

## UNRIVALLED 131

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Jackson Quelch made eye contact with Colin Dunne and sparks flew immediately. Something trembled inside of Jackson Quelch, and he gave a violent shiver, as though he had been electrocuted.

He broke his eye contact with Colin Dunne and looked away.

He could tell that the officer standing before him had been through many battles, since his aura reeked of death and despair.

Even though Jackson Quelch had been a mercenary overseas for a few years, he couldn't help but cower in fear in front of Colin Dunne. He was like a tiny puppy who had seen a lion for the first time.

He couldn't fight against the mighty power in front of him.

Jackson Quelch led his subordinates out of the airport and took out his phone.

He found out that Nathan Cross and Thomas Dunn had gone to a place called Springlake Village in the suburbs to visit the family of someone by the name of Eddy Forst.

Jackson Quelch gave a twisted grin. "Springlake Village, huh. Well, today is the Ghost Festival and the ghosts are out and about this time of the year, maybe they'll claim Nathan Cross and Thomas Dunn as their own."

He went to see Kingston Zabinski with his men before giving orders to kill Nathan Cross that night.

Meanwhile, Colin Dunne led two thousand men from the Dragonfury Special Forces to have a meal at the military reception center before reporting to Nathan Cross at Springvale Village.

It was a moonless night.

Dark clouds tumbled across the pitch black sky with the occasional flash of lightning. A storm was coming.

Nathan Cross, Colin Dunne, Thomas Dunn, the Elite Eight, and two thousand Dragonfury soldiers were in full armor and stood by the riverbank.

Candles and incense sticks were set up along the bank, along with food offerings and wine.

They were conducting a ritual to honor the soldiers who have sacrificed themselves in battles.

Nathan Cross' eyes grew blurry when he thought of his dead comrades.

Thomas Dunn was burning joss paper into a fire they lit in a basin.

Colin Dunne and the Elite Eight stood in a row behind them, while the two thousand men from Dragonfury stood in rows right at the back, shrouded in darkness.

Even Colin Dunne, a man who rarely showed any emotion had tears in his eyes.

His voice trembled as he raised a glass of wine to the calm waters of the river. "Aaron Forst! The General is here with our brothers to visit you! Let's drink up!"

He tipped his glass back and drank up the wine.

Then, he continued, "Brad Kinley! We're here to see you! Cheers!"

He emptied another glass of wine.

"Victor Leigh! We're here to see you! Cheers!"

"Wright Hort! We're here to see you! Bottoms up!"

"Shaggy Alfred! We're here to see you! Have some wine!"

...

Colin Dunne downed a glass of wine with every name he shouted.

Soon, he began to get tipsy.

He felt as though his former brothers-in-arms have all returned to his side.

Thomas Dunn bit hard on his lips to stop the tears from spilling out of his eyes as he continued feeding joss paper to the fire.

Nathan Cross, the Elite Eight and the Dragonfury soldiers stood in silence with their eyes closed.

Every name Colin Dunne called out conjured an image before their eyes, reminding them of how their lives were so ruthlessly taken away from them in battle.

The wind roared in their ears, a perfect setting for a murder to take place.

In a distance, a huge group of people moved quietly under the cover of darkness.

It was Jackson Quelch and his men coming for Nathan Cross' life.

When they arrived at Eddy Forst's house, Nathan Cross was long gone.

However, he managed to get hold of Nathan Cross' location from Eddy Forst by posing as his friend.

He led his three hundred men to the riverbank after night fell.

"Look, Quelch! There's someone burning joss paper by the river!"

Jackson Quelch peered into the distance, but all he could see was the glow of candles and fire.

He could just make out the silhouettes of Nathan Cross and a few other people, but he couldn't quite tell the number of people there.

Jackson Quelch pulled out his kukri. "Take your knives and follow me. Leave no man standing!"

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Jackson Quelch's subordinates pulled out their sharp kukri in a flash.

They only used two types of weapons, baton in fights and kukri to kill.

Nathan Cross, Colin Dunne, and Thomas Dunn had been reminiscing the good old days when they suddenly heard strange noises from afar.

Nathan Cross opened his eyes and looked into the dark.

The darkness outside made it difficult to see clearly, but he could just make out the silhouettes of people charging towards them.

Nathan Cross's face darkened. "Those ignorant morons!"

Thomas Dunn got up slowly and glared in the direction of the crowd.

Colin Dunne grasped his wine glass tightly with his eyes half-opened. There was no sign of intoxication in his eyes but killer instinct.

The Elite Eight and two thousand men from Dragonfury Special Force stood firm behind Nathan Cross where each one of them held on tight to the firearms in their hands.

Jackson Quelch and his three hundred men charged towards them menacingly.

"Don't let Nathan Cross or Thomas Dunn get away! They are wanted dead or alive!" Jackson Quelch snarled.

"Go!"

His three hundred men rushed to the riverbank like a pack of hungry wolves, all armed with kukri.

However, they skidded to a halt just seconds later.

The army of people surrounding Nathan Cross came into view only after they got within fighting range.

Jackson Quelch and his men were scared out of their wits. What the h\*\*l happened?

Thud! Thud! Thud!

Several lights flickered on, and the riverbank was suddenly as bright as day.

Only then did Jackson Quelch and his men realize that they were surrounded by military vehicles.

The lights that flooded the area were the headlights of those vehicles.

They began to cower in fear when they realized that Nathan Cross and Thomas Dunn had the company of Colin Dunne and two thousand soldiers.

Those soldiers were the Dragonfury fighters they saw earlier that night!

Nathan Cross peered at Jackson Quelch and his men, who were paralyzed by fear. "So you want to kill me? Come now!"

Jackson Quelch and his men turned pale upon hearing that.

Kill him? How?

What kind of a joke is this? Jackson Quelch wondered.

"Troops, get ready for combat!" Colin Dunne bellowed.

The two thousand soldiers standing behind Nathan Cross immediately got into their position.

With a loud click, every gun was cocked.

"Sir, the Dragonfury squad is ready for battle. We await your orders, Sir."

Nathan Cross put his hands behind his back. "Go into battle mode. Kill anyone who tries to escape or resist."

Swoosh!

All two thousand soldiers lifted their guns simultaneously and pointed them at Jackson Quelch's men.

Clank, clank, clank...

The kukri in the hands of Jackson Quelch and his men clattered on the ground noisily as they raised their hands to surrender.

It was quite obvious that Nathan Cross was not joking.

The slightest movement would get them shot on the spot.

Even though Jackson Quelch grew up with the Zabinski family and had had some experience on the battlefield as a mercenary, he was not prepared for this.

He stared at Nathan Cross in shock and despair as a taste of bitterness began to permeate his tongue. He could kill himself out of regret right then.

At the same time, he was puzzled. According to the Zabinski's record, Nathan Cross was merely a retired soldier? How could he be commanding such a huge army then?

However, what he didn't know was that Nathan Cross' particulars were top-secret, and there were very few people in this country who had the authority to read it in detail.

Even the particulars about Thomas Dunn, who was part of the National Guards under Nathan Cross, were confidential.

The information on Nathan Cross that the Zabinski family managed to get hold of was placebo, created specifically to throw people off Nathan Cross' tracks.

Nathan Cross glared at Jackson Quelch. "You wanted to kill me?"

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Jackson Quelch's voice began to tremble. "I..."

He wanted to deny it, but he couldn't bring himself to lie.

After all, he had barged into the area with three hundred men and had vowed to kill him.

Piak!

Nathan Cross gave him a solid slap across the face.

Jackson Quelch's face began to swell up like a balloon and he was bleeding.

“Answer me!” Nathan Cross growled coldly.

Jackson Quelch hesitated for a split second, and a second slap landed on his face. A couple of his teeth broke and fell out of his mouth.

He began to panic. “I’m sorry, Mr. Cross! I’ve overestimated myself! Please let me go this time around! I won’t do it again...”

Nathan Cross merely gave him an emotionless glance. “I’ve already given you a chance at my mother-in-law’s birthday party last night. Why didn’t you learn your lesson?”

Jackson Quelch seemed to notice something, his face went pale as a sheet. He opened his mouth to plead for mercy.

However, Nathan Cross had already turned to Colin Dunne and said, “Finish him.”

Colin Dunne’s hands moved in a flash slicing his sword through Jackson Quelch’s neck.

Crack!

The sickening sound of bones breaking tore through the air.

Jackson Quelch’s body flopped onto the ground like a dead chicken.

Jackson Quelch was dead!

His three hundred men stood quivering by the side. A strange smell of ammonia began to permeate in the air, it seemed that some of his men had pissed in their pants out of fear after they witnessed his death.

Nathan Cross looked at them then commanded, “Round up these people and arrest them for illegally disclosing military secrets. Send them to work in the mines for ten years.”

Nathan Cross knew perfectly well that Jackson Quelch’s “security agency” was just a cover-up for a mercenary troop.

Not only did his men provide security services to rich people and celebrities, they also took part in gang fights, assassinations and retribution schemes.

As such, he had no reason to show mercy to them but throw them to the mines to at least make a contribution to the country.

Soon, Jackson Quelch’s men were rounded up and thrown into the trucks by the Dragonfury soldiers.

Suddenly, lights flashed from a distance, and a few vans came zooming into the scene.

They were the gangsters in the area led by a man called Baron.

The person who sat beside him was Alexander Forst, the person that Nathan Cross beat up just a few hours ago.

As it turned out, Alexander Forst had borrowed money from Baron and was a few hundred thousand bucks in debt.

He had gone to the Forsts to convince them to sell their house so he could pay off his debts but received a round of shelling and beating from Nathan Cross instead.

He felt deeply resentful and ran off to see Baron, hoping that he could teach Nathan Cross a lesson.

At the same time, he had promised to transfer the ownership of the Forsts' house to Baron.

Baron knew that the houses in Springlake Village were due for demolition.

Hence, he agreed to Alexander Forst's suggestion immediately, since the land there would be very valuable.

That was the reason that led up to this showdown.

Baron came rushing to the scene with about twenty of his gangsters, led by Alexander Forst.

They had driven over as quickly as they could upon hearing that Nathan Cross was burning joss paper by the river.

However, the driver noticed that something was amiss and stepped on the brakes abruptly when they were just a few feet away from Nathan Cross.

"What the hell? Why did you stop? Keep going!" Baron yelled as he was oblivious to the situation.

"B-Big Brother Baron! Something doesn't seem right..." The driver stammered.

Baron squeezed to the front of the van and peered out of the window. "What's wrong?"

"There's a bunch of soldiers, and they look like they're arresting some people!" The driver said with a trembling voice.

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Both Baron and Alexander Forst jumped in shock at the driver's words.

They took a good look at the scene before them, and noticed that there were indeed hordes of soldiers in full armor taking a big group of people into custody.

Baron went pale and his voice started to tremble as he ordered, "Oh my god! Let's get out of here! I don't want to get shot!"

However, they had already blown their cover.

Colin Dunne strode over and surrounded the vans together with a group of his men.

He knocked on the window, and it came down to reveal a bunch of gangsters with colorful hair and tattoos.

"What are you doing here?" he asked coldly.

Baron and his gang had never felt so intimidated before.

They were petrified when they saw Colin Dunne and his army in full battle mode.

Nathan Cross walked over and his gaze turned icy the moment he saw Alexander Forst in the van. "I see it is you again!"

Alexander Forst was already scared of Nathan Cross because of his beating earlier, so when he saw Nathan Cross again, he got really scared and started apologizing, "I'm sorry! I shouldn't have gotten Big Brother Baron to come after you, and I shouldn't have given him my parents' house..."

Baron almost dropped dead upon hearing his words.

Nathan Cross' lips curved upwards after hearing Alexander Forst's apology before he turned his eyes towards Alexander Forst. "You're Baron?"

Baron's smile was uglier than a scowl. "That's right..."

Nathan Cross nodded. "You came at the right time. We're doing an anti-terrorism sweep right now. Since you're here, then come with us."

What?

You mean go mining with the rest!

Alexander Forst and the other gangsters stumbled off their vans and were hauled to the army vehicles to be taken to the mines in the Northern District.

In contrast to Baron and his gangsters, Jackson Quelch's men heaved a huge sigh of relief when they



heard that they were getting ten years of forced labor.

Nathan Cross was already being lenient with them by sparing their lives.

The “security guards” glared at Baron and his gangsters and scoffed, “Why are you all crying? Hurry up and get on to it, we have work to do.”

With that, the Dragonfury soldiers took Jackson Quelch’s men, Baron, Alexander Forst and the gangsters away in their vehicles.

In the meantime, Nathan Cross, Thomas Dunn, Colin Dunne, and the Elite Eight set off to see the Forsts again.

Springlake Village was close to the river, and the commotion had several villagers rushing out of their houses in shock.

The Forsts walked out as well, wondering what had happened.

Eddy Forst was ecstatic when he saw Nathan Cross, and he immediately went up to him with a warm smile. “What happened, Nate? Someone was looking for you just now, and we told them that you went to burn some joss paper by the river.”

Since Nathan Cross regarded the Forsts as his parents, they decided to call him by his nickname as well.

Knowing that Nathan Cross and Aaron Forst adored each other when the latter was still alive, the Forst couldn’t help but get a sense of warmth whenever they see Nathan Cross.

Nathan Cross smiled. “Mom, Dad, those were just some troublemaking thugs. Alexander Forst, Baron, the gangsters. Apparently, they have all been taken to the mines.”

Bianca Forst was shocked. “Alexander Forst and that bastard Baron are going to the mines? What a sinner!”

Eddy Forst was a little taken aback as well, but he sighed and said, “Well, that’s karma for you. They deserved it anyway.”

The other villagers mumbled amongst themselves too.

Eddy Forst led Nathan Cross back to their house, though he didn’t dare to ask about the army of people following him.

Nathan Cross noticed his hesitation and explained, “Mom, Dad, this is Colin Dunne. The rest of them were Aaron’s brothers-in-arms!”

Eddy Forst was overjoyed. "Hello everyone! Aaron's really lucky to have you all as comrades."

Colin Dunne and his men couldn't help but feel a little saddened. After all, Aaron Forst was no longer with them.

"Mom, Dad, I'm staying in Channing for now. Since your house is getting demolished, why not stay with us in the city? I'll take good care of you," Nathan Cross said.

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The Forsts gave him a happy smile, though Eddy Forst was not agreeable with the idea. "Thank you so much for the offer, Nate," he said.

"However, we can't accept it. It would be a lot of trouble for you."

Nathan Cross opened his mouth to insist, but was cut off by Eddy Forst before he could even say a word. "Listen, boy. We will probably struggle a lot to get used to life in the city."

"Besides, the villagers have been discussing about moving to Quinzy City after the demolition. We can still keep in touch with each other that way."

Nathan Cross went silent for a moment before saying, "That's not a bad plan too. The weather in Quinzy is really good weather and is suitable for retirement."

"I'll visit you both whenever I have the time. By the way, here are Colin and Thomas' contact numbers in case you can't reach me if something happens."

That night, Nathan Cross and his men left and went back to Channing.

The next day, in the study room of the Zabinski manor...

Kingston Zabinski, who was dressed in a drab cloth shirt and shoes, put down the mantra in his hand and looked up at his son standing before him. "I heard that Jackson went to assassinate Nathan Cross and Thomas Dunn last night with three hundred men. Any updates?"

Finley Zabinski panicked. "Dad, he..."

Kingston Zabinski grew impatient. "Why are you stuttering? Spit it out!"

Finley Zabinski had no choice but to speak the truth. "Jackson Quelch and his three hundred men had disappeared."

"Nonsense! There's three hundred of them, and they're gone just like that? What about their bodies?" Kingston Zabinski yelled in anguish.

Finley Zabinski scowled. "They disappeared without a trace. I mobilized a lot of our own manpower to search for them, but they're gone for good."

Kingston Zabinski struggled to calm himself down. "What in the world is going on?"

"However, I manage to get some valuable information from the villagers in Springlake Village," Finley Zabinski offered.

"Just tell me!" Kingston Zabinski ordered.

"Apparently, a large group of gangsters were taken away by the military last night including their leader Baron."

"What's that got to do with Jackson disappearing?" Kingston Zabinski asked as he frowned.

"I heard that a few dozen transport aircrafts carrying soldiers from the Northern District landed at the airport yesterday. They're probably here on a mission," Finley Zabinski answered.

"My guess is that Baron, his gangsters and Jackson Quelch got in their way and were captured."

Kingston Zabinski was shocked. "That's too much of a coincidence. Could this have anything to do with Nathan Cross?"

Finley Zabinski shook his head. "That's impossible. We've already investigated Nathan Cross' background, and he is just an ordinary retired soldier. He wouldn't have the authority to mobilize such a huge army to take Jackson Quelch away."

"Besides, even if he actually had commanded the soldiers to capture Jackson Quelch, why would he take away random people like the local gangsters and Baron?"

Kingston Zabinski nodded. "That's not a bad explanation. It shouldn't have anything to do with Nathan Cross, since some other people were taken away too."

"Maybe both of them interfered with the secret missions of the Northern troops and got captured."

Kingston Zabinski suddenly looked up. "Should we use our connections to rescue Jackson?"

"Forget about it, Dad. It's the Northern troops we're talking about here."

"We're nothing to them, so there's no way we can rescue him."

Kingston Zabinski sighed. "That's so unlucky of Jackson."

“Dad, I know Jackson’s in trouble, but we can’t just give up on avenging Jerry! He’s still in the hospital! The doctor was suggesting sex-change surgery since he doesn’t have his manhood anymore!” Finley Zabinski growled, gritting his teeth.

Kingston Zabinski frowned at the mention of Nathan Cross’ name. “Can we get someone else to avenge Jerry in replacement of Jackson?”

“Isn’t Novem Dragon dead? We need someone to replace him as our underground spokesperson in Channing.”

“Do you have someone in mind?” asked Kingston Zabinski.

“Jon Xander, the lord of the underground in the neighboring city Arcvale. People call him the tyrant of the South.”

“He’s one of our followers and he’s not satisfied with being merely the ruler of Arcvale underground.”

“Why not we use him against Nathan Cross? If he could kill Nathan Cross and get rid of Thomas Dunn, we can make him the spokesperson for our share of the underground as well.”

Kingston Zabinski lowered his head to consider it for a moment, before nodding. “Fine. Tell Jon Xander to avenge Jerry for us.”

“Yes, Dad.”

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Nathan Cross returned home at noon.

His family was having lunch when he came through the door.

The moment Queenie Smith saw him, she threw herself into his embrace. “Papa! Papa!”

Nathan Cross picked up his daughter and grinned at her. “Did you miss me?”

Queenie Smith nodded. “I did and so was Mama.”

Penny Smith was walking towards them with a smile on her face, but her expression froze when she heard her daughter’s words.

Nathan Cross’ lips curved upwards. “Oh? How do you know that?”

“Mama called Papa’s name a few times in her sleep,” Queenie Smith said innocently.

Penny Smith flushed immediately. “Nonsense! Now go and finish your food, or I won’t let you watch TV

later.”

Queenie Smith pouted upon hearing that.

...

Nightfall in Channing City.

The wind howled at the top floor of the Orentry Building.

Harvey Babcock, the owner of the antique auctioning company Treasure Vault, was brought to the top of the building with his hands restrained by a group of fierce-looking men.

“Who the hell are you? Do you even know who I am? Everyone who knows me calls me the T-Rex! I’m a follower of the Zabinski family too! You have no right to do this!” he screamed as he stumbled along.

“Oh, hello T-Rex! Long time no see!”

A loud and crisp voice boomed.

T-Rex looked in the direction of the voice in shock, before realizing that there were some other people waiting for him on the top floor.

The person who spoke was a man standing by the railing and looking at the glittering skyline of Channing.

T-Rex stared at the man’s back while struggling to compose himself. “And you are?”

The man turned around all of a sudden. Square face, deep-set eyes, high cheekbones, thin lips...he gave off a rather intimidating aura.

“Aren’t you Jon Xander? The lord of the Arcvale underground, the tyrant of the South?” T-Rex yelled.

Jon Xander smiled. “It looks like you know who I am.”

T-Rex gave him a crooked grin. “We’re both followers of the Zabinski family, yet you’re doing much better than me as the spokesperson of the Zabinski family in Arcvale. Why wouldn’t I know who you are.”

“Man, I thought I was being kidnapped! I didn’t expect to meet you here, Mr. Xander.”

“Actually, you don’t have to trouble yourself. Just give me a call if you need anything. I’ll be at your side in a flash.”

Jon Xander remained stoic. "The Old Master had ordered me to come here and take revenge for the Young Master. Did you betray the Young Master, T-Rex?"

Fear flashed across T-Rex's eyes. He had indeed been the one who led Nathan Cross and Thomas Dunn to Jerry Zabinski.

He forced himself to remain calm as he replied, "No, of course not. I have always been loyal to the Young Master."

Jon Xander smirked. "Are you sure?"

Before T-Rex could answer, Jon Xander thrust a dagger straight into his abdomen.

T-Rex did not see that coming. He rasped with a pained expression on his face, "You!"

Jon Xander simply twisted the dagger around in T-Rex's abdomen and snarled, "I know you won't admit to it, but it's fine. My presence here means that there's enough evidence to confirm our suspicions. The Young Master had told me to pay you a visit on behalf of him."

T-Rex's whole face was twisted with pain. "I-I didn't betray the Young Master! I..."

"The Young Master doesn't think so!" Jon Xander said, before plunging the knife into T-Rex's heart.

T-Rex held on tight to Jon Xander's clothes. "I...I didn't..."

"I don't think so too!" Jon Xander yelled, stabbing him yet another time.

He pushed T-Rex's corpse onto the ground and handed his knife over to his assistant. Taking the handkerchief his assistant gave him and wiping his hands clean of blood, he asked, "Who's the next target?"

"Samuel Smith. He's the one who orchestrated this whole plot against the Young Master for Nathan Cross and Thomas Dunn."

Jon Xander nodded. "Very good."

### [Chapter 137](#)

The next day, Nathan Cross and Penny Smith returned home from the office to find Benson and Leah Smith waiting for them.

Benson Smith immediately spoke up the moment he saw them enter the house. "You came back at the right time. There's something we need to discuss with both of you."

"What's wrong?" Penny Smith asked as Nathan Cross looked on curiously.

“Do you still remember your second grand uncle?” Benson Smith asked.

Penny Smith nodded. “Of course, he’s the younger brother of Grandpa. I heard that he had been working at the Northern Grand Council. Grandpa adores him too.”

“He hasn’t come back for a visit for more than a decade now, and he hasn’t stayed in touch with us as well.”

“That’s right but you know what? He came back yesterday,” Benson Smith said.

“Huh? Grand Uncle is back?” Penny Smith exclaimed.

Benson Smith nodded. “He chided your grandfather for kicking us out of the family. Uncle probably didn’t want to see a rift forming within the family.”

“He called me just this morning and invited us to lunch at 2pm this afternoon. He wants to discuss this with us.”

Leah Smith bit her lip. “The Old Master already kicked us out of the family, so what’s there to talk about?”

Benson Smith sighed. “Dad kicked us out, not Uncle.”

“Uncle is our senior and works at the Grand Council, so there’s no reason we shouldn’t go.”

“Since he’s interested in this and wants to talk about it, why not take this chance to explain everything to him?” Penny Smith asked.

“In fact, if we manage to get on good terms with Grandpa and our other grand uncles, it would be a win-win situation for all of us.”

That afternoon, Nathan Cross and company arrived at the Century Hotel for lunch.

They met up with Penny Smith’s second grand uncle in the Peony Hall.

The man looked like he was in his sixties. Even so, his greying sideburns failed to get in the way of his powerful aura.

Everyone else from the Smith family was there too, except the Old Master Sean Smith himself.

“Uncle!”

Benson Smith greeted his uncle Sebastian Smith politely.

Sebastian Smith glanced at his family from his seat, the room was surrounded by the other members of the Smith family. "You're here. Have a seat," he said without a hint of emotion.

Benson Smith and his family scurried to their seats.

"Since everyone's here, I will get the waitress to serve the food now. We can talk as we eat," Sebastian Smith said.

The food came within minutes, each of them carefully crafted and arranged in the most extravagant manner.

Sebastian Smith pulled out a carton of his own wine instead of picking from the hotel's menu.

"I may be just an errand boy at the Grand Council, but I got to enjoy the finest of wines especially the ones delivered to my boss. I can't stand the taste of ordinary wine, if you want me to be honest."

With that, he took out a bottle of limited edition wine.

Samuel Smith and his family members' eyes lit up after seeing the bottle.

This was something that only those high ranks could enjoy!

Everyone sang their praises to Sebastian Smith.

Sebastian Smith was pleased with the flattery, though his happiness was slightly dampened upon noticing Penny Smith and her family's lack of enthusiasm.

Benson Smith was an honest guy who did not believe in flattery. Hence he was completely oblivious to Sebastian Smith's displeasure.

Soon, everyone's cups were filled with wine.

Sebastian Smith raised his glass for a toast.

Benson Smith and his family followed suit.

After the toast, Samuel Smith started a new wave of praises. "An excellent brew! No wonder it's specially tailored for the higher-ups! Thank for this chance to taste it, Uncle!"

Sebastian Smith looked at Benson Smith. "Benson, I suppose you've never tried such fine wine before?" he asked with a fake smile.

Benson Smith froze for a second, his cheeks flushed a bit. "I had. My son-in-law Nathan once brought



home a couple of cartons for us to try. He said that his old chief gave them to him, and he was not interested so I had them,” he answered.

Everyone else at the table began to scoff at him.

“Oh Benson, will you die if you stop bragging even for a second?” Samuel Smith asked, smirking.

“Who doesn’t know that Nathan Cross is a good-for-nothing piece of trash? How is it even possible for him to get his hands on those limited edition wines? You could have at least tried to make it convincing by saying that he’s an officer or something.”

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Sebastian Smith squinted. “There’s a lot of fake wine circulating in the market right now. He might be lying about those limited edition wine.”

“I’m not blaming you for anything, Benson. Maybe you couldn’t tell the real from the fake since you don’t have the experience.”

“It doesn’t matter to me if you’re drinking fake wine or not, but I won’t tolerate you flaunting it in front of me.”

Sebastian Smith’s words were like a few stinging slaps on Benson Smith’s face.

Benson Smith’s cheeks were flaming red.

He wished that the ground would just open up beneath him so that he could hide from these monsters at the table.

Nathan Cross’ face began to darken as well.

He couldn’t stand Sebastian Smith showing off and berating his father-in-law.

However, he forced himself to remain calm knowing that Sebastian Smith was a senior in the Smith family.

Benson Smith was utterly humiliated.

Despite that, he couldn’t argue, since he was indeed ignorant of the difference between real and fake wine.

On the other hand, Sebastian Smith changed the subject immediately.

“I’m not sure of what outrageous things you did to get yourselves kicked out of the family,” he said staring straight at Benson Smith.

"If you're to ask me, he's still your father, your kids' grandpa and your Old Master!"

"You should be asking for forgiveness from him, instead of being so stubborn!"

Sebastian Smith paused before continuing, "My brother is scary on the outside, but he has a kind heart. Benson, so go and apologize to him. Maybe he'll forgive you and your family for what you've done."

"What?" Leah Smith exclaimed before Benson Smith could speak. "We did nothing wrong! Why are we the ones asking for forgiveness?"

Sebastian Smith's gaze turned cold. "The men are talking. You should shut up."

Leah Smith fell silent, though her anger was clear.

"Benson, answer me. Are you willing to kneel before your father and ask for his forgiveness?" Sebastian Smith asked, turning to see Benson Smith again.

Benson Smith kept his head low and answered, "We did nothing wrong. Besides, Dad wouldn't forgive me even if I apologized."

"Then stay there until he does!" Sebastian Smith exclaimed, pointing his chin at Benson Smith.

"Three days of kneeling should be more than enough for him to change his mind."

Kneeling in front of the Smith family mansion for three days straight?

Both the kind-hearted Penny Smith and the simpleminded Benson Smith frowned in protest to Sebastian Smith's outright abuse of power.

Leah Smith began to get annoyed. "Benson Smith, if you're going to do it, then you're on your own!"

"I've been suffering ever since I got married with you! I'm not going to give in the last bit of my dignity for this."

Sebastian Smith glared at her. "You again! Benson, what's the point of keeping her? I want you to divorce her as soon as possible."

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Benson Smith was about to protest against it when Nathan Cross suddenly spoke up.

"That's enough!"

Everyone turned to look at him in shock.

"What did you say?" Sebastian Smith asked as he was annoyed.

"You're taking the moral high ground. That's overstepping the boundaries," Nathan Cross said calmly.

Sebastian Smith glared at him. "Young man, if you're going to speak to me, at least do it with some respect."

Nathan Cross kept his composure. "I should have but I couldn't."

Sebastian Smith slammed one hand onto the table and pointed his finger at Nathan Cross' nose. "You reckless bastard! Where's your workplace?"

Samuel Smith and company began to jeer at Nathan Cross.

"Uncle, this useless thing isn't even employed. He's just feeling cocky after he got some money from Penny Smith's construction project," Samuel Smith said.

"Cocky?" Sebastian Smith huffed. "I can deflate them with just one phone call!"

Samuel Smith and his party perked up in excitement as Penny Smith and her family began to panic.

Although they didn't know what Sebastian Smith's designation was at the Grand Council, they figured that it wasn't a place for ordinary people.

Perhaps Sebastian Smith could actually take the project away from Penny Smith's company just by giving the mayor of Channing a call. That could mean the end of the world for her family.

Penny Smith quickly turned to Nathan Cross and begged, "Nathan, Uncle isn't someone we should mess with. Please apologize to him."

However, Nathan Cross merely smiled. "No worries, let him call the mayor. I'm going to call his boss at the Grand Council."

He turned to Sebastian Smith. "Since you work at the Grand Council, I believe you have the head's phone number, yes? If you don't, well...I can give it to you."

To everyone's surprise, he recited a phone number with much confidence.

Sebastian Smith watched Nathan Cross with fear in his eyes, almost convinced that he was done for.

However, when he heard the phone number that Nathan Cross recited, a smug look replaced the horror in his eyes.

He had never met the Chief of the Grand Council, whose name was Hudson Quarrington. After all, he wasn't anyone important in the Grand Council.

However, he could remember the Chief's office phone number.

The number that Nathan Cross gave did not match it.

Because of that, he figured that Nathan Cross was merely bluffing him.

"Huh! You're calling yourself a hunter just because you caught a rat? Fine then, I'll call this number! Let's see if you're lying," Sebastian Smith said as he scoffed.

Unfortunately for him, Nathan Cross had just given him Hudson Quarrington's personal phone number.

As everyone looked on, he entered the number into his phone and started calling.

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When the other person picked up the call, Sebastian Smith turned the speaker mode on his phone on and asked with a smirk, "Who the heck are you?"

"I'm Hudson Quarrington," the person answered, a hint of confusion was clear in his voice. "Who are you? Why do you have my personal phone number?"

"Wow, you're really good at imitating him! Even your tone sounds exactly like our Chief," Sebastian Smith scoffed.

Annoyance began to creep into Hudson Quarrington's voice. "You're from the Grand Council? Which department do you work at?"

"It doesn't matter. I'm warning you, stealing the identity of a high-ranking official is a very serious offend! You'd better cooperate with the investigations, or else..."

"What then?" Hudson Quarrington growled.

"Or else, I'll throw you and your accomplices into jail," Sebastian Smith threatened.

"Fine then! Come and get me!" Hudson Quarrington snarled.

Sebastian Smith widened his eyes, unable to believe that there could be con artists as shameless as this one. "Tell me your name and address! I'm sending someone after you right now!"

"Hudson Quarrington, 5th Royale Street!"

He hung up right after that.

Sebastian Smith gaped in horror as only those in high power could live in Royale Street.

Besides, the Chief of the Grand Council actually resided at 5th Royale Street.

His hand began to tremble uncontrollably.

Everything began to fall into place in his mind. The voice, the tone, the aura of that person was indeed from Hudson Quarrington of the Grand Council.

He had indeed been talking to the Chief!

Sebastian Smith's blood pressure rose as panic mounted, to a point that his vision grew dark and he collapsed onto the floor.

Horried yells filled the air as Sebastian Smith's body fell like a rock.

They gave Nathan Cross unhappy looks as well. Didn't Nathan Cross give him a fake number? Wasn't that an imposter?

What actually happened that made uncle fainted?

Samuel Smith and his family rushed Sebastian Smith to the hospital immediately.

In the meantime, Penny Smith pulled Nathan Cross to the side and interrogated him in a quiet voice.

Nathan Cross simply smiled and said, "That phone number is real."

Oh my goodness!

So it was indeed Hudson Quarrington, the man most people could only catch a glimpse on TV!

Everyone was shocked.

With bewilderment written all over her face, Penny Smith stammered, "How did you get the phone number of Mr. Quarrington? Don't tell me you..."

Everyone who was still at the scene, Benson and Leah Smith, as well as Miles and May Smith strained their ears to listen in on their conversation.

The truth was, Nathan Cross had known Hudson Quarrington for a long time, and they were on very good terms.

However, he chose to lie. "I know him, but he doesn't know me."

Penny Smith was not convinced. "Then how did you get his personal phone number?"

"During a search and rescue mission some time back, Mr. Quarrington went down to the affected area himself to console the residents there. He gave everyone his personal phone number to call if there's anything they need."

"I committed it to memory after that."

Everyone had a moment of realization upon hearing that.

After that, everyone's expressions began to shift one by one.

Penny Smith and her family members all knew that Nathan Cross had nothing to do with Quarrington, so they couldn't help but worry if Sebastian Smith would come back for revenge.

On the other side of the room, Miles and May Smith looked on with utter bewilderment.

"I knew it! Jobless folk like him wouldn't be able to get in touch with someone like Mr. Quarrington. He's just riding off Mr. Quarrington's coattails," Miles Smith sneered.

May Smith smirked. "Just wait till Uncle wakes up. He's going to suffer Uncle's wrath."