

# An Understated Dominance [On-Going]

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## Chapter 2581

### Afternoon, Sun Moon Tower – Private Room

Just as Grace had predicted, Matthias had come by at noon after she'd dealt with Tristan earlier that morning.

And now, in the afternoon, Nathaniel had shown up too.

All three princes had visited the palace on the same day—each trying to figure out what had happened the night before.

Tristan wanted answers.

Matthias wanted to know if Grace was behind it.

And Nathaniel was trying to figure out if someone powerful was backing her.

Their concerns were the same, but their angles differed.

Grace had no choice but to deflect with vague answers, buying time. Admitting anything outright would only invite more trouble.

Still, she knew no secret could stay buried forever. Sooner or later, they would piece together the truth.

She let out a soft sigh, her head throbbing slightly.

Her original plan was simple: eliminate the Pantheon using Logan's breakthrough and their moment of vulnerability.

That goal had been accomplished.

But in doing so, she'd also dragged herself out into the spotlight.

She had always preferred to keep a low profile while quietly building her influence. But now, that anonymity was gone.

"As the great Princess Grace, what's got you sighing like this?" Logan teased as he walked in behind her.

Grace glanced over and gave a wry smile. “Don’t start. I’ve got a headache. All three princes are watching me now. Things are bound to get complicated.”

“They can keep watching,” Logan replied with a grin. “You’ve stayed quiet long enough. It’s time to show them what real strength looks like.”

“I still prefer making quiet progress. I’m not interested in power struggles,” Grace said, shaking her head.

“If you don’t fight for your slice, someone else will take it from you,” Logan said, picking up a slice of cake. “Think about it. No matter which one of your brothers becomes emperor, do you really think they’ll let you keep running the kingdom’s largest intelligence agency?”

He looked at her seriously.

“They’ll strip you of everything—if not to weaken you, then just out of fear. You might end up under house arrest, watched day and night.”

Grace went silent.

She’d thought about this before.

As long as the current emperor lived, she could safely hold power and serve the kingdom. Her father trusted her.

But once the throne passed to someone else, everything would change.

The new emperor would take back her authority. Her agency would be dismantled or handed to someone else.

She could accept that.

What she couldn’t accept was being treated as a threat after surrendering everything.

Even if she stepped down peacefully, they wouldn’t let her walk away.

And knowing how she had treated her brothers in the past... being locked up would be a mercy.

Worse outcomes weren’t out of the question.

It wasn’t cynicism—it was experience. She’d seen too much of the world’s darkness to believe in fairy tales.

“Boss!”

A confidant suddenly knocked, stepping into the room with a grave look. “We just got news—a plague has broken out in the southern frontier. It’s spreading fast, and many are falling ill.”

“A plague?” Grace frowned. “The southern frontier has always been stable. Why now?”

“According to our sources, it may be tied to the White Bone Cult from thirty years ago,” the aide reported.

“The White Bone Cult?” Grace’s expression shifted. “I thought they were wiped out. Could there still be survivors?”

Thirty years ago, her father had led 100,000 troops into the southern frontier to crush the White Bone Cult. Roads and bridges were sealed, and the cult was encircled for three full months.

Thousands were killed, including the cult’s top leadership. Afterwards, her father sent elite teams to hunt down the stragglers.

Since then, the cult had vanished.

For thirty years, nothing.

And now, at this critical juncture, they were back—causing chaos once again.

“We need more time to confirm,” the aide continued. “But the plague is spreading fast. If we don’t act soon, it could devastate more than a dozen cities.”

“Mobilize all available forces immediately,” Grace ordered, her voice cold and calm. “Do everything possible to contain the outbreak and protect the people.”

“Yes, Your Highness!” the aide said and quickly left.

Grace turned to Logan, brows furrowed. “This is serious. The White Bone Cult is back. I don’t know how many lives will be lost.”

“The White Bone Cult, huh…” Logan’s eyes narrowed, his instincts kicking in.

Something about this didn’t sit right.