

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 236 -

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“What’s going on with Boulderthorn? Why would they send that chunkster on stage? With his physique, he’ll be out of breath after taking just a few steps—can *he* even handle the Battle Royale?” Quentin scoffed.

“Don’t underestimate the opponent. Since Boulderthorn dares send him into the ring, he must have some extraordinary qualities that could potentially push the tide in their favor. Which one of you wants to go first?”

Natasha asked the three of them.

“Ms. Harmon, let me handle the first round.” Stephan stood and strode into the battle ring.

Among the three of them, his strength appeared to be the weakest. Because of that, it was only natural that he took the lead. After all, if he could secure their victory in the first match, he might as well have laid the foundation for their eventual win,

“Dustin, who do you think would win? Ruth asked curiously.

“It’s hard to tell. The chunkster looks peculiar enough, but if Mr. Chapman can find his weaknesses and attack. focally, he might still stand a chance.” Dustin analyzed.

“Hmph! That’s so close—minded!” Quentin pursed his lips. “What right does he have to fight against Mr. Chapman? A few rounds of simply running around, and he’ll be as good as dead!”

Dustin did not argue against that. Instead, he fixed his gaze on the battle ring, seemingly deep in thought.

Meanwhile, in the battle ring, both parties prepared themselves as the referee mounted the stage.

“There are no rules in this ring. Live or die—that’s on you. Surrendering, severe injuries, death, or being thrown out of the ring will result in a loss of said round. Do the both of you understand?”

The referee threw his hands down as soon as the two contestants nodded.

“Let the games begin!”

With a frenzied shout, the atmosphere around the ring instantly surged to a new peak.

“I’ve long heard about the many talents cultivated under the lead of Mr. Williams. I’m honored to be able to

witness them with my own eyes today!”

After a firm salute, Stephan took a step forward and launched his first attack.

The strategy he elected was to take control of the fight and exhaust his opponent. As the man’s physique was beyond massive, his strength was apparent. Direct attacks were not a smart option if he wanted to last in the

ring.

To be on the safe side, he had to fully leverage the advantages of his lightweight body and the subsequent agility it inevitably brought him.

Stephan inched closer toward his opponent but did not launch a frontal attack. Instead, he rounded to the back of the chunkster and slapped him on the back.

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A crisp slap rang out, but the chunkster stood unmoving. Throughout his body, his flesh rippled and trembled shudderingly. The force brought down by Stephan’s palm had been completely dissipated by the violent

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shudders of flesh, leaving the man completely unaffected by its magnitude.

“So, this is what it is then?” Stephan’s gaze narrowed, but he didn’t stop. He delivered two more sharp,

consecutive slaps—

one to the chunkster’s waist, the other to his back. Both of them landed on spots that

should’ve been vulnerable had it not been for the protection of his voluminous flesh and body fat that shielded

him from even remotely sensing the impact of Stephan’s punches.

Contrary to what Stephan expected, his opponent paid him no heed despite his efforts to garner his attention. From the start, he simply chewed on the roasted mutton leg he held in one hand, completely disregarding Stephan’s presence.

Stephan was beginning to get mad. His palms transformed into brutal fists that pounded wildly from top to bottom in rapid succession. The series of punches he launched after that was almost crazed and merciless. and yet the chunkster continued devouring the mutton leg with the fervor of a famished man.

Stephan’s pride, having suffered the fall it did, transmuted into wild fury. As his rage suffused him, he delivered

a swift kick to the mutton in the chunkster’s hands and watched with satisfaction as the man turned to him.

stunned at first.

Then, a roar followed as he charged toward Stephan with astonishing speed, his actions reminiscent of a

distraught bear.

A moment of carelessness had him colliding head—on with the chunkster’s advance—his body air—bound the

next moment and his gut churning.

Midair, the chunkster’s head struck him squarely in the chest, sending him flying even further, a mouthful of bright—red blood spilling from his lips.

Before he knew it, he was already on the ground, thrown out of the battle ring before he'd even gotten the chance to retaliate.

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“How could this happen? Mr. Chapman lost?” Quentin’s face was slack with shock as he beheld Stephan’s injuries and the blood he was still coughing up as a result of the man’s attack. He’d never anticipated the strength the chunkster had shown—not even Mr. Chapman could rival that kind of power.

“Who is that chunkster? Not even Mr. Chapman could break through his defenses-

Natasha’s face grew serious. She was well aware of the extent of Stephan’s capabilities. He was a martial artist who specialized in harnessing the body’s internal energy, and his punches were enough to break through stone.

And yet, for someone of his expertise to have not been able to impact the other man in the slightest—it was evident that his opponent would not be easily defeated by ordinary means alone.

“If I’m not mistaken, he’s Mr. Williams’ second disciple. They call him Rotund Tiger.”

Mr. Wangle stroked his beard and said nonchalantly. “This person might seem simple-minded, but the talent he possesses when it comes to martial arts is extraordinary. His body is capable of both attack and defense- it’s tough yet flexible. It’s very difficult for someone unfamiliar with his fighting style to take him on successfully.”

“Mr. Wangle, can you take him on?” Natasha asked in return.

“I can’t guarantee a win, but I think I have an eighty to ninety percent chance of holding my own against him.” Mr. Wangle’s tone was proud.

“Good. Please do your best then, Mr. Wangley.” Natasha nodded imperceptibly.

“Mr. Wangley, the man’s weakness lies on the crown of his head. If you time your attacks well and seize the opportunity when it presents itself, you might be able to take him down in one strike!” Dustin spoke up suddenly.

It’d only taken him a single round to discern the opponent’s vulnerable spots.

If they wanted to win, it was crucial to strike where the opponent was the weakest— not only would that ensure an easy win, but it would also further guarantee their overall victory.

“What? Are you trying to tell me what to do?” Mr. Wangley peered at Dustin out of the corner of his eye, his tone displeased.

“I’m just offering a friendly reminder.”

“A reminder? Do I look like I need your reminders? Mr. Wangley sneered. “Who do you think you are, boy? What right do you have to tell me how to take this man down? Do you think you’re stronger than me?”

“Dustin! Shut your mouth if you don’t know what you’re talking about. Does Mr. Wangley look like he needs

your advice to win? Really, it’s about time someone put you in your place for a change!” Quentin was equally impatient.

“If you don’t believe me, it’s your call. Forget it, then.” Dustin shrugged. There was no point in trying to reason

with them anyway. He’d only thought to offer a suggestion out of pure goodwill. Since none of them

appreciated it, he wouldn't scramble to make them listen, either.

'Little brat! Keep your eyes wide open and look at how it really is done!' Mr. Wangley turned and sprang away, leaving Dustin with those words. The older man sprang into the battle ring like a proud eagle, landing steadily amid the feverish applause from the audience.

Someone whistled, raucous cheers erupting all over in response to Mr. Wangley's elegant move.

The chunkster, however, paid him no attention. He picked up the fallen mutton leg and continued devouring it vehemently.

"Young man, that Adamantine Shield of yours is undeniably impressive, but unfortunately, you're faced with me tonight. It is only fate for you to end up as my stepping stone!" Mr. Wangley placed both hands behind his back, arrogance permeating his features.

"Chunkster! Knock this old man out of the ring, and I'll treat you to a whole roasted lamb in return!" Brody shouted from the audience.

"Lamb... lamb!"

The chunkster's eyes lit up as he turned to Mr. Wangley. At present, it was not a renowned fighter who stood before him but the promise of a fragrant, whole roasted lamb.

"Defeat you eat lamb!" He struggled to utter a few words from his limited vocabulary before launching his first attack. With a stomp, the chunkster charged toward Mr. Wangley like the sputtering engine of a car, violently aiming for a collision.

"Ineffectual amateur!" Mr. Wangley flexed his soles and sprang, landing not a moment later on the chunkster's back. Then, without pausing, he extended his fingers and struck the pressure points present on the chunkster's back relentlessly.

The chunkster stumbled along with Mr. Wangley's momentum. He swayed, seconds away from losing his balance.

"Lamb! Meat!" The chunkster was growing impatient now. His assault became crazed and

frantic, but Mr. Wangle was smart enough not to meet them head-on. Instead, he ducked agilely, launching a few sneak

attacks here and there as he egged his opponent on.

When it came to manipulating the pressure points of his opponent to turn the situation in his favor, he was, no doubt, an expert.

He believed that no matter how strong the chunkster's defenses were, he could effectively

target his pressure points and bring him down, once and for all! At the end of the day, those were the points he believed to be the chunkster's weaknesses.

His idea was undeniably a good one, but as time passed, Mr. Wangle couldn't help but feel that something was off.

Because of the chunkster's build, his defenses were different from the patterns exhibited by the usual adamantite shields wielded by the opponents he'd faced in the past.

The fat on his body was key in dissipating the impact of his attempted attacks.

As for the pressure points he'd been targeting all this while, they only proved to be mildly effective for a short period of time before fully

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recovering shortly after, rendering most of his strikes ineffective.

After their long-

withstanding struggle, the chunkster appeared to be spirited while Mr. Wangle seemed more

out of breath than ever.

The consumption of energy after channeling the internal energy he possessed drained him to the core.

"This is impossible!" Mr. Wangle exclaimed inwardly, his brow knitted.

The chunkster's appearance was unremarkable, but he was extremely tenacious.

“Mr. Wangle! Try targeting the crown of his head! That’s where his weakness lies!” Natasha’s voice rang out

from the audience.

No one believed Dustin but her.

“That brat speaks nothing but nonsense! He’s just trying to disrupt the state of my mind!” Mr. Wangle’s

expression was icy.

Not even he could identify the chunkster’s weaknesses, let alone someone whose name he hadn’t even heard of in his entire life. He was not about to believe his words just like that.

“I need to finish this soon! And quickly!” His stamina was swiftly waning, and he couldn’t afford to waste any

more time.

Mr. Wangle threw himself forward boldly, targeting a punch toward the chunkster’s throat. That area had the least amount of flesh—it must be his opponent’s weakest spot.

If it landed where he intended to, the subsequent effects would be extraordinary.

“Gotcha!” The chunkster grinned as he grabbed ahold of Mr. Wangle’s wrist.

“Shit—” Mr. Wangle’s expression changed as the magnitude of the situation he was caught in dawned upon him. He was about to pull back, only to realize he couldn’t break free.

“Up you go!” The chunkster bellowed and tossed Mr. Wangle up in the air, spinning him around. About ten rounds or so later, he swatted the old man like a fly and sent him crashing to the ground.

A loud boom reverberated around the arena, shaking it momentarily.

Mr. Wangle coughed up blood as he convulsed on the ground before stilling completely. He was severely injured, rendered motionless by the impact of his fall. That plummet must have also broken a great number of

his bones.

“Mr. Wangley!” Quentin stood up immediately. Shock and, inexplicably, fear had taken hold of his features.

When he'd watched Mr. Wangley's attempts to take control of the situation earlier, he thought victory was theirs at long last. Never in his wildest dreams would he imagine the tides to turn on them.

“Quick! Get a doctor over here!” Natasha's expression was stern as she ordered someone to lift Mr. Wangley

off the ground.

“Even Mr. Wangley lost to this chunkster, Could he actually be invincible?” Ruth's brows were perpetually furrowed, worry evident on her face.

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The situation was far from optimistic after losing two rounds in a row.

“Another great master from the Harmons has fallen. Looks like their loss today is inevitable! Otto shook his

head.

“Exactly! Competing against Boulderthorn today was a surefire way to bring disgrace upon themselves. Not even the Harmons could emerge victorious against an opponent this powerful!” Julie grinned gleefully.

After knowing that Dustin had connections with the Harmon family, she couldn't help but take pleasure in the misfortune of said family.

“I wouldn't be so sure about that.” Suddenly, a man spoke up from beside them. “I heard the Harmons still have their biggest trump card to turn this around!”

“What trump card?” Otto asked tentatively.

“This trump card of theirs is none other than the warrior ranked ninth among the Hundred Immortals, the King

of Kicks!”

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“The King of Kicks?”

“The one ranked ninth on The Hundred Immortals?”

Everyone looked astonished upon hearing the mention. They had clearly heard of the King of Kicks—those who ranked on The Hundred Immortals were extraordinary talents, not to mention the legends who made it into the top ten!

A powerful man like the King of Kicks would command respect anywhere he went. His presence at their unremarkable guild was akin to an attack from a higher level. Not even the Boulderthorn disciples could overshadow him.

“Wow! I’m surprised that the Harmons have hired the King of Kicks! They are indeed wealthy!”

“With the King of Kicks around, the Harmons are definitely winning the battle.”

“He can take on every single opponent at the scene with his capability!”

After the initial shock, the spectators started to anticipate the fight. After today, they could boast that they had witnessed the King of Kicks in action.

“Ms. Harmon, your martial artists seem weak. Why don’t you send the top gun?” Brody challenged her with a sneer. Winning two consecutive rounds boosted his confidence.

“Sir Cavaliere, I’ll bank on you.” Natasha looked at the hawk-nosed elder.

“Hmph! Didn’t I tell you not to waste your time? What are those two good-for-nothings doing here?” The man appeared disdainful. His remark upset Stephen and Mr. Wangle, who were being treated for their injuries on the side. Still, they dared not talk back to him.

“Sir Cavaliere, you’re right. These two aren’t at the same level as you. They’re just here to fill up the quota,” Quentin quickly sucked up to the King of Kicks..

“Please, Sir Cavaliere.” Natasha, refusing to engage in more talk, gestured to ward the battle ring.

“Sure! Since I’m paid to do this, I’ll walk around the ring!” He smiled and marched right into the ring. His appearance led to a huge commotion among the audience.

“Fuck! It’s truly the King of Kicks! Am I dreaming?”

“That’s unexpected! The Harmons must have spent a fortune to get him here!”

“When you have one of the top ten from The Hundred Immortals in the ring, it’s practically a massacre, isn’t it?”

“I thought the Harmons were going to lose! But the tables have turned!”

The atmosphere in the guild reached a climax due to the presence of the King of Kicks.

“Although this has cost us a fortune, it is worth it solely for the shock factor. The corner of Jessica’s lips

curled into a rare smile.

“That’s true! Once the King of Kicks defeats the lineup from Mr. Williams’ side, no one will look for trouble with

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us anymore!” Quentin concurred with a nod.

“Too bad the King of Kicks is an egotistical lone wolf. We can’t work with him for long.” Natasha shook her head regretfully.

“Oh, what do you know? Legends are special and act in their own ways. That’s why they’re different from us!” Quentin sounded like a know-it-all and was promptly ignored by Natasha.

“Silence!” The hawk-nosed elder pressed on the floor of the ring. When the audience quieted, he announced, “I have caught the flu and felt sick today. Therefore, I shall surrender and forfeit the battle today!”

Chaos erupted among the audience.

“What? Is he surrendering?”

“That can’t be! He’s the King of Kicks and ninth on The Hundred Immortals. How could he give up because of flu?”

“Fuck! That’s no surrender. He’s doing it on purpose!”

The audience was stunned and confused as they didn’t expect the King of Kicks to act in such a way. After going into the ring, he surrendered before the battle. What was that? Was there some shady deal going on?

“What’s wrong? Why did he surrender?” Jessica and her group exchanged astonished glances. The King of

Kicks had received the payment but surrendered before he rendered his services. He had crossed a line!

“Did he switch sides at the last minute?” Dustin narrowed his eyes, looking hostile. He had not expected the King of Kicks to pull off that trick.

“Sir Cavaliere! What was that?” Natasha shot up from her seat, looking frosty. The whole reason she accepted

the invitation to the battle was because she had him as an ace card. His unexpected behavior had messed up

her plans.

“Ms. Harmon, you paid me to join the battle, but you did not specify that I have to win. Isn’t it a normal thing to fall sick and give up on the battle?” He flashed a half smile at her.

*Sir! You are a respected senior in the martial arts world! Aren’t you worried you’d be the butt of the jokes if you flip-flopped on your promises?” Natasha chided him.

“The butt of jokes? I am an honorable and upright man. No one dares to joke about me.” His eyes swept across the area, and those who felt his gaze quickly lowered their heads in deference.

“Sir Cavaliere, I believe I have treated you generously. Why would you do this?” She furrowed her brow. At that moment, she was no longer oblivious to the fact that she had been fooled. The King of Kicks agreed to join the battle, only to surrender at a critical moment, catching her off-guard. It was a cruel and raw betrayal!

“Ms. Harmon, I do not see the need to hide the truth from you.” The hawk-nosed old man straightened his shirt and said to her, “I play fair, and I work for the highest bidder. This time around, someone has offered me a higher price. So, I can’t help you out. Of course, I can reconsider my decision if you’re willing to bid for my

service at a higher price.”

“Are you marking up the price now?” There was a wintry look in Natasha’s attractive eyes.

“Since this is a transaction, it’s only normal to mark up prices at the last minute.” He showed no guilt in his

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behavior.

“You’re shameless!” She sneered, feeling aghast at the rotten character of the King of Kicks she had painstakingly hired.

“Ms. Harmon, if you refuse to offer a higher price, I shall leave the ring.” He looked like he was about to leave.

“Wait! We’ll do it!” Jessica’s face fell apart, and she immediately stopped him. If the King of Kicks surrendered, the Harmones would lose the battle without a doubt! They had to accept the fact, even if he had demanded more money at the eleventh hour.

“I’m sorry. Your reply comes too late.” He sneered at them and walked up to the Boulderthorn guild gang in front of everyone. The Harmons instantly paled upon witnessing that.

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The Harmons were shocked that the handsomely-paid King of Kicks had tricked them instead of lending them a helping hand. At that moment, they were lost and helpless.

Meanwhile, the Boulderthorn guild was all smiles, a stark contrast to the anger and indignation on the Harmons’ end.

“Hahaha Ms. Harmon, your family has lost three rounds. Anyone else wants to get into the ring? If not, we’ll declare victory!” Brody laughed insolently. Very few knew the fact that the King of Kicks was a good friend of Mr. Williams. The betrayal was part of his plan as well. That would force the Harmons into a corner!

“Oh no! Are the Harmons leaving in defeat?”

“I was looking forward to a great battle tonight. Who knew we’d witness such a botched situation!”

“At the end of the day, the Harmons have fallen into a trap. The King of Kicks that they wasted the effort on recruiting turns out to be a rat from the Boulderthorn guild!”

“Might is right! There’s no point arguing over this. The Harmons are destined to lose!”

There was a lot of gossip surrounding the sharp turn of events. People were shocked and sympathetic; some were even gleeful at the disaster.

“Natasha, your King of Kicks is a sham! What do we do now? Do we take the defeat?” Quentin put on an odd

and critical look.

Natasha bit her lips but said nothing. The situation had unfolded beyond her control, and she wondered if

there was anyone who could save the day.

“Ms. Harmon, is anyone from your side going into the ring? Just admit defeat if you have no one else to send. Stop wasting time,” Brody challenged her again.

“Yeah! Just admit defeat! Don’t waste our time!” Those from the Boulderthorn guild chanted, and the Harmons

had nothing to say in return, only upset looks on their faces.

“I’ll go!” A voice boomed and echoed in the guild. Everyone looked at the handsome man who emerged from

the crowd. It was Dustin Rhys!

“Huh?” The audience standing beside him was puzzled.

“Rhys! Are you kidding? The audacity to join the battle!” Quentin was taken aback before sniggering as he

gave Dustin a look of disbelief.

“Dustin, stop fooling around! Even Mr. Wangsley and the rest were no match for the Boulderthorn guild. What can you do up there? Losing your life?” Jessica rebuked, but she was more concerned about the reputation of the Harmons than Dustin’s safety. If he lost the battle, the Harmon family’s reputation would suffer.

“Dustin, you don’t have to take the risk. If they want our stocks, we’ll give it to them.” Natasha was worried for

her man. No amount of stocks or benefits was worth risking his life for.

“Don’t worry. I’ll be fine.” He smiled. “I will not offer them our stocks, and I’ll save our reputation!” With that, he

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marched into the ring. He wasn't planning on getting involved, but he was forced to do so after the King of Kicks switched sides at the last minute.

"Sis, do you not want to stop him?" Ruth was a little concerned.

"He's not a reckless man. If he's fine with joining the battle, he must be confident in his chances of winning." Natasha put on a brave face, but her eyes betrayed her worry. However, she had no choice but to trust him unconditionally in such a critical time.

"Kiddo, you must be on a suicide mission! How dare you come into the ring?" Brody laughed like a maniac and stared at Dustin like he was looking at a dead man. He had been thinking hard about getting revenge against

Dustin, but Dustin made it easy for him.

"Who is that?" Maximus questioned.

"Max, that's the inventor of Immortunol. He was the one who slapped me this morning." Brody explained.

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"Oh, it's him."

Maximus smiled coolly. "It's really gutsy of a physician to join the battle. Looks like the Harmons have run out of candidates."

Dustin's appearance came as a shock to the members of the Boulderthorn guild as well as Julie and her group.

"Is he crazy? He can't even beat me. What makes him think he's capable of fighting the Boulderthorn masters?"

to Marsh was dumbfounded by Dustin's decision. Even Mr. Chapman was beaten to a pulp in the ring. Where did a weakling like Dustin get the courage to enter the ring?

“Hmph! He still wants to show off at this point in time. That’s just courting death.” Julie chuckled gleefully. She looked forward to Dustin being beaten up badly onstage.

“You’re damn right! Even Otto knows better than to show off at this serious event. That dude is on a suicide mission!” The group of youngsters scoffed at Dustin, whom they believed was an attention-seeker. An average person should never get involved in the battle of the masters, for a tiny slip-up could cost one’s life.

“Young man, are you sure you’d like to fight on behalf of the Harmon family? The hawk-nosed elder suddenly questioned in a threatening voice. Everyone in the guild could hear him well, even though he wasn’t speaking loudly. The elder had made it clear that anyone who represented the Harmons would be his enemy.

“Well, at least I’m not as shameless as those who took the money but refused to make good on their promise and even stabbed others in the back!” Dustin taunted him mercilessly. “Even dogs are thankful to the hand that feeds them. I guess that somebody is worse than an animal.”

The audience gasped and murmured upon hearing the remark. They were already startled when Dustin went on the stage, but they were once again shocked by his audacity to mock the King of Kicks in public. Was Dustin Rhys playing with fire?

“You punk! Do you even hear what you’re saying?” The old man’s expression crumbled.

“Why? Can’t stand being criticized for your actions? You’re just a greedy, dishonest, and ungrateful bastard, aren’t you?” Dustin jeered at him.

“You have a death wish!” The old man stared coldly at Dustin, but he was stopped by Maximus before he could make a move. “Sir Cavaliere, we cannot break the rules of the battle. You should leave any personal grudges for post-battle.”

“You punk! I sure hope you survive!” The hawk-nosed old man scoffed and begrudgingly took his seat.

“Sir Cavaliere, calm down. That punk is certainly going to be dead today.” Brody cackled and yelled in the direction of the ring. “Chunkster, smash him! I’ll give you two more mutton legs if you cripple him!”

“Mutton leg! Mutton leg!” Chunkster giggled, his eyes shining bright when he stared at Dustin. Before the referee even officiated the match, he had hurled himself toward Dustin at high speed and with explosive energy like an invincible human tank. Compared to Chunkster, Dustin was as thin as a rail.

“That punk is going to die! Not even Mr. Chapman could beat Chunkster. Dustin Rhys is going to be minced meat in the ring.” Otto chuckled with anticipation.

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“He deserves it for being a show-off.” Julie crossed her arms on her chest and waited for ill fate to befall

Dustin.

Just when everyone thought that it was a David and Goliath battle with a clear winner, Dustin suddenly made

a move. He kicked against the ground and launched himself forward like an agile serpent. When he was near Chunkster, he quickly leaped into the air, tapping his index and middle fingers on the Meridian point on top of Chunkster’s head with precision.

With a grunt, Chunkster immediately blacked out in the ring. Due to the momentum, his ball-

like figure accelerated for a good ten feet before coming to a stop and dropping off the platform with a thud. The

audience watched on, their jaws dropping on the floor.