

An Understated Dominance Novel Free Chapter 2621 - chapter 2621 (English Translation)

Chapter 2621 Sloan tunneled through the muddy underground using the earth-shifting technique. Even though he'd found good cover earlier, the altar's destruction still affected him. Now, his energy was a chaotic mess, and every breath sent fresh pain lancing through his torso. But he had no time to worry about his injuries. He raced toward the Nether Crypt at maximum speed. The grand elder had to be warned. They need to relocate their base. Hidden beneath the gnarled roots of a 1,000 -year-old banyan tree, the crypt's entrance would stay buried forever unless one knew precisely where to look.

Sloan tunneled at full speed, burning through his internal energy reserves as he drove forward. After 15 relentless minutes, he finally reached the Nether Crypt entrance. He flicked three bone talismans from his fingertips. The banyan's root system parted slowly like snakes, revealing a pitch -black passage. As soon as he slipped inside, the soil behind him churned violently and sealed the passage shut. Sloan's strength gave out. He collapsed face-first onto the stone floor of the Nether Crypt, gasping from the massive drain on his internal energy. "Mr. Vilehorn?

What happened to you?" The cult members guarding the Nether Crypt saw the state he was in, and their faces went white. They rushed forward to help him up. Each of the cultists was deathly pale, with sunken eyes and black robes that reeked of rot. "Hurry up and report to Elder Ashlock right now." Sloan grabbed the cultist's wrist so hard that his finger bones dug deep enough to leave marks. "That powerhouse is coming for us!" The moment the words left his mouth, the surrounding cultists froze in shock. Without hesitation, they quickly turned and ran to report it.

Soon, the news spread through the crypt like wildfire. Inside a palace built from the bones of the dead, a low, growing unrest echoed through the halls. The corpse-oil lanterns embedded in the stone walls flickered violently, casting twisted shadows across the bone-carved murals that writhed like demons dancing on the walls. Deep in the Nether Crypt's inner sanctuary, the Grand Elder of the Skull Covenant, Lucan Ashlock, sat cross-legged on his throne of bones. His skin clung tightly to his bones like dried leather, and only his eyes seemed alive, glowing with a sickly green light.

When a cultist rushed in with the news, Lucan's withered fingers clenched the throne's armrests so hard that the embedded skulls let out a piercing wail. "Fools!" Lucan shouted. His voice scraped like grinding stone. "Three grandmasters working together couldn't stop one brat?" Sloan lowered his head, not daring to look up. "He's not just any martial artist. Instead, he's reached the terrestrial immortal realm. Wherever that golden light touched, flesh and bone melted. Even Gore's Crimson Flow Formation couldn't hold him back." "Terrestrial immortal?" Lucan looked alarmed.

"Wasn't he supposed to be dealing with the zombie virus? How did he get here so fast?" "Their palace had sent scouts to search this area, but I silenced them before they could report back. They must have tipped that powerhouse and followed their trail here," Sloan explained. "Damn it all." Lucan shot to his feet, and a surge of black mist rose around him, towering ten feet high. Inside the haze, the shapes of tormented souls twisted and wailed. "Activate the Elemental Seals!

Cryptbound Twelve, retreat with me now." At his command, a deep rumble echoed from the depths of the Nether Crypt as heavy mechanisms groaned to life. Twelve black figures stepped out from the stone walls of the sanctuary. They wore bone-plated armor, each carrying a different bone-forged weapon. With every step, wisps of blood mist curl from the ground. These were the Cryptbound Twelve, the Skull Covenant's elite warriors. Each of them had reached the level of a grandmaster. Their combined strength could rival even an ultimate grandmaster.

They were the product of years of preparation, and their only trump card to rise again. Whatever happened next, the Cryptbound Twelve couldn't be allowed to fall. "Elder Ashlock, this crypt has been our stronghold for a century. Are we really abandoning it just like that?" Kaelen Vireth, first among the twelve, couldn't hide his concern. The bone flute in his hand was leaking a steady drip of dark red fluid. Lucan looked at him coldly. "Better to retreat and fight another day. That bastard destroyed my altar and killed my grandmasters. This blood debt won't be forgotten.

Once we regroup with Ebon Messiah, we'll make him pay." The Cryptbound Twelve said nothing. They lowered their heads in unison and accepted the command. Sloan struggled to follow behind them, but Lucan's boot sent him sprawling. "You've outlived your usefulness. Keeping you around would only slow us down." Before the words fell, a bone needle shot from Lucan's fingertip and punched straight through Sloan's heart from behind. Sloan's eyes bulged as choking sounds escaped his throat. His body shriveled like a deflating balloon until only a wrinkled skin remained on the stone floor.

"Open the secret passage," Lucan ordered. He grabbed Sloan's dried skin and slapped it against the bone altar in the heart of the sanctuary. The altar bucked and shuddered. A crack split open the ground, nearly ten feet wide, revealing a staircase that descended into absolute darkness. The Cryptbound Twelve slipped into the opening one after another. Just as Lucan prepared to follow behind them, the entire crypt trembled violently. "Oh no! He's found us," he muttered. His face paled instantly, and he was gripped by a cold, paralyzing fear.

An Understated Dominance Novel Free Chapter 2622 - chapter 2622 (English Translation)

Chapter 2622 The gates of the Nether Crypt rumbled open, and a tall, white figure emerged through the widening gap. Dustin stood with his hands clasped behind his back. Golden radiance swirled around him, turning the night sky bright as day. The

black mist seeping through the doorway instantly dissipated when it touched the glow. "Trying to run?" His voice cracked like thunder through the passage. "When you massacred tens of thousands of innocent people, did you think this day would never come?" A vicious gleam flashed in Lucan's eyes.

He hurled the human skin upward and shouted, "Crimson Rite-unleash!" The strip of human skin expanded in midair, swelling into a massive red curtain. Twisted human faces writhed and screamed across its surface, stretching the flesh as they clawed from within. At that instant, the Cryptbound Twelve struck in unison. Bone blades, whips, and spears tore through the air as twelve blurred shadows -each one howling with razor-sharp force -charged toward Dustin. "Child's play." Dustin snorted and flicked his right hand casually. The seemingly effortless gesture whipped up a golden gust of air.

All twelve bone weapons shattered like glass, and the Cryptbound Twelve were sent flying backward. They slammed into the stone walls with bone-crushing force, and their blood sprayed across the surface in bright, sickly-red splatters. Lucan's eyes widened in shock. He quickly formed hand seals and shouted, "Spectral Formation-merge as one." The fallen Cryptbound Twelve jerked upright like broken marionettes. Their bodies twisted at impossible angles as the twelve figures fused instantly into a nearly 30-foot-tall Necro Tyrant.

Its eyes burned with eerie green flames, and it gripped a massive axe forged from countless skulls. The dripping toxin on the blade hissed as it corroded deep pits into the ground. "Come and test our covenant's supreme divine power." Lucan's voice echoed from inside the Necro Tyrant, laced with arrogant laughter. As it advanced with earth-shaking steps, the Necro Tyrant brought its massive axe down on Dustin with bone-crushing force. The air warped in its wake, and the feral spirits bound to the blade shrieked like banshees. However, Dustin didn't flinch.

He slowly raised his right hand as golden light gathered in his palm, condensing into an orb the size of a bowling ball. Mysterious runes crisscrossed on its surface, each rotation sending tremors through reality itself. "Crush!" Dustin roared. The golden orb streaked toward the Necro Tyrant like a comet. When they collided, time seemed to stop. Blinding light engulfed the entire passage, and the feral spirits shrieked in agony as they dissolved like snow in a furnace. The Necro Tyrant's massive axe shattered first, followed by its towering body breaking apart piece by piece.

The screams of the Cryptbound Twelve rang out one after another, but not a single body remained. In the end, they were reduced to nothing but dust. Lucan rushed out from the cloud of bone dust. He had shed his human form into something nightmarish. It was a writhing mass of flesh and blood, studded with dozens of blinking, lidless eyes. "I'll take you down with me!" he howled. The grotesque blob exploded into billions of razor-thin blood threads that surged toward Dustin like a crimson tsunami. Each thread carried Decayspit, the world's deadliest poison.

A single drop could melt a grandmaster into a puddle of liquid. But the golden light around Dustin suddenly flared brighter, forming an impenetrable barrier. The blood threads struck it harmlessly, like raindrops hitting an umbrella. With a flick of his finger, Dustin fired a concentrated beam of golden energy and pierced the black bone core hidden within the flesh mass. "No..." Lucan's agonized scream echoed along the passageway. The bloody mass withered rapidly in the golden light until his original human form reappeared. At that moment, he had nothing left to fight with.

He slumped to the ground, his eyes flickering between fear and bitter rage. Dustin slowly approached him and stared down at the mastermind of the chaos. "Your Skull Covenant has committed countless atrocities. Your reign of terror ends today." Lucan suddenly laughed maniacally. "You really think it's over just because you killed us? Ebon already knows what happened. He will avenge us and ensure Dragonmarsh pays for our deaths." Dustin's expression darkened, and he conjured a golden light in his palm.

Lucan's laughter died in his throat as his body dissolved into a wisp of blue smoke and vanished. With every threat eliminated, Dustin turned toward the depths of the Nether Crypt. This underground hellhole had claimed countless innocent lives. The skulls embedded in the walls bore silent witness to unspeakable horrors. He drew a deep breath and released his full power without restraint. Golden energy roared through the passages like a raging river. The sturdy stone walls crumbled like paper in the surge of golden light.

Altars, hidden chambers, and prison cells inside the crypt -every last trace of evil was wiped out in the storm of golden light. A final thunderous crash shook the earth as the entire Nether Crypt collapsed. The mountain above it came tumbling down in an avalanche of rock and debris. When the dust settled, Dustin had already vanished into the night sky. A thousand miles away in a hidden valley, Ebon sat cross-legged in meditation. His eyes suddenly snapped open as the bone pendant around his neck cracked and shattered into pieces.

An Understated Dominance Novel Free Chapter 2623 - chapter 2623 (English Translation)

Chapter 2623 Inside a temporary camp in Reedcrest, thousands of civilians huddled together in cramped conditions. Many were wounded, and countless others showed signs of plague infection. When the zombie horde had attacked, there hadn't been time to deal with the outbreak. Saving lives had come first. Though the horde was eventually wiped out, the damage caused by the virus was far from over. However, the plague remained the biggest threat. With the crowd in chaos, it had spread like wildfire. Infections had climbed from hundreds to thousands, even under Grace's containment efforts.

Without the medication keeping it under control, the outbreak would have been catastrophic. Even so, Reedcrest was doing remarkably well compared to the other three cities. Those three had already descended into chaos. Even without the threat of the zombie virus, it would take time to restore any kind of order. Dustin rode a trail of golden light back to the temporary camp. He saw Grace kneeling inside the tent, feeding medicine to a child who couldn't have been older than five. The child had already been infected with the plague.

His fever hadn't broken, and his condition was clearly worsening. But there were far too many just like him. Even the most renowned doctors couldn't keep up. All they could do now was use tonics to stabilize the symptoms and treat each case individually. "You're back." After feeding the child the medicine, Grace tucked him in before leading Dustin outside the tent. "Did you find the remnants of the Skull Covenant?" she asked. "I've killed every last one of them," Dustin replied. "I also destroyed their main base.

They won't be stirring up trouble again anytime soon." "I can't thank you enough. With their base destroyed, people in all four cities can finally sleep at night." Grace forced a smile that didn't reach her eyes. "How bad is the plague situation?" he asked. "It's still spreading, but your prescription has helped keep things under control here in Reedcrest." Compared to the chaos brought by the scarlet mist and the zombie horde, the plague seemed manageable. "That's great," he said with a nod. He was worn out, but knowing they'd saved lives made it all worth it. "Ms.

Linsor!" Sadie came running, panic written across her face. "We just got an emergency report from Sommertown. Prince Nathaniel burned down the entire slum. He's calling it purification. Anyone infected with the plague was burned alive." "What?" Grace went pale. "How could he do such a thing?" Burning every plague victim alive? How could anyone justify something so brutal? "Our scouts report that Sommertown's plague has spiraled out of control. Prince Nathaniel couldn't contain the outbreak, so he chose to burn everything down," Sadie explained. Grace frowned.

"How many people have died?" "Tens of thousands." Sadie's voice cracked. Grace swayed and grabbed the tent pole to steady herself. Her knuckles turned white from gripping so hard. She snapped, "How could he do that? Those were his own people, and he had them killed without hesitation. Does human life mean nothing to him? How does a prince become this cruel? It's barbaric and completely unforgivable." Sadie pressed on with her grim report, "It wasn't just Prince Nathaniel. Prince Matthias has been just as brutal. He claimed the plague victims were possessed by evil spirits.

"Not only did he burn the infected districts, he also executed every civilian who'd had any contact with patients. He claimed it was to stop the plague from spreading." "Animals! They're both animals!" Grace seethed, her eyes turning bloodshot. They had already overcome so many crises. If everyone had just held the line a little longer and worked together, they could've overcome this natural and man-made disaster. But in the

final stretch, Nathaniel and Matthias chose the easy way out. Rather than put in the effort to contain the plague, they resorted to mass murder.

What they did wasn't just cruel and inexcusable. Dustin suddenly asked, "What about Prince Tristan?" Nathaniel was selfish to his core, and Matthias was a natural-born killer. Their actions matched their nature perfectly. Though Tristan might be a hypocrite, he didn't seem capable of this level of cruelty. "Things are just as bad in Harbortown," Sadie replied. "Prince Tristan hasn't ordered any executions, but he locked up a large number of civilians-both infected and healthy-in the same space," She continued, "Then, he abandoned them.

No medical care, no separation protocols, and no help whatsoever. He just left them to survive or die on their own." "He's just as cruel as the other two," Grace said coldly. Compared to Nathaniel and Matthias, Tristan's action might not have been cruel, but turning his back on the crisis was no less damning. That kind of behavior might be expected from ordinary citizens, but he was the crown prince of Dragonmarsh. He was supposed to set an example for all officials and protect the citizens of Harbortown.

But when the outbreak spiraled out of control, he washed his hands of the whole thing and disappeared, leaving the city to fend for itself. He was no better than Nathaniel and Matthias. Grace shuddered to think what would happen to Dragonmarsh under their rule. At that instant, she realized just how wise Dustin's earlier words had been. None of the three princes could be trusted with power. Rather than hand control over to these incompetents and watch them harm innocent lives, it would be far better to keep that power in more capable hands.

Unconsciously, a seed of ambition had taken root in her heart.

An Understated Dominance Novel Free Chapter 2624 - chapter 2624 (English Translation)

Chapter 2624 Grace said, "These princes sit in their high positions but treat their people like dirt beneath their feet. When Father sent them to the Ashen Coast, he wanted them to grow as leaders and protect the lives under their care. Instead, all they do is fight for power and use human lives as chess pieces in their political games." Her face flushed with anger, but her eyes went cold. As angry as she was, what cut deeper was the disappointment. In her eyes, none of her three brothers were fit to rule, and none of them deserved the throne.

"Now isn't the time to point fingers," Dustin said. "Right now, we need to focus on saving those innocent people." He didn't think much of Tristan, Matthias, or Nathaniel either. To him, Tristan was a hypocrite who put on one mask in public and showed his true nature behind closed doors. Matthias was a brutal hothead with more muscle than brains. Meanwhile, Nathaniel was nothing but a selfish, petty man who would sacrifice anyone

for personal gain. "Mr. Rhys is right," Sadie said grimly. 11 Those people are trapped in hell right now.

"We're their only hope." Grace drew a long breath and forced down her rage until she was calm again. She quickly ordered, "Get a rescue team ready. We're heading to Harbortown at full speed to save as many lives as we can." The reason she'd chosen Harbortown wasn't because the outbreak couldn't be contained, but because Thornwick and Sommertown were already beyond saving. After all, Matthias and Nathaniel had dealt with their infected populations by burning them alive. Even if she rushed a team to those cities now, there would be almost no one left to save.

At least Tristan's hands-off approach had given the plague victims in Harbortown a sliver of hope. As for how many lives could be saved, all she could do was to do everything humanly possible and hope for the best. Under Grace's command, a rescue team quickly set out from Reedcrest, heading straight for Harbortown. In Harbortown's slums, a ten-foot-high wooden wall enclosed the area like a giant prison. The humid air reeked of vomit and rotting flesh. Sharpened wooden stakes lined the top of the wall, and scraps of cloth fluttered from the tips.

It was the last trace of those who had tried to climb out. More than 5,000 people were crammed into the muddy clearing below. There wasn't a single intact sleeping mat or place to rest, just cold, wet ground. In the corner, a weak child's cry broke the silence. A woman in tattered clothes was gently patting the child's back with hands chapped and cracked from the cold. Her bare arms were covered in dark blotches, and every cough sent a bulging mass rising from her chest like something ready to burst. "Water...

Does anyone have water..." A frail old man lay sprawled in the dirt, clawing at clumps of grass with skeletal fingers. The skin on his neck had begun to fester, oozing with a sickly yellow-green pus. Nearby, two burly men tore at half a moldy cornbread, their cloudy eyes filled with hunger. They didn't even notice the maggots crawling into their filthy, tattered clothes. Suddenly, a commotion erupted from one of the shacks on the west side. Several plague-infected patients collapsed to the ground, convulsing as their skin turned pitch-black before their eyes.

The uninfected screamed and tried to back away, but the crowd pressed in from all sides. They could only watch in horror as the dark blotches spread across the patients' bodies. "Don't touch them. They're contagious," someone shouted, and panic exploded through the crowd. Some of them picked up rocks and hurled them at the infected. Others tried to climb over the wooden wall, stepping on whoever was in the way. In the chaos, a woman carrying her baby was shoved to the ground. The infant slipped from her arms and hit the muddy earth.

Before it could even cry out, panicked feet trampled over it. "Guards! We're not sick. Let us out." Those who hadn't shown any symptoms dropped to their knees at the wooden

barrier, shaking the rough fence with all their strength. Through the slits in the wall, the soldiers could be seen moving outside. They watched the tragic scene inside with cold indifference, while occasionally jabbing their spears at anyone who got too close. "What the hell are you yelling at?"

Prince Tristan has ordered you all to stay here." The broad-faced officer spat out the stalk of grass he'd been chewing and ground his boot heel over a bloodstain. He added, "We'll let you out when this outbreak ends, provided you're still alive by then." Before he'd finished speaking, a chorus of coughing erupted from the east. A dozen civilians, perfectly healthy just moments ago, dropped to their knees, clutching their chests. Black froth spilled from their lips. Terror spread faster than the outbreak itself. More voices joined the desperate wailing.

Some people began banging their heads against the wooden posts while others clawed at each other's hair. The entire prison had become a vision of hell on earth. As dusk fell, rain began to drizzle down. The water washed away surface filth but couldn't cleanse the despair that hung thick in the air. More bodies curled in the mud. It was impossible to tell who was asleep and who would never wake again. Only the tattered banner on the wooden wall made any sound, snapping like a whimper in the wind and rain.

An Understated Dominance Novel Free Chapter 2625 - chapter 2625 (English Translation)

Chapter 2625 When Grace and Dustin led the rescue team into the slums of Harbortown, the sight that greeted them left them stunned. The muddy ground behind the wooden walls was soaked in filth and stank of rot. Dozens of people were crammed inside like caged animals. Their eyes were dull and empty, filled with nothing but numbness and despair. Some wore nothing but rags, while others were stripped to the waist. Their emaciated frames cast ghastly shadows under the dim light. In one corner, a gray-haired elderly man lay curled up on the ground.

His legs were rotting, with white maggots crawling in the wounds, yet he seemed numb to the pain. With trembling, bone-thin hands, he kept scooping mud from the ground and stuffing it into his mouth. Nearby, a young woman clung tightly to her child's lifeless body. The little girl's face was grayish-blue, with dried black foam at the corners of her mouth. The woman kept stroking her daughter's cold cheeks, murmuring, "Don't worry, sweetie. I'll take you home. We're going home..." But her voice was dry and cracked. Her tears had long dried up, leaving only a hollow, vacant look in her eyes.

Not far away, several burly men were fighting over half a moldy cornbread roll. Their faces and arms were covered in cuts and bruises. Still, they snarled and clawed like that last scrap was the last hope left on Earth. One man suddenly slammed another to the ground, then sank his teeth into the man's neck. Blood sprayed across the onlookers' faces, but none of them flinched. They just stood there, watching indifferently. It was still

raining, and the icy water poured down on the frail civilians, leaving them trembling in the cold.

A young man clutched a baby to his chest, wrapping the child in his thin, tattered shirt. The baby's cries were barely audible, lost beneath the sound of falling rain. Sweat dripped from the man's forehead as he tried to warm the baby's tiny hands with his breath. Each exhale grew more desperate, but the cries slowly faded until they completely stopped. He froze. Then, suddenly, he let out a heart-wrenching scream, filled with endless pain and despair. In the dead silence of the slum, the sound was especially jarring. Grace clenched her fists so tightly her knuckles turned white.

Her nails dug into her palms until blood seeped between her fingers. Her eyes brimmed with tears, but she refused to let them fall. "Those bastards," she hissed through gritted teeth, her voice trembling with fury and grief. The sight hit Dustin harder than he expected. He'd seen his share of bloodshed, more than most men ever would, but the hellscape before him still shook him. He drew a slow breath to steady himself and said quietly, "Let's help them first." Grace snapped out of her daze. She wiped the corner of her eye and ordered, "Rescue teams, listen up.

Move in and help the people now." At her command, the standby teams jumped into action. Medics carrying supply kits pushed through the crowd, tending wounds and administering medicine to those infected. But there were too many in need. The medics couldn't keep up. No sooner had they finished treating one person than several more would collapse nearby. The soldiers hauling supplies were gasping for breath. Crates of medicine, food, and clean water were brought in one after another. However, it was never enough, as the demand far outpaced what they could provide.

They had to guard against panicked civilians rioting over the supplies while trying to distribute everything as quickly as possible. Exhaustion was written across every face. Grace personally oversaw the rescue efforts. One moment she was urging medics to watch their safety, the next she was ordering soldiers to reinforce the wooden walls in case of collapse. Her voice was hoarse from giving orders. Sweat gathered on her brow, and her rain-soaked clothes clung to her skin, but she never slowed down. Her eyes still burned with unshakable resolve. Dustin didn't just stand by and watch, either.

He joined the rescue effort and did everything he could to save more lives with his medical skills. Even though they had come prepared, the hellish reality still left them scrambling. But there was no other choice. They had to save whoever they could, however they could. This was a race against death. Every second mattered because every delay meant another life lost. Under Grace's leadership, the medics worked around the clock to treat the wounded and the infected. The slum was drowning in despair, but a faint spark of hope still clung on.

It was kept alive only by those who refused to give up.

An Understated Dominance Novel Free Chapter 2626 - chapter 2626 (English Translation)

Chapter 2626 Rain streamed down Grace's face. The stench of blood was heavy in the air. She turned toward the wall, where screams echoed beyond the wooden gates, and drew the longsword at her hip. With one quick slash, the iron lock snapped in two. "Open all the gates!" she shouted. Her voice cut through the rain with absolute authority. "Set up isolation areas now," she ordered. "Move the healthy to the clearing on the east side, and the infected to the west shelters.

Move, now!" Dustin conjured three beams of golden light at his fingertips and aimed them precisely at the wooden stakes lining the top of the wall. The sharpened stakes tumbled down in a rain of splinters, clearing the way for desperate climbs. Medics pushed through the mud-soaked crowd, lighting the bundles of mugwort they had brought. Acrid smoke curled upward through the drizzle, but it helped mask the stench of rot lingering in the air. "Is this... medicine?" the gaunt man whispered as he held the jar. A faint glimmer of hope flickered in his dull eyes.

The feverish child next to him had cracked, dry lips. But after swallowing two spoonfuls of the medicine, his body stopped shaking and his breathing steadied. Just then, a flurry of footsteps echoed from the west. More than 30 soldiers in protective masks marched over aggressively. The general leading them wore black armor with a tiger-head blade strapped to his waist. It was Harlan Creed, commander of the Iron Fang Battalion under Tristan's command. 1 "Who dares trespass in the quarantine zone?" he barked. He unsheathed his blade and stormed into the slums with his elite unit at his heels.

They stormed through the area with brute force, knocking over anyone in their path. Civilians who didn't move fast enough were shoved aside or kicked to the ground without mercy. 1 The commotion drew Grace's attention. She slowly turned, rain trailing down her fair face. "Are you one of Tristan's men?" she asked coldly. "How dare you speak His Highness's name so casually?" Harlan snapped. "You must have a death wish!" "You're the one out of line," Sadie shot back. "How dare you speak to the Princess of Ariella that way!" He sneered. "Princess of Ariella? Don't give me that crap.

Why would a princess come to such a filthy dump?" "You-" Sadie was about to snap, but Grace raised a hand and stopped her. Grace looked at Harlan and said coldly, "General, who I am doesn't matter. What matters is that these people are in danger. As a Dragonmarsh official, it's your duty to protect them. We're critically low on medicine. We need your help to get supplies." "I was assigned to guard the quarantine zone and stop the plague from spreading," he replied indifferently.

"Anything beyond that isn't my concern." He added, "Since you've entered the quarantine zone, every one of you will be treated as plague patients. Stay where you

are, and no one gets hurt. But if you try to break out, my men won't hesitate to open fire." While they were talking, a panicked civilian seized the opportunity to try to break through the blockade and escape. "Disobeying orders? Kill him!" Harlan barked, giving the execution order without a second thought. Two soldiers behind him immediately charged forward, kicked the civilian to the ground, then raised their blades to strike.

But a sudden gust of wind burst through the air, and both soldiers were sent flying several feet back. Dustin appeared in front of Grace in the blink of an eye. "Anyone who dares act out in front of the princess... dies," he said coldly. Harlan's eyes narrowed slightly. A chill ran down his spine. He hadn't even seen Dustin move, but just one glance was enough to confirm Dustin was an expert. "You're a Dragonmarsh military commander, yet you'd slaughter your own people? Do you even respect the law?" Grace snapped. "The law?" Harlan burst out laughing.

The bronze studs on his black armor gleamed under the rain. "Here in Harbortown, Prince Tristan's word is law. Who the hell are you to lecture me?" He snapped his arm forward. 30 soldiers fell into formation, shields locking as they began their slow, steady advance. Behind the wooden walls, terrified screams rang out. The spark of hope that had just been rekindled seemed about to be snuffed out by this show of force. Without saying anything, Dustin raised his hand. He released a shower of golden light that crashed into the shield formation.

The 30 elite soldiers were tossed into the air like leaves in a storm. They were instantly sent flying, crashing to the ground in a heap. They were no match for him at all. "Huh?" Harlan's expression changed. He finally realized Dustin was no ordinary opponent. Seeing his men instantly defeated, his face twisted with fury as he swung his tiger-headed blade at Dustin. The blade glinted coldly as it sliced through the rain. Dustin sidestepped to avoid it. A flash of golden light shot from his fingertips and struck the blade's spine.

With a loud clang, the tiger-head blade flew from Harlan's grip and embedded itself deep in the muddy ground. His arm went numb. As he looked up and met Dustin's cold gaze, a chill ran down his spine. "Who... Who the hell are you?" His voice trembled as he backed away. "You're not worthy of knowing my name," Dustin said with an icy expression. "You've oppressed the people and treated human life like trash," Grace snapped. " Guards, take him." Her personal guard stepped forward to tie up Harlan. Harlan's face darkened as he struggled to break free.

But in the blink of an eye, Dustin appeared in front of him and placed one hand on his shoulder. A pulse of golden force surged into Harlan's body. His internal energy immediately snapped like a brittle thread, and he crumpled to the ground. Grace's guards quickly moved in and bound him.

An Understated Dominance Novel Free Chapter 2627 - chapter 2627 (English Translation)

Chapter 2627 "You damn troublemakers! You have some nerve for attacking a Dragonmarsh military commander! I'll make sure you regret this!" Even while bound, Harlan kept thrashing and shouting threats. Without saying anything, Grace raised her hand and slapped him across the face several times until he was seeing stars. His cheeks were swollen, and blood trickled at the corner of his mouth. "You think you deserve the title of Dragonmarsh military commander?" she said coldly. "You should be court-martialed and stripped of your rank." "Court-martialed? Ha! Who the hell do you think you are?"

Don't make me laugh," Harlan spat. He wasn't intimidated in the slightest. As one of Tristan's trusted officers, nobody except Valon could dismiss him. "Hold it!" Suddenly, a commanding voice rang out behind them. Tristan had arrived, dressed in full protective gear and flanked by a large unit of soldiers. When Harlan saw him, his face broke into a huge grin. He laughed and said, "His Highness is here. You're all screwed now." Grace glanced up at him with a blank expression. "Your Highness-" Harlan began, but Tristan cut him off sharply.

"Shut your mouth!" But when Tristan turned to Grace, he managed a smile. "I wasn't expecting you. Why didn't you let me know you were coming?" he asked. "I heard the plague in Harbortown had worsened, so I brought a team to help," Grace replied coldly. "But instead of cooperating, your general here did everything he could to stop us. Are you aware of this?" "That happened?" Tristan frowned as he turned on Harlan. "Have you lost your mind? You actually tried to stop the Princess of Ariella?"

When you return, report to the barracks and take your 50 lashes." "I-" Harlan wanted to explain, but one look from Tristan made him bite his tongue. He'd never imagined that Grace would show up in some plague-infested slum. But judging from how things were playing out, it was clear he was about to take the blame for it. "Don't worry, Grace. I'll punish this man severely for obstructing your work," Tristan assured her. "Tristan, we can deal with him later. Right now, our priority is saving the infected. You locked everyone inside the slums and then turned your back on them.

You're practically sentencing them to death," she said coldly. "I didn't have a choice," Tristan replied with a helpless expression. He went on, "The lockdown was meant to keep the plague from spreading and minimize casualties. No one expected the virus to mutate. It really caught me off guard. Honestly, I don't even know what to do anymore." "Even so, you can't just lock people up like this." Grace's voice rose, her anger flaring. "Do you have any idea what's going on in that quarantine zone?" she asked. "It's not just the infected, but there are healthy civilians trapped inside as well.

You've thrown them straight into the fire." Forcibly isolating those infected was understandable since it was a necessary step to contain the outbreak. But locking healthy civilians in with plague patients and then turning a blind eye? How was that any different from sentencing them to death? "No way. You're telling me there are healthy

people inside there?" Tristan looked around with what seemed like genuine surprise. "Harlan! Did you round up the wrong people? I told you to quarantine the infected. Why are there healthy citizens locked in there, too?" "I...

I don't know either," Harlan said bitterly. "They were all packed together. How could anyone tell who was infected and who wasn't? I had to round them all up to be safe. I was thinking about the bigger picture." "Fool!" Tristan snapped, glaring at him. "When we return, you'll be demoted two ranks." Upon hearing that, Grace's frown deepened. A demotion by two ranks was barely more than a slap on the wrist. How was that any different from a verbal warning? And Harlan was one of Tristan's most trusted officers. Whether he rose or fell in rank was entirely up to Tristan.

Besides, she didn't believe for a second that this was all Harlan's idea. Without Tristan's order, who would've dared detain that many civilians on their own? But from the way Tristan was handling this, it was clear he had no intention of taking responsibility. There was no point in pressing him any further, as it would only be a waste of time. Even if Grace demanded justice, what would it amount to in the end? Harlan would take the blame, and that would be the end of it. She knew Tristan too well, and that was exactly why she was filled with bitter disappointment.

"Tristan, if you really want to help, send more supplies. Otherwise, I suggest you leave before you catch the plague and end up regretting it," she said, taking a deep breath to steady herself. "Help? Of course, I'll help," he replied with a quick nod. Then, he ordered, "Harlan, take your men and start gathering supplies from the surrounding area. Do everything you can to assist the Princess of Ariella in treating the infected." "Yes, Your Highness!" Harlan snapped to attention. After freeing himself from his restraints, he led his men away.

Grace gave Tristan one long and unreadable look, but said nothing. She turned back to the patients and threw herself into the work of saving lives.

An Understated Dominance Novel Free Chapter 2628 -

Chapter 2628 As the rain subsided, the quarantine zone inside the wooden barriers was beginning to take shape. Grace trudged through ankle-deep mud between the makeshift shelters. The hem of her white dress was soaked with blood and grime, but she couldn't spare a moment to care. Even the herbal paste crusted at the corners of her mouth went unnoticed. She jabbed a silver needle into a child's purpled fingertip, then squeezed out half a bowl of foul-smelling, dark blood. Without missing a beat, she poured a warm tonic down the child's parched throat.

"We still need 20 more stretchers for the third row of shelters," she shouted, her voice hoarse from hours of constant orders. Nearby, Dustin was burning away infection from a patient's rotting wounds with threads of golden light. The glow danced across torn flesh, incinerating the squirming maggots as it passed. The elderly man trembled in pain, but he bit down on a wooden stick to keep from crying out. When he saw sweat rolling down

Dustin's face, he realized his own suffering wasn't the worst thing happening here. The medics moved with growing efficiency.

One of them funneled thick mugwort smoke into ceramic tubes, guiding it through cracks in the floor to purge the foul air lingering in the underground cellars. Another pried open the jaws of unconscious patients with sticks, then slowly spooned in a paste of crushed herbs and honey. Meanwhile, a third kneeled in the muck, performing chest compressions on half-frozen children until their shallow breathing steadied. A hundred yards uphill, Tristan stood beneath a makeshift canvas shelter.

Dressed in full protective gear, he watched Grace rush between patients through the quarantine zone with a blank expression. "Your Highness, perhaps we should head back? This place feels cursed," Milton suggested from behind him. Tristan didn't respond. Instead, he shifted his gaze to the soldiers racing between stations. The medical supply crates at their feet were more than half empty, and some men had collapsed directly into the mud from exhaustion, gasping for air. "Incompetent," Tristan muttered under his breath, clearly displeased.

Ever since the strain had mutated, infection and mortality rates had skyrocketed. That was precisely why he'd chosen the containment approach, locking up every infected civilian in one place. He felt that it was better to risk sacrificing the innocent than to let the disease spread unchecked. What he hadn't anticipated was Grace rushing over from Reedcrest with a rescue team. If they managed to cure the infected, it would be great. But if they failed, his own forces would get caught in the disaster.

Behind Tristan, 30 of his personal guards stood at attention, their boots completely free of mud. They'd been ordered to keep watch from 30 feet away because he didn't want them to breathe the air from the infected zone. Just like that, another day had passed. Grace had finally finished treating the critical patients in the western shelters. The moment she stood upright, dizziness nearly knocked her over. She grabbed a wooden post to steady herself. Dustin handed her a piece of flatbread and gently touched her forehead.

Golden light pulsed beneath his fingertip, driving away some of her exhaustion. "There are still over 200 mild cases left on the east side," he said, his voice carrying the faintest rasp. Even the gold embroidery on his white robes had turned dark brown with dried blood. When night fell, dozens of campfires blazed throughout the quarantine zone. In the flickering light, Grace supervised soldiers building makeshift cooking stations, Cauldrons bubbled with tonic as the bitter scent wafted through the air.

Suddenly, a sick woman convulsed and lunged at Grace, fingernails nearly scratching her face. Dustin reacted instantly. He caught the woman's wrists and held her steady. After the golden light flowed into her body, she gradually calmed down, and tears streamed from her cloudy eyes. Under the shelter, Tristan yawned as he watched the

last grains of sand fall through the hourglass. It was already midnight, yet the quarantine zone still blazed as bright as noon. Harlan approached and offered warm soup with a fawning smile. "Your Highness, look at them working themselves into the ground.

At this rate, they'll collapse completely." Tristan took a sip and noticed a soldier collapsing beside one of the fires from sheer exhaustion. Even as his comrades dragged him upright, the man kept mumbling about medicine. Tristan let out a derisive laugh. "What a waste of effort." As dawn approached, the last bowl of tonic had been fed to the final patient. Grace pulled herself upright using a wooden staff. The eastern sky began to glow, bringing some color back to her ashen face.

The golden light around Dustin had dimmed considerably, but he still forced himself through one last shelter inspection. Medics lay scattered across the clearing, too exhausted even to snore properly. Only the occasional coughing proved they were still conscious. Then, someone dropped to their knees. It was a teenage boy with both hands missing. He used his elbows to brace himself as he bowed his head deeply in Grace's direction. Others began following suit-first the infected from the western shelters, then healthy civilians from the east, and finally even mild cases who could barely stand.

Over 5,000 people dropped to their knees, like a rolling wave across the muddy ground, the wet slap of bodies hitting the earth echoing in every direction. Filthy water splashed onto their faces, but no one moved to wipe it away. "Long live Your Royal Highness!" Someone started the chant, then thousands joined in a deafening roar. Gray-haired elderly men lifted blood-stained earth above their heads, women raised their dead infant's swaddling clothes, and children copied the adults. Grace watched the scene unfold and felt her eyes suddenly well up with tears.

She tried to speak, but there was a lump in her throat. All she could do was raise a trembling hand and give the people a deep bow. On the hill, Tristan hurled his soup bowl to the ground. The porcelain shattered with a sharp crack. He stared at the sea of kneeling figures, his fists clenched until his knuckles went white. Harlan barely dared to breathe beside him. One look at Tristan's thunderous expression told him this resentment would fester for weeks to come. These people should have revered Tristan. Instead, they were kneeling before a woman.

For Tristan, that scene stung worse than death.

An Understated Dominance Novel Free Chapter 2629 - chapter 2629 (English Translation)

Chapter 2629 Tristan's expression darkened. He was the crown prince, the one who commanded respect. Yet now, all eyes were on Grace. Of course, that didn't sit well with him. If those plague-infected civilians had died, he could've sealed off the city and buried the truth along with the bodies. But now that Grace had stepped in, there was no

covering it up. Worst of all, she was the one who saved them. Compared to that, he seemed somewhat incompetent. No matter how bitter he felt, he had to keep up appearances. The rain had just stopped, and a damp mist still clung to the ruins of Harbortown.

Tristan trudged through the mud toward Grace, wearing a warm smile. "You must be exhausted," he said. "Come back to the tent with me. I had the chef prepare some chicken soup to help you warm up." Raindrops slid down Grace's cheek, and she wiped them away. Her black field clothes were already soaked through with mud. She glanced at the civilians huddled in the ruined church nearby. They'd just been rescued from the flood, and some of the children were still burning with fever. "That's thoughtful of you, Tristan," she replied flatly.

Her tone gave nothing away, though her fingers unconsciously tightened around the pendant at her waist. It was a gift from Valon, etched with the words, "Protect the People". The camp sat on high ground along the northern slope with gray-blue tents dotting the hillside. Outside, soldiers stood in gleaming armor that made a sharp contrast with the ragged refugees below. Inside the main tent, everything was warm and comfortable. A brazier burned steadily in the corner, its coals giving off a steady, comforting heat.

On the table, slices of smoked venison were neatly arranged on a porcelain platter. Amber-colored wine shimmered in an emerald decanter. Even the preserved fruits served alongside were arranged like flower petals. "Have a seat," Tristan said. He pulled out an ornately carved rosewood chair for her. The cloud brocade lining his sleeve cuffs peeked out, embroidered with subtle golden dragons. "This venison is a tribute from the Skarnvale. It was marinated for three days in 20-year-old wine.

Try some?" He picked up a silver knife, sliced a piece of meat with a perfect fat-to-lean ratio, and offered it to her. The emerald ring on his finger caught the lamplight with a warm, glossy sheen. But Grace didn't reach for her utensil. Her eyes had drifted to the military map hanging on the tent wall. The streets of Harbortown were circled in red ink. On the west side of the city, where the slums were, someone had marked an aggressive black X. "Tristan, do you know how many people in the quarantine zone are actually infected? And how many are healthy?" Grace's voice turned sharp and cold.

Her fingertips drummed against the table as she added, "I passed the supply depot on my way here. There's a stockpile of herbs just sitting untouched. Why haven't they been distributed?" Tristan's hand froze mid-cut, then he burst into laughter. "You don't understand. Those herbs are set aside for our troops. If disease breaks out in the camp, we can't just let our soldiers die, right?" he explained. He poured himself a drink, and the liquid made a crisp sound as it hit the goblet. He went on, "Besides, there are so many refugees.

How could we possibly save them all?" "So if we can't save everyone, you choose to save no one?" Grace retorted. As she shot to her feet, her dark cloak swept past the brazier, sending sparks flying. She continued, "The people are the foundation of the throne. Have you forgotten that these civilians are citizens of the Dragonmarsh, not weeds to be trampled underfoot?" Wind carrying the scent of rain and blood seeped through the tent. The candle flames danced and hissed in protest. Tristan's smile dimmed as he lifted his goblet for another sip. "You make a fair point," he said.

"Though Matthias and Nathaniel have been far more ruthless than I have." He set the goblet down and lowered his voice. "When the plague hit Thornwick, Matthias just set everything on fire. He burned over 10,000 people alive. You can still see black smoke rising from their bones. "When Sommertown got hit, Nathaniel was just as brutal. He burned, killed, and buried people alive. His hands are soaked with innocent blood. He picked up the goblet and added, " Compared to them, I've been merciful. Everything I've done has been for the greater good.

To stop the plague from spreading." "That's enough!" Grace cut him off. Her knuckles were white from how tightly she clenched her fist. She turned and looked outside the tent. The post-rain sky had just begun to brighten. In the distance, the cries of the refugees drifted in on the wind, each one like a knife to the heart. "I'll remember what they've done. But I'll also report to Father how you stood by and watched while people suffered," she said coldly. Tristan's smile vanished. He set his goblet down hard, the base hitting the table with a hollow thunk.

"Why do you have to be like this?" he asked. "We share the same mother. If you'd just stand with me, we could rule Dragonmarsh together someday. Think of how many more lives we could save. What could be better than that?" "You're wrong, Tristan." Grace straightened her collar, her voice returning to its usual cool reserve. "I never wanted power. I just want people to live in peace." She glanced at the feast spread across the table. The fancy spread looked ridiculous now. "I won't be staying for dinner.

The children in the quarantine zone are still waiting for their medicine." With that, she turned and walked away. Tristan watched her figure disappear into the distance, his smile slowly fading. When the tent flap lifted, cold air rushed in and set the candle flames dancing wildly. His shadow twisted across the wall, long and distorted. Only after Grace had gone completely out of sight did he slowly clench his fist until his knuckles turned white. His eyes were seething with silent rage.

An Understated Dominance Novel Free Chapter 2630 - chapter 2630 (English Translation)

Chapter 2630 Thick black smoke blanketed the sky over Thornwick. The once-bustling streets now lay in deathly silence. Choking, acrid fumes filled the air, mixed with the metallic tang of blood and the putrid stench of decay. At the mass burial ground in the southwest of the city, massive fires still raged. Flames crackled and hissed as they

consumed what remained of human life. Charred bodies twisted in the heat while half-burned limbs occasionally tumbled from the pyre, exposing white bone.

Matthias stood on the hillside in his protective gear, staring down at the scene with complete indifference. There wasn't a flicker of emotion on his sharply defined face. It was as if what burned below weren't thousands of human lives, but a field of dry grass. Dried blood stained his protective gear, gleaming dully in the sunlight. "Your Highness, we found another 37 infected civilians in the western quarter. We've brought them all here," the assistant general reported, dropping to one knee. His voice shook slightly.

1 Matthias nodded, yet his gaze remained fixed on the direction of the burning ground. When he spoke, his tone was flat as if he were commenting on the weather. "Toss them in." "Yes, Your Highness." The assistant general rose and gestured to the soldiers behind him. 37 civilians in rags were shoved forward. Some burned with fever, barely able to stay on their feet. Others moved with vacant eyes, their will to resist long since drained away. The scorching heat hit them as they neared the flames. It jolted them awake, and a chorus of panicked screams erupted as they scrambled to back away.

But the soldiers grabbed them one by one and hurled them into the inferno. Their screams cut through the air before the crackling fire swallowed them. "Your Highness, we've dealt with over 8,000 people since the burning began," the assistant general reported again, sweat beading on his forehead. Without turning, Matthias replied in a calm, deliberate voice, "Keep searching. Don't let a single infected person escape." "Your Highness!" Neville stepped forward, unable to stay silent any longer. He stared at the smoking burial ground and frowned. "This can't go on.

If we kill this many civilians at once and the royal court finds out, the consequences will be unthinkable." He'd seen enough war to last a lifetime, but the scene in front of him still turned his stomach. He understood how deadly the plague was, but burning people without even trying to tell who was infected was inhumane. Matthias finally turned and fixed Neville with a cold, hard stare. "Desperate times call for desperate measures," he said. "This plague is spreading like wildfire. If we don't act now, and it slips out of control, Thornwick will be a graveyard.

"And when that happens, we won't be talking about a few thousand bodies. It'll be tens of thousands or maybe hundreds of thousands. "As for Father, proper information control ensures he'll never know what happened here. Once the plague ends, this will all be forgotten." Neville wanted to persuade him again, but that icy stare made the words die in his throat. He let out a heavy sigh and stepped back in silence. He knew Matthias too well. Once he made a decision, nothing could change his mind. Further protest would accomplish nothing. The soldiers continued dragging the infected into the fire.

The blaze in the mass grave burned hotter by the minute, and thick black smoke poured into the sky, darkening the air above Thornwick. Meanwhile, Sommertown presented an equally horrific scene. Nathaniel stood atop the city walls, surveying the cordoned area below. Soldiers had dug an enormous pit in the clearing and stacked firewood around its rim. "Bring the infected here," he commanded, his voice devoid of any warmth. Soon after, a group of civilians was herded in. Most wore rags and bore black-blue lesions across their skin. Many coughed violently, spraying blood-flecked sputum.

Some clutched feverish children whose faces burned red and whose breathing came in shallow gasps. "Please spare my child. He's just a little boy." A woman collapsed to her knees, still holding her son. She knocked her head against the ground until blood ran down her face. Nathaniel watched impassively, like he couldn't even hear her begging. "Throw them in." Soldiers stepped forward and yanked the child from her arms. Both were hurled into the pit along with the others. The pit echoed with screams and people begging for their lives. "Set it on fire," he said flatly.

A torch was tossed into the pit. The dry kindling caught instantly, and flames raced across the fuel. The screaming stopped all at once, replaced by the awful sound of flesh crackling in the heat. Thick smoke billowed up and spread across the sky over Sommertown. The stench was even worse than what hung over Thornwick. An elderly man broke from the crowd, trying to reach his family in the burning pit. One soldier's blade cut him down before he took three steps. His blood pooled on the dirt.

"Anyone who resists will be executed on the spot!" Nathaniel barked, his eyes blazing with murderous intent. Below the wall, a boy of maybe seven or eight peered out from behind a stack of lumber. He looked from the roaring flames to the cold figure above, with fear and confusion written all over his small face. His parents had been among those thrown into the pit. Only his hiding place had saved him from the same fate. The fire continued its work, devouring life after life. Sommertown's remaining citizens cowered in doorways and alleys, too terrified to make a sound...

The entire city had become a vast tomb, with only that burning pit bearing witness to the horror that had unfolded.