old ones until you become strong enough that you can default on them without any major repercussions.'

'What was that proverb again? Once you suppress a Specter, you can never let it go.'

Nick just took a deep breath.

'Goodbye, Wyntor.'

'I don't know if I regret meeting you or not.'

Nick slowly walked forward and approached one of the guards as he kept staring at Vernon.

"What happened?" Nick asked. "I only heard a quick summary of what happened."

The guard looked at Nick with furrowed brows.

"This does not concern you," he said.

"It does," Nick answered. "He's my boss. I'm the Chief Zephyx Extractor of Dark Dream."

The guard looked at Nick with surprise.

"Alright," he said.

"The Veteran over there," the guard said as he gestured to the fearful woman, "arrived here around 15 minutes ago. She's working for Kugelblitz, and when she saw the two guards standing in front of Kugelblitz today, she started a conversation with them."

"She talked with them for about ten minutes, which was when Wyntor Melfion came out of his Shweeb."

"The woman looked over at Wyntor Melfion and immediately shouted that a Specter has broken out."

"She took out her sniper rifle and released a shot at Wyntor Melfion."

"According to the guards, Wyntor Melfion's Barrier broke, and he immediately died. You can see the outcome," the guard explained.

Nick looked at the corpse.

Then, he turned to look at the distant woman.

"Why?" he asked.

"We are still investigating," the guard said. "Our hypothesis is that she was manipulated by an Extractor or a Specter due to her lack of self-preservation in the way she committed the crime."

"No sane Veteran would kill one of Melfion's heirs in the middle of the day in front of several people. That is tantamount to committing suicide."

The guard noted that Nick seemed quite calm.

"Do you know anyone who could have had a reason to kill him?"

Chapter 328 – Goal

"A couple," Nick said.

"Dark Dream is worth a lot of money," he said. "Everybody knows that Wyntor is the reason why Dark Dream was created and how it became so big in the first place."

"With Wyntor gone, Dark Dream is just a juicy piece of meat."

The guard looked at Nick suspiciously.

He wasn't sure what it was exactly, but he felt suspicious of Nick.

"Can you elaborate?" the guard asked.

"Well, Dark Dream only managed to gain footing in the city thanks to Wyntor. Without Wyntor's background, Dark Dream would have been consumed by one of the other Manufacturers as soon as we got our first couple of Specters."

"Everybody knows that killing Wyntor means making Kugelblitz their enemy, and no one was willing to take that risk."

"Until now, apparently," Nick added.

The guard kept looking at Nick.

"What about more personal reasons?" he asked.

"Personal reasons?" Nick asked.

"Everything you said so far makes it seem like his identity as Dark Dream's CEO is the only reason why someone would want to kill him. But what if someone had a more personal reason?"

"Like revenge," the man said.

Nick furrowed his brows.

"Hard to tell," he said. "Wyntor and I have worked together for five years, but he always kept his personal life a secret from me."

Nick looked at the corpse for a while.

"Although, there is one person I can think of."

"Yes?" the guard asked.

"Ardum Melfion," Nick said.

This surprised the guard. "His brother?"

Nick nodded. "Well, Dark Dream filed a complaint to the city around three to four years ago. It was a complaint about Cycle, Ardum's Manufacturer business, not having the manpower to suppress their own Specters."

"And naturally, as the CEO of Dark Dream, Wyntor was the one that filed the complaint, and as a result, Dark Dream got all of Cycle's Specters, ruining Ardum's chances of becoming an official heir in the process."

The guard looked at Nick for a while.

He knew exactly what it meant when a Manufacturer complained to the city about another Manufacturer not having enough people to suppress their own Specters.

Such a complaint unveiled the fact that a secret war had been happening and that the war had ended.

"What about you?" the guard asked.

"Me?" Nick asked back.

"You seem quite calm," the guard said. "You act like his death doesn't concern you."

Nick furrowed his brows as he kept looking at the corpse.

"That's because I am more concerned with my own life right now," Nick said.

The guard raised an eyebrow.

"I'm 90% sure that Dark Dream was the reason why Wyntor was killed," Nick said, "and with Wyntor now being dead, his shares of Dark Dream are now mine, which makes me the sole owner of Dark Dream."

The guard's suspicion of Nick skyrocketed after Nick said that sentence.

"And since I am now the sole owner of Dark Dream, I will be their next target," Nick said. "If I die, anyone can just file a complaint, and they would get all of Dark Dream."

"Even more, since Wyntor is now dead, Dark Dream is no longer protected by his family, which means that any random Expert or even Specialist can just kill me in secret without any repercussions."

"You think I did it?" Nick asked as he calmly looked at the guard.

The guard didn't answer.

"Wyntor's death means my death," Nick said.

"With Wyntor gone, what stops any Manufacturer from just secretly assassinating me and taking Dark Dream for themselves?"

"I'm a dead man walking," Nick said.

As the guard thought about what Nick said, his suspicion lessened.

Everything Nick said made sense.

If Nick was truly the sole owner of Dark Dream now, it would only be a matter of time until he was killed.

Yet, the guard just couldn't stop feeling suspicious of Nick.

His mind was telling him that it couldn't have been Nick, but his heart was telling him something else.

A short moment later, Vernon approached Nick.

Vernon looked horrible, and Nick could feel the grief emanating from him.

A father had lost his son.

However, Vernon's suffering didn't mean anything to Nick.

Vernon was the reason why the Dregs had been suffering for decades.

He and Kugelblitz had been the ones who caused so much misery for the people.

Vernon hadn't cared that his policies had doomed thousands of people into a life filled with suffering.

So, why should Nick care about him?

Over the past month, Nick had had a lot of time to think.

And he had come to a couple of decisions.

One of them was regarding Vernon and Kugelblitz.

In the past, Nick had been a bit on the fence regarding this issue.

Yes, Vernon was partially responsible for the pain of the Dregs, but what could he do?

He was just one of the shareholders.

After a lot of thinking, Nick came to a decision regarding that matter.

Vernon was complicit in the suffering of the Dregs.

And people who took advantage of people far weaker than them deserved no mercy.

'I wanted to save a thousand people to repay the debt I owe to Horua,' Nick thought.

'Now, I am responsible for the deaths of a thousand people.'

'I could kill myself, but that would just mean running away from my responsibility.'

'Instead, I will continue living.'

'And I will continue growing.'

Nick looked at the grieving Vernon.

'And when I am finally powerful enough, I will kill everyone that exploits weaker people.'

'I will kill Vernon.'

'I will kill the governor.'

'I will destroy Kugelblitz.'

'I will destroy Anatomy.'

'I will take control of this city, and I will make this city a good place to live in!'

'I've got enough of all of these powerful and rich people causing suffering for thousands of people just so that they can add another zero to their bank account!'

Meanwhile, Vernon sighed.

"Nick, I know it's a bad time right now, but we need to talk about some things."

Nick nodded.

"I understand."

"Sorry for your loss."

Chapter 329 – Contract

?The guard watched Nick and Vernon entering Kugelblitz.

The guard still thought that Nick acted suspiciously, but in the end, he just shrugged.

He was not responsible for the investigation, and he was also one of the few guards who weren't working for Kugelblitz.

So, this didn't concern him.

He was just a bit interested.

Nick followed Vernon in silence.

Naturally, Nick was quite a bit nervous, even though he was trying his best to hide it.

It was a fact that Nick was the reason why Wyntor was dead.

He might not have killed him directly, but he had ordered his death.

And he knew very well that several people were suspicious of him based on his history with Wyntor.

The reason why Nick had ordered Wyntor's death this morning was twofold.

First, he wanted Wyntor to die while he had an alibi.

And second, he wanted to show his motive for killing Wyntor before it actually happened.

At first glance, the second part seemed stupid.

After all, why would anyone want to tell others that they had a reason to kill someone?

The reason was that Nick wanted to make it seem as unplanned as possible.

Additionally, Nick wanted to show that he already had a way out of this.

If he knew that Wyntor was about to die, why would he ask for a job from Vernon?

He already had a solution, and he had already made his peace with the outcome.

And then, Wyntor just suddenly died.

But there was actually one more reason as to why Nick unveiled his conflict with Wyntor.

Nick knew that he wasn't a good actor, and he was sure that someone as experienced as Vernon would notice if Nick decided to fake his emotions.

Now, since Nick had told Vernon about the broken relationship between him and Wyntor, it would no longer be as suspicious if Nick didn't seem as aggrieved.

Nevertheless, Nick was still in a lot of danger.

The next couple of hours were what would decide his future.

After a long walk in silence, Vernon led Nick back into his office.

The cup of coffee from earlier was still on the table.

Vernon sat down and sighed.

"I know a lot has happened, but we need to talk about Dark Dream first," Vernon said.

Nick nodded.

"I'm 90% sure that it was one of the other Manufacturers that killed my son, and if we don't want them to gain anything out of this, we need to deal with the matter of Dark Dream's ownership as quickly as possible."

"Since they killed Wyntor, they will soon also kill you. Before that happens, we need to get you to a safe place."

Even though Nick saw Vernon as a cold and ruthless businessman, he was still a bit shocked that Vernon could talk about money mere minutes after he heard that his son died.

Usually, parents wouldn't want to deal with anything so quickly after their children died.

Even more, except for a couple of minutes of grieving, Vernon looked quite normal and calm.

Nick hadn't expected that Vernon would be this cold to his family.

"Since I now own 70% of Dark Dream, I'm willing to buy your 30% and hire you as a team leader for Kugelblitz," Vernon said. "Like this, you don't have to fear anyone attacking you since there is nothing to gain from your death."

Nick suppressed a smile.

"That's not right, Vernon," he said.

Vernon raised an eyebrow.

"You don't own 70% of Dark Dream," Nick added. "I own 100% of Dark Dream now."

Vernon furrowed his brows in confusion and annoyance.

"I think you might have misunderstood the law," Vernon said after a sigh. "When somebody dies, their next-of-kin gets whatever they own. Since Wyntor does not have a wife or a child, all of his belongings go to me. That includes the 70% of Dark Dream."

Nick's eyes shone, and a suspicious expression appeared on his face.

"I was under the impression that Wyntor showed you the ownership contract for Dark Dream's shareholders," Nick said.

"Yes, he did," Vernon answered. "It's a standard contract that I personally drafted. I use it for all kinds of deals, and Wyntor borrowed it. He also gave me a copy for safekeeping.

"And that contract doesn't state anything in regards to the death of an owner of the company, which means that the standard process comes into effect."

"That's wrong," Nick said with furrowed brows. "I explicitly remember signing it about three to four years ago, and I am certain that there was a clause in regards to the death of an owner."

"I remember it saying that, in the case of a death, the other owners get the shares of the deceased owner."

"I'm 100% certain that it is in the contract since I even remember becoming suspicious. I was afraid that this clause was in the contract so that Wyntor could, one day, kill me to get all my shares without having to pay me."

Vernon started to become annoyed. "I have read through the contract, too, and I am certain that it is just the standard contract. I also told Wyntor to never create the specific clause you are talking about since that would endanger his life."

The two of them looked at each other in annoyance.

"I have a copy here. Let's just look at it and be done with it," Vernon said.

Then, Vernon stood up and searched through one of his drawers for a folder, which he then opened.

After about half a minute of going through the folder, Vernon put the folder on the table, the contract visible.

"Read," Vernon said.

Nick did so and looked through the contract.

As he kept reading, his brows furrowed.

Sure enough, there was no such clause in the contract.

But when Nick reached the end of the contract, his eyes widened in realization.

Then, he pointed at his signature at the very end of the contract.

"That is not my signature," he said.

"I never signed this contract."

"This is a fake."

Chapter 330 – Dispute

?Vernon also furrowed his brows.

"That's not a fake," Vernon said with quite a lot of annoyance. "Wyntor gave me this just a couple of days after you bought 30% of Dark Dream."

"But it's fake," Nick interjected. "That's not the contract I signed, and that's also not my signature."

Vernon's annoyance rose.

What the fuck was Nick talking about?!

This was the contract!

First, his son had died, and now, somebody was accusing him of falsifying contracts!

Today was truly not his day.

"Fine," Vernon said as he put the contract away again. "If we go to get your copy of the contract, will you finally accept and sell your shares?"

Nick stood up. "Let's go and get it."

The next moment, Nick and Vernon started to walk out of Kugelblitz.

They walked past Wyntor's corpse and the guards without stopping.

The only thing that Vernon did was sigh after throwing a glance at the corpse.

Since Vernon was an Expert, he had no issues keeping up with Nick while he was jumping down from the top end of the middle layer.

Less than a minute later, the two of them landed on the lower layer and ran towards the Outer City.

Then, they entered Dark Dream.

After they went into Nick's office, Nick searched through his documents for a while before he found the contract.

He read through it, and a satisfied expression appeared on his face before he slammed the contract onto the table.

"That's the contract!"

"That's the clause!" he shouted, pointing at the death clause.

"And that's my signature!"

Nick pointed at the bottom of the contract.

Vernon's eyes widened in shock before he started to read through the contract very carefully.

Then, he glared at Nick.

"Was this your plan?" Vernon asked.

"What?" Nick asked.

"You had this issue with my son, but you knew that you couldn't kill him since he is the only reason why Dark Dream still exists. So-"

"Don't!" Nick shouted aggressively. "Do NOT accuse me of killing Wyntor!"

"I did not kill Wyntor, and I did not fake this contract! You're the one with the fake contract!"

Nick's eyes narrowed.

"And I'm starting to think that you're the one that planned all of this," he said with a threatening tone.

A deep well of rage rose inside Vernon, but he kept it suppressed.

"You faked your contract," Nick said. "And then, you killed Wyntor to get all of Dark Dream for free!"

"You thought that you could just walk all over me since I am only a Veteran."

"Silence!" Vernon shouted in anger. "This is a baseless accusation! The fact that you insinuate that I would kill my own son for a couple of credits is insulting and disrespectful!"

"Insulting and disrespectful?" Nick repeated with a snort. "For a father, you got over your son's death really quick. Barely ten minutes passed before you were talking about money again!"

BANG!

Nick's table broke under Vernon's force. "Now, I'm certain! You instigated all of this! You killed my son!"

"No, you killed Wyntor!" Nick shouted back, glaring back into Vernon's eyes.

They glared at each other for some seconds.

And then, Vernon's rage vanished as an icy coldness came over his face.

"It doesn't matter," he said calmly. "An upstart from the Dregs might not know this, but the city also has a copy of all important contracts for situations exactly like this."

"We'll just go to the city, demand the contract, and when we inevitably see my contract, your little scheme will crumble."

Vernon looked at Nick.

Surprisingly, Nick looked quite calm.

"That's what I should tell you. Sure, let's go to the city."

Then, Nick walked past Vernon, who looked at Nick with suspicion.

Nick seemed very good at putting on a false front of confidence.

But Vernon wouldn't fall for it.

Most likely, Nick would try to escape, and Vernon wouldn't let him.

The two of them left Dark Dream again and entered the Inner City.

Vernon kept a close eye on Nick all the time.

Eventually, the two of them reached the central administration building on the lower layer.

When the clerks saw Vernon's uniform, they immediately prioritized him and took the two of them into a room.

Vernon told them why they were there, and the clerks left quickly to get the contract.

Contracts regarding the ownership of Manufacturing businesses were not stored in such an insecure location.

These kinds of important contracts were held in a secure place in the upper layer of the Inner City.

Nick and Vernon just stayed in the room.

Vernon kept an eye on Nick since he was sure that he was getting desperate.

Nearly half an hour of silence passed.

During these 30 minutes, the two of them kept throwing aggressive glances at each other.

Eventually, the door opened, and a big group of people entered.

Vernon looked at the seven people who entered with annoyance. "Why are all of you here? This is just about a contract."

Two from the group looked with suspicion at four others from the group, who seemed just as suspicious of the two from the group.

The seventh and last person was the only one that seemed neutral.

"We just want to make sure that everything is going according to policy," one of them said.

Even though all of them wore the city guard's uniforms, there were still a couple of small signs that showed their identities.

Four of them worked for Kugelblitz, and two of them worked for Anatomy.

There were two Specialists, two Experts, and two Veterans.

The last person was the clerk from earlier, who was carrying the contract.

"Good," Vernon said before motioning for the clerk to approach.

The clerk walked to the table and revealed the contract.

The guards looked suspiciously at each other, ready to attack.

Nick and Vernon looked at the contract.

A moment later, Vernon's face became white as his eyes widened.

Meanwhile, a victorious smirk appeared on Nick's face.