

# Rebirth of the Deadly Beauty

—

c 651

[ 646 words ]

Clara entered through the door and rapped on the door frame sharply.

When she caught Yolanda's eye, she looked away immediately.

"Let's start class for now."

The results of the Southdale Physics Competition would usually be revealed at 10.00 am sharp on the official website.

When it was time, the teachers of every school would then allow the students who had participated in the competition to check for their results with their phones.

However, it was yet time for the results to be announced, but the students could no longer focus in class.

Even those who didn't participate in the competition were distracted as well.

Clara was thinking about how she should answer Yolanda when she interrogated her later. So, she was distracted as well.

After explaining a few questions, she allowed the students in class to self-study.

At the same time, the academy board directors were all gathered in an executive conference room. They were discussing how they would celebrate after the results were announced.

Yolanda, the pain in their necks, was finally going to be thrown out of the academy. They could finally breathe a sigh of relief.

Students like Yolanda who didn't obey instructions and blatantly challenged the academy board of directors should be weeded out as soon as possible.

Marcus and Hector were seated next to each other and were deep in a hushed discussion.

Suddenly, a director at the side asked, "Mr. Coleman is coming back tomorrow. What do we do if he sides with Yolanda and refuses to let her be expelled?"

Marcus and Hector paused. Disdain flashed in their eyes.

"There is an agreement written clearly in black and white. Even if Yolanda and Mr. Coleman wanted to regret and back out, they can't!"

"But..."

The other directors were still worried after they heard that Harvey was coming back.

"Our agreement may be legally binding, but if news got out that the academy's board of directors had placed a bet with a student, wouldn't it tarnish the school's reputation? Also, since Mr. Coleman could pull strings and allow Yolanda to be accepted with his influence, he would surely have a backup plan against us."

"She's the one who promised to get first place. How is it our problem if she can't achieve what she promised?" Marcus' expression darkened.

"But... the only reason Yolanda couldn't take part in the physics competition was because Ms. Bennett tore up her registration form. If Yolanda were to expose this, what should we do?"

"What else can we do? Get Ms. Bennett to bear the blame then." Hector responded immediately.

"She's just a teacher. Even if things were to blow up, it would have nothing to do with the academy's board of directors. I'll send people to warn Ms. Bennett to watch her words.

"If she still wants to have a job in the education industry in Riverdale, she will bear full responsibility for that. For safety, we should expel Yolanda today, before Mr. Coleman comes back.

"As long as she had signed the expulsion agreement, we need not worry about any future havoc that could occur."

"That's right. Let's do this."

Hector's words quickly dispersed the uneasiness in the academy's board of directors' hearts.

"It's almost time for the results announcement. Somebody get Yolanda here, just in case she calls Mr. Coleman for help beforehand."

The moment Marcus had finished speaking, someone had gone to get Yolanda.

Yolanda, who was self-studying in class, saw a middle-aged man asking for her. So, she placed down her pen and walked out calmly.

"Why are the academy's board of directors asking for Yolanda now?"

"Who knows?"

Students of Class 1A were all curiously looking at Yolanda as she walked out of class.

"Oh! I almost forgot that Yolanda had a bet placed with the academy's board of directors before this."

"I think I remember something like that too. Her bet with the directors is that she would get first place in the physics competition, or she would be expelled."

"Isn't it practically impossible to get first place in the physics competition?"

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## Chapter 652

[ 668 words ]

Even if Yolanda were to be placed in the top ten, it would be glorious for First Academy!

Previously, when the students of Class 1A thought that Yolanda was merely accepted because of connections, and had gotten first place in the exams by cheating instead of being truly capable, they all wished really hard for Yolanda to be expelled.

Now that Yolanda had proven that her grades were genuinely great, why should she still be expelled because of a physics competition?

"But she signed an agreement with the academy board of directors. She probably can't even regret it if she wanted to..." Madeline muttered helplessly.

"This agreement is too unfair. Excellent students like Yolanda shouldn't have to be expelled. Let's go ask the board of directors for a second chance."

"Yes! If students with Yolanda's results have to be expelled, how else would we have the dignity to remain in school?"

With some students fanning the flame, the students of Class 1A were all emotional and riled up as they planned to head to the executive conference room.

"Sit down, all of you! It's still self-study time now."

Clara saw that the situation was almost out of control and slammed her hands on the table anxiously.

"Remain in your seats!"

"Yolanda is from Class 1A. Don't you care at all about her outcome, Ms. Bennett?"

Aileen was surprised that Clara, who usually didn't care about classroom affairs, would forbid them from doing so.

"Of course, I care, but this is in between Yolanda and the academy's board of directors. We shouldn't interfere too much as people who aren't involved."

Sweat was beading on Clara's forehead as she tried to explain to her students.

Yolanda was fated to be expelled because she couldn't even take part in the competition.

However, this was a secret that only she and the board of directors knew. These students had better not create more trouble before the board of directors expelled Yolanda.

So, Clara roared at her students with a stormy expression, "I am your homeroom teacher. When I tell you to self-study in silence, you're not allowed to leave the classroom."

Madeline and Aileen shared a look. They were both feeling very reluctant to comply.

However, the students behind them didn't care that Clara had forbidden them to leave. They got up and rushed out of the classroom.

"Are you deliberately disobeying me?"

Clara was infuriated. She rushed to the door and tried to block the students from leaving, but she was no match for a dozen students.

She could only watch helplessly as the number of students in her class decreased rapidly.

At that moment, the clock struck ten. It was time for the results to be announced!

In the conference room, Marcus looked haughtily at Yolanda and announced with disdain, "Hurry up and sign the notice of expulsion, Yolanda. Then pack your things and leave.

"This isn't something that you should be proud of. You won't want this to be known to all, right?"

He was great at using the threatening persuasion method to get students to bend to his will. After he threatened Yolanda, his tone swerved, like there was still room for discussion as he put a kind smile on his face.

"Don't you worry. As long as you're willing to be expelled immediately, I'll write you a referral letter on behalf of First Academy, so even if you are to go to another school, they will take you in."

"There's still five minutes. Are you sure you don't want to take a look at the results of the physics competition first?"

After Yolanda entered the conference room, she immediately took Harvey's seat.

Since the academy's board of directors was soon to be under her management, with Harvey away, that seat would be hers soon anyway, so it didn't matter if she took the seat first.

"How could you sit there? That's not your seat! Get up!"

The other board of directors saw Yolanda seated in Harvey's seat and was quick to yell at her.

"Don't you think that since you're about to be expelled, you can do as you please!" "Do we even need to look at the results?"

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[ 611 words ]

Marcus snickered coldly.

"I think you're really too full of yourself. Since it's almost time for the results to be announced, I won't beat around the bush then. You didn't even take part in the Southdale Physics Competition, so it's impossible for you to even get first place.

"You'd better leave obediently right now, and we can at least save you some face out of the kindness of our hearts."

"I didn't take part?" Yolanda smiled. "Our bet was placed on the physics competition. How could I not have taken part in it?"

"Stop acting!" Marcus saw how Yolanda still pretended not to know anything and was enraged.

"Your registration form wasn't even submitted. You're not even eligible to participate in the competition. You were stopped outside the examination site, so what competition could you have taken part in?"

"What? Did you personally see me get stopped?" Yolanda was still calm.

"O-Of course someone saw it!" Marcus had sent someone to survey the situation on the day of the competition just in case.

The person he sent had left after Yolanda was brought to the academic building for a problematic admission ticket and concluded that Yolanda wouldn't be able to take part in the competition.

Even Marcus didn't know that Yolanda had taken part in the competition with Colin personally being her proctor.

"No matter what it is, we all knew that you didn't take part in the competition. This means you've lost the bet." Hector was afraid that Yolanda would seek trouble and create havoc because of the admission ticket issue and had tried to strike her out first.

"It's a fact that you didn't take part in the competition. The agreement we had is also written in black and white. It's no use for you to argue."

"There's two more minutes." Yolanda glanced at the time on her phone. There were two more minutes until the announcement of the results.

She didn't bother arguing with the board of directors. She was just going to slap them with the reality of her results.

"Sure. We'll wait another two minutes for you. Let's see what else you have to say then."

Marcus and the rest looked smugly at Yolanda. They couldn't wait till they saw Yolanda scurry out of school after they expelled and chased her out.

Suddenly, Marcus' phone rang.

After he answered the phone, his expression changed drastically. "What? Why so sudden?"

After he hung up, he hurriedly said to Hector, "Quickly, make some preparations! Mr. Rothman is coming!"

"Mr. Rothman?" Hector looked at Marcus, confused.

"Which Mr. Rothman?"

"Mr. Rothman, the chief of Creybia's Department of Education, is coming to our school!"

Marcus was so anxious that his face was all scrunched up.

"No, we have to chase Yolanda out quickly. We can't let Mr. Rothman see—"

"What can I not see?" Just as the board of directors was panicking in the conference room, an old man dressed in a suit walked in.

"Mr. Rothman!" Marcus and Hector were shocked. They plastered a flattering smile and went up to greet Colin.

"You must have misheard, Mr. Rothman. We were planning to personally welcome you downstairs. What brings you up here yourself?"

"I'm just here for a casual visit."

Colin walked into the conference room and quickly saw Yolanda. He knew that Yolanda was a student of First Academy, so he wasn't surprised to see her here. He smiled kindly at Yolanda as an acknowledgment.

Yolanda did not expect to see Colin again. As she remembered his identity, she then thought it was normal for him to make an appearance here.

That old man was Colin Rothman, the chief of Creybia's Department of Education, and also Yolanda's personal proctor during the competition.

Marcus hadn't realized that Colin knew Yolanda. Instead, he yelled at Yolanda with a stern face in Colin's presence.

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## Chapter 654

[ 547 words ]

"Are you blind? Mr. Rothman is here. How can you still sit there? Give up the seat immediately!" Hector roared.

What he didn't expect was for Colin to say, "It's just a seat. I'll just sit here. It's fine."

Then, Colin took a seat on Yolanda's right side.

Marcus and Hector shared a look. Even though they thought that Colin's attitude toward Yolanda was a little odd, they didn't think too much of it. They merely assumed Colin to be a kind, easy-going man.

They were busy ushering Colin. However, since they couldn't air the academy's dirty laundry before Colin, they could only glare at Yolanda behind Colin's back. They were warning her to guard her tongue.

"What brought you here today, Mr. Rothman?"

Before this, when they knew that Colin was coming to Riverdale to be the proctor for the competition, they were very eager to invite him over for a tour of the academy.

Colin was the chief of Creybia's Department of Education and was the leader of the entire Havaria education system. If he could come for a tour of the academy, it would be the academy's greatest honor.

However, Colin had rejected the offer for a school tour in the name of his being occupied before this.

Now that Colin had paid them a surprise visit, they were pleasantly surprised.

"Isn't today the announcement day of the results for the Southdale Physics Competition?" Colin smiled faintly and answered, "I was nearby settling some matters and had passed by your school.

"So, I came by so I could congratulate you as well."

"Congratulate us?" Marcus, Hector, and the rest were confused.

"You don't know yet?" Colin glanced at Yolanda.

When he was the proctor for Yolanda, he had seen Yolanda's paper. Yolanda was definitely first place in this competition.

However, he was surprised that Yolanda didn't tell anyone from school about it.

After some thought, he was even more pleased with Yolanda. She was a young lady with such glorious achievements, yet she was humble and down to earth. If she were to continue to work hard in her studies, she would be very successful in the future.

"What should we know?" Marcus stood beside Colin. His body was slightly bent over as he bowed slightly with a flattering smile on his face. "Please let us know, Mr. Rothman!"

"I was wrong. I thought you already knew." Colin smiled kindly as he gestured for Marcus to be seated.

"When I saw Yolanda, I thought you had gotten the news and that you were planning to celebrate her in advance."

"You know about Yolanda Henderson, Mr. Rothman?" Colin's words had everyone beyond confused.

However, Marcus and Hector's faces were distorted.

No way. Could Yolanda be so capable of getting herself connected to Colin, the chief of Creybia's Department of Education?

"Of course!" Colin replied, "I got to know her from the Southdale Physics Competition."

"I see!" Marcus didn't know he was about to be in huge trouble as he continued matter-of-factly, "We apologize for not teaching our students better. Please bear with us, Mr. Rothman!"

"Students like Yolanda, who didn't have an admission ticket yet insisted on participating in the competition, will definitely be dealt with very seriously by our school. Immediate expulsion, no other excuses!"

The moment Marcus was done, the other academy's board of directors chimed in, "We'll throw her out of school immediately! There won't be a next time."

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## Chapter 655

[ 580 words ]

The directors still assumed that Colin was the person who punished Yolanda for wanting to participate in the competition without a proper admission ticket and was quick to be clear that the school had nothing to do with Yolanda.

Little did they know, Colin frowned deeply when he heard what they said and asked sternly, "What nonsense are you talking about? Of course, Yolanda would be eligible to participate in the competition. Are you crazy to expel such an excellent student?"

Colin's words had stunned everyone in the conference room.

"How's that possible?" Marcus quickly responded, "Yolanda didn't even register-"

"If she didn't register, how did she get an admission ticket?" Colin suddenly thought of something and his expression became very solemn.

"Uhh..."

Marcus' face fell. He tried to think of a reasonable explanation but failed.

"That was just our assumption. Yolanda is usually a bad student who is often absent from class. Her homeroom teacher can testify to that."

Hector quickly added, "She's a problematic student and everyone in school knows about her. We've been in several meetings because of her and she's really causing us a lot of headaches."

Even if they had known that Yolanda had participated in the competition, they still didn't believe that she would get first place.

They assumed that she was acquainted with Colin and that he was there to support her.

"Even though this is an internal school matter, Mr. Rothman, rest assured that we'll handle this properly."

"Hah! Handle this properly?" Colin scoffed. "I'd like to know how you would handle this."

"Yolanda placed a bet with the school's board of directors that if she didn't get first place in the Southdale Physics Competition, she would drop out of school," Hector answered.

"You should know what the best our school has achieved according to all our previous years' records, Mr. Rothman. How ridiculous is it for Yolanda to boast haughtily that she could get first place?"

"That's right. We are a strict, just school. We will not allow arrogant, haughty students like her to exert bad influence here."

Marcus and Hector were bold and loud.

"If you don't believe us, Mr. Rothman, I'll get her homeroom teacher to come, and you can ask her for yourself."

Then, he ordered for Clara, Yolanda's homeroom teacher, to come to the conference room.

In less than five minutes, Clara arrived at the conference room.

"This is Yolanda's homeroom teacher, Mr. Rothman."

"Tell Mr. Rothman truthfully, Ms. Bennett. Yolanda has often skipped school and is frequently absent, is that right?"

"T-That's right!"

Clara took a deep breath and composed herself before she added, "Not only does she often skip school, but she also frequently requests to be absent. I have a whole drawer full of her notes of absence."

Then, she whipped out the notes of absence that she had prepared ahead of time.

Colin glanced coldly at the notes of absence.

"If you didn't think it was suitable for her to be absent from school, you as her homeroom teacher could have just denied her request. What are you trying to prove here by showing me all these notes of absences now?"

"Are you trying to show me that you have not done your job properly as a homeroom teacher?"

"Uhh..." Clara couldn't refute what Colin had said. All she could do was look at Marcus and Hector for help.

However, the two were trying to figure out a way to get Colin to leave, so they ignored her silent plea for help since they were occupied.

"Also, Mr. Zwink previously mentioned that Yolanda didn't register for the physics competition. What's that all about?"

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## Chapter 656

[ 629 words ]

"S-She registered!" Clara stuttered. She might not be the smartest, but she knew that she definitely couldn't tell Colin that she had torn Yolanda's registration form apart, so she feigned ignorance.

"I already gave her her admission ticket."

"Oh?" Colin looked pointedly at both of them who were sweating profusely and asked, "You are saying different things. Who should I believe then?"

"This is not important, Mr. Rothman. Yolanda already signed an agreement with us."

At this point, Marcus didn't care much anymore. All he wanted to do was kick Yolanda out of school as soon as possible.

"That agreement is effective, so even if it was you, you can't—"

"An agreement?"

After Colin read through the agreement Marcus whipped out, he was so angry he slammed the agreement onto the table.

"You're all teachers! Who gave you the power to sign an agreement like this? She didn't break any school rules.

"She merely didn't get first place in the physics competition. Why should she be expelled?"

"But this is the bargain Yolanda put forward." Marcus was bold as he pushed all the blame onto Yolanda.

"She had the audacity to announce that she would disperse our board of directors and reappoint new directors, and she had the final say. We had no choice. That's why we signed an agreement like this."

Marcus' shameless words shocked Colin. Just as he was about to say something, he suddenly remembered something and said something else. "Since you have signed an agreement with her, I won't interfere."

"You're not interfering with us fulfilling the contents of the agreement, Mr. Rothman?" Marcus and Hector shared a look. They were ecstatic!

As long as Colin wasn't involved, they could definitely throw Yolanda out.

"Yes. I won't interfere. You can just do as per the agreement. You're not allowed to go back on your word."

Colin emphasized the "not allowed to go back on your word" part of his sentence, but since Marcus and the rest were still elated in the dream of them finally being able to expel Yolanda, they didn't notice it.

Yolanda, who had been quiet all this while, looked at the smug faces of the directors and still chose to remain silent.

"If that's so, I won't delay your execution of internal affairs anymore. The results are out now, so you can all check the results on the official website."

Colin might have said that, but he had no intention of leaving.

"Is it even necessary to check, Mr. Rothman? It's impossible for Yolanda to get first place." Marcus smiled flatteringly at Colin.

"I'm very aware of the standards of students in our school. We may be the best school in Riverdale, but we're still very far behind the other schools from other participating districts."

"Yolanda may have decent results here in our school, it's a stretch to assume that she would be placed in the top ten. But for her to get first place...that's impossible!"

"I know you're acquainted with Yolanda, Mr. Rothman. I understand that you might be biased toward her, but this time, I'm afraid you'd be disappointed-"

"You'd better get onto the official website and see carefully for yourself." Colin frowned as he looked at Marcus, who was clearly smug and arrogant.

He didn't expect to see such a ridiculous thing happening in the best school in Riverdale.

How could leaders of the school use competition results to force a student to drop out? How could they deliberately scheme against the student so she couldn't take part in said competition?

It seemed like it was about time First Academy had an internal makeover.

"It's actually not necessary."

However, to ensure Yolanda and Colin accepted the fact that they had lost, Marcus turned on the projector used usually in meetings and planned to display the official website on the screen for all to see.

"You're too arrogant, Yolanda. It's impossible for someone like you to get first place!"

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## Chapter 657

[ 585 words ]

Marcus logged on to the official website and clicked on the newest banner. He double-clicked it and opened the webpage.

The results of the Southdale Physics Competition were on display for all to see. When the directors in the conference room saw the name displayed in the first place, they were dumbfounded. It felt like a lightning bolt had struck them on their heads, causing their faces to be majorly contorted.

"How is that possible?"

"Yolanda really got first place!"

"That's impossible! That's utterly impossible! Since the Southdale Physics Competition started, First Academy has never gotten students who would get such good results."

As for Marcus and Hector, all they could do was shake their heads hysterically.

"How could Yolanda possibly-"

"Could it be someone with the same first and last name?"

"I'm sure it's someone else with the same first and last name!"

"My student ID and my identification numbers are on there." Yolanda, who had been quiet, reminded them kindly.

...

Marcus and Hector's faces were ashen. They had yet to recover from this huge turn of events.

"Since you said to handle it strictly professionally, hurry up and get it done."

Colin saw how flabbergasted they were and felt contempt toward them.

How could school leaders representing the best school in Riverdale be such a joke?

"This is all just a misunderstanding, Mr. Rothman..."

When Marcus came back to his senses, he wiped the cold sweat off his face and forced a smile.

"The agreement was just a joke we played on Yolanda."

"Yes! We only did it to encourage Yolanda. That's why we got her to sign that agreement. Our goal is to get her to work hard."

Hector, the old, cunning, sly fox of a director lied blatantly without blinking to save himself.

Colin's frown etched deeper after he heard what Hector said. He was about to teach Hector a lesson when Yolanda, who was seated on the side chimed in, "So for Ms. Bennett to tear my registration form apart... Was that to encourage me as well?"

"How did you know?" Clara blurted and soon realized her mistake. She covered her mouth immediately as remorse filled her heart.

Suddenly, a video popped up on the screen that was previously showing the results of the competition.

The location of the video was the academic office.

In the video, Clara was seen tearing an A4 paper into shreds. When she had thrown the shredded paper into the trash, the video zoomed in and through the words seen, it was clear that the paper that was just discarded was Yolanda's registration form.

The conference room sank into a pin-drop silence.

The directors felt like they had been plunged into icy, cold waters as hopelessness filled their hearts.

"This is all Ms. Bennett acting on her own. We had no idea about this at all—"

Marcus still wanted to defend himself when the next audio recording rang out. It was the conversation they had after they found out about Clara tearing Yolanda's registration form apart.

This time, Marcus could no longer retort and defend himself.

"What else do you have to say for yourself?" Colin's face was stormy as he glared at Marcus and the rest.

"Please let me explain, Mr. Rothman. This is all a scheme. Someone clearly wanted to harm us and divide the board of directors. You have to investigate this, Mr. Rothman..."

Marcus' attempt to turn things around ignited a sliver of desire in the hearts of the directors, since if Yolanda were to take over the board of directors, it would mean that they would be stripped of all of their privileges. They could even lose their jobs.

"I've seen enough."

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## Chapter 658

[ 625 words ]

Colin picked up the agreement that Marcus took out and said, "Do exactly what's written on this agreement. I'll get people to monitor you."

He didn't give Marcus any more opportunities to explain himself. Then, he turned to Yolanda and said, "I got to go, Yolanda. When you ever come to Creybia or change your mind and have decided to major in physics, please contact me."

Yolanda couldn't help but smile. She didn't know Colin was still so adamant in wanting her to major in Physics in Creybia.

It actually didn't matter to her what major she was in, but since she had promised Harvey previously, she wouldn't go back on her word.

After Colin bid his goodbyes to Yolanda, he glanced apathetically at Marcus and Hector, who both looked deathly pale, and left the conference room.

Before he left, he emphasized, "Yolanda, according to the agreement, all the best revamping the academy's board of directors."

This sentence took the hope away from all the directors. They watched helplessly as Colin left. There was nothing they could do anymore.

"Let's talk, Yolanda. Name your price."

After Colin left, Marcus was still trying to persuade Yolanda.

"There's nothing for us to talk about. The both of you are fired."

Yolanda declared as she pointed at Marcus and Hector. She then pointed at Clara and said, "As for you, if you don't want the entire Riverdale education field to know about the despicable things you have done, you'd better finish your handover tasks before school ends today."

"You're too much, Yolanda!" Marcus shrieked. "Who gave you the power to do so?"

"Weren't you the ones who had signed this agreement with me?"

Yolanda picked up the agreement on the table and waved it in Marcus' face. "Do you need me to read it aloud for you once more?"

"We haven't done anything wrong. Your threats are useless to us!" Hector was still stubbornly holding on.

"Is that so?"

Yolanda took out her phone and found a document. Then, she displayed it on the screen for all to see.

This document had the detailed account statements of Hector and all the other directors, clearly stating the bribes they had secretly received in the name of admission slots over the years.

This time, the silence in the conference room was groundbreaking. It shattered the hearts of the people who were planning to give it one last go and tear the agreement apart.

The news of the academy's board of directors' revamp had quickly spread across the entire school.

Some students who had long felt that the board of directors was biased felt utterly satisfied when they heard the news. However, there was also a group of students who had entered the academy with connections hating on Yolanda because now, they could no longer enjoy the privileges they once had.

Yolanda didn't care about all that.

She gave Harvey a call and put him in charge of the rest of the process.

Since the board of directors had been disbanded, and with Harvey still being away, there was a lot of fear and uncertainty in school. So, the teachers unanimously decided to give the students a few days' break.

After lunch, Yolanda packed up and headed to Willow Creek Clinic.

The news of Gavin being hospitalized had reached the Savage family, causing Priscilla to stick to Gavin like a shadow.

Even Arthur, who was usually aloof, had unusually sent his secretary to ask for Gavin's updates every 30 minutes.

Gavin merely told Priscilla that he was overworked. He didn't mention anything about the assassins he had encountered on his way back. There were also no updates on Henry's side.

The situation in the Savage family might seem to have calmed down, but only Gavin and Henry knew the turmoil underneath the facade of serenity. There was a huge storm brewing. More were about to get involved in it.

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[ 732 words ]

When Yolanda got out of the cab, she saw an unexpected figure outside of Willow Creek Clinic.

Harold stood by the door. He looked like he had been contemplating for a long time, but still had not made up his mind if he wanted to enter or not.

"Are you here for a doctor's consultation?"

Yolanda already got to know from Winnie that Harold and Diana had been discharged. Diana was busy resetting the living room in the Henderson residence. Under Yvonne's

provocation, every time Diana had to swipe her card to pay for something, she would curse at Yolanda while feeling sorry for her bank account.

Harold, on the other hand, had fully immersed himself in work. He was preparing to bid for a few projects in Riverdale for the next season.

"You finished school so early today." Harold was clearly not expecting to see Yolanda, so he looked a little perplexed.

It was clear that he merely wanted to take a look, but had not mentally prepared himself to actually meet with Yolanda.

"If you're not well, you have to register inside. If you need medications, you just need to show us medical records from a proper medical facility."

After Yolanda was done, she was about to pass Harold by and leave.

Although the original Yolanda's tragedy had nothing to do with Harold, as the original Yolanda's father, he had not done his job as a father at all.

Unlike Diana, Yolanda didn't loathe Harold, but she didn't exactly like him either.

"Uhh... Yolanda, can we sit down somewhere and have a chat?"

Harold hesitated for a while before stepping in to block Yolanda in her path.

This time, he had forgo his identity as Yolanda's elder. His tone was no longer commandeering.

"There's a cafe nearby," said Yolanda, who was a little curious. She wondered why Harold wanted to talk to her, so she led the way to the cafe nearby.

Both Harold and Yolanda were seated in a private room on the second floor of the cafe ten minutes later.

Harold ordered a cup of Earl Grey and passed the menu to Yolanda.

"What do you feel like eating?" Harold asked.

His change had surprised Yolanda.

Harold was usually a dominating person. He didn't usually care for what Yolanda wanted.

"A glass of lemon water." Without looking at the menu, Yolanda placed her order with the waiter.

She wasn't hungry at that moment. She also didn't have an appetite with Harold around.

The waiter closed the door behind him after serving them their drinks.

Harold took a sip of his tea.

Yolanda noticed that Harold's hand trembled a little as he picked up the teacup.

It was only then when she had watched Harold closely that she noticed that he seemed to have aged a decade since the last time she saw him, which was half a month ago when she signed the agreement and left.

If the original Yolanda saw this, she would probably feel emotional. However, all Yolanda could think of was a saying that stated, "What's done is done."

"Thank you for taking care of the matters with Mr. Langley." After a moment of silence, Harold broke the ice.

Yolanda had nothing to do with the Hendersons anymore. She could have not cared about Winnie at all. She also didn't have to care if they were alive or not.

However, Yolanda still stepped in and rescued them.

Even though Yolanda's original intention was to save Winnie, she had also saved Diana and Harold in the midst of that.

However, to Harold who knew nothing, it touched him that Yolanda was able to repay evil with kindness.

"My original intention wasn't to help you." Yolanda didn't want to take the credit. "Just tell me what you've called me here for."

"I've thought about it for a long while recently. Your mother and I have done some things wrong." Harold looked at Yolanda, who was still aloof, and felt a little down.

"We had been biased toward Yvonne and have disregarded your feelings."

"I'm here today not to ask you to forgive us because I know you can most certainly live a very good life with your capabilities. You didn't need the Henderson family to support you at all.

"But it's fine. It doesn't matter if you've signed the Relationship Termination Agreement. You're still a Henderson forever. We are your safe haven."

Harold had thought about it for a long time before he said all this to Yolanda.

He had been thinking for the past few days if he had been too harsh with Yolanda.

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## Chapter 660

[ 462 words ]

Harold's heart was filled with mixed emotions, especially after hearing from Winnie about Yolanda's abilities. Not only could she heal people with her medical skills, but she could also defend herself in fights.

Yolanda had grown up in ways he never knew about. Yet he had stubbornly clung to his prejudices by treating her like a worthless troublemaker and refusing to give her even an ounce of trust.

Indeed, he had made a mistake. Though Harold was traditional in his ways, he wasn't too proud to acknowledge his errors.

Yolanda listened to his words without reacting. She knew that even the original Yolanda would have felt numb to such a belated apology. "It's too late now."

Yolanda heard a sigh deep in her heart. These were probably the words the original Yolanda had longed to say to Harold.

"What was that?" Confused, Harold furrowed his brows and stared at Yolanda.

"Nothing. I just meant it's getting late. Is there anything else?"

"Well, um..." Harold hesitated unusually before continuing, "Actually, there's something I need your help with. I heard from Winnie that you taught yourself medicine, and you're quite skilled..."

Expressionless, Yolanda laughed bitterly inside. No wonder he had laid such thick emotional groundwork. He only came to see Yolanda because he needed something from her.

Though Harold's previous words might have held some sincerity, they became worthless in the face of his clear ulterior motives. Yolanda was about to leave as she did not want to hear more, but Harold's phone rang.

Harold glanced at the caller ID with hesitation. Then, he declined the call and placed the phone on the table. A few seconds later, it rang again. Yolanda glimpsed the screen-it was Yvonne calling.

"Why aren't you answering?" Yolanda's smile held hidden meaning.

"The other matters can wait." Thinking Yolanda might be bothered, Harold had avoided taking Yvonne's call. Now faced with the tension between his daughters, he did not dare to act rashly. Perhaps Harold truly was getting old.

Finally, Harold answered Yvonne's call under Yolanda's watchful gaze. "What is it, Yvonne?"

"Dad, I placed tenth in the Southdale Physics Competition!" Yvonne's voice was so excited that even Yolanda could hear it.

"Is that so? That's great." Though Harold said this, his face showed little joy. Clearly, Yvonne's academic achievement meant little compared to his current struggle.

"Because of this score, I'll be transferred to the honors class soon! That's why I wanted to share the good news with you right away!"

Either Yvonne didn't notice Harold's lukewarm tone or pretended not to. "Dad, let's celebrate tonight with Mom!"

"I'm busy today." Harold frowned impatiently. "I have work to do. I need to go." With that, he hung up.

"Yvonne said she placed tenth," Harold told Yolanda dryly as he looked at her. "You participated in that competition too, didn't you? How did you do?"

"I got first place."

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[ 479 words ]

"Really?" Harold looked quite surprised. His lips twitched as if he wanted to laugh but held back.

"Why don't we celebrate tonight? Let's invite your mother and Yvonne. It's been a while since we've had a family dinner."

"I'm busy tonight." Yolanda threw Harold's earlier excuse to Yvonne back at him. "Besides, didn't you have something else to discuss?"

"Well... yes. A friend of mine is ill, and I was hoping you could take a look..." Harold struggled with the simple request. He did not seem that confident either, as if he was expecting Yolanda to turn him down.

"Sure." Yolanda nodded without hesitation. She agreed readily.

"What?" Harold froze, then asked for confirmation, "You'll do it?"

"Yes." Yolanda placed money for her lemon water under the glass and stood up. "Pick me up at Willow Creek Clinic tomorrow morning."

Originally, Yolanda had not planned to help Harold, but Yvonne's call changed her mind. Though Yolanda was not sure what methods Yvonne had used to secure tenth place in the Southdale Physics Competition, sharing classes with her would surely bring more schemes and tricks.

Besides, Yvonne always prioritized Harold's approval. Her expression would surely be priceless when she found out that Harold had secretly asked for Yolanda's help. For someone as greedy as Yvonne, what could be more painful than watching Harold begin to trust and rely on Yolanda instead?

This was just the first step in "repaying" Yvonne's act of sisterly love, and Yolanda was already looking forward to her reaction.

...

Early the next morning, Harold came to pick up Yolanda at Willow Creek Clinic. Last night, she was organizing a new shipment of medicinal herbs with Baxter instead of returning to the villa.

That morning, Yolanda noticed their destination was Cerulean Abode.

"What are your friend's symptoms?" Yolanda asked casually along the way, breaking the silence in the car.

"Chest tightness, shortness of breath, high blood pressure, and poor sleep. He often wakes up in the middle of the night."

Harold thought for a moment before adding, "Actually, he's not really a friend, but a potential client. He owns many businesses and has projects waiting to be developed. If we can cure his illness, he might agree to give our company his future projects."

"The company suffered quite a lot of losses recently. I won't have to take out loans for now if we land a few major projects."

Harold was honest enough to reveal his true motivations for seeking Yolanda's help. Yolanda felt satisfied with his response. At least he hadn't lied.

"Does your client live in Cerulean Abode?"

"Yeah, he owns property here."

Twenty minutes later, Harold's car entered Cerulean Abode and stopped in front of a villa in the east district. Though its location was not as great as Yolanda's villa, it was still located in Cerulean Abode's core area.

Anyone who could afford such a property must hold considerable status.

Harold parked by the roadside and walked up the front porch steps to ring the doorbell.

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[ 523 words ]

Soon, a middle-aged woman dressed as a housekeeper came to open the door.

"Hello, I'm Harold Henderson. I've brought a doctor to treat Mr. Cavanaugh. I've already contacted Ms. Cavanaugh, and she approved our visit."

The housekeeper nodded coldly but didn't immediately invite Harold and Yolanda in. Instead, she returned to the villa. A full five minutes passed before she returned. She opened the gates to let them enter.

As Yolanda and Harold entered the living room, they saw an aloof young woman in a long dress emerge from the inner suite. Though moderately attractive, Miranda carried herself with an overwhelming presence and superiority.

However, she spoke with a distinct Dunhill accent. "Mr. Henderson, we meet again."

"Good morning, Ms. Cavanaugh." Harold nodded to Miranda. He seemed accustomed to her attitude. "As I mentioned before, my daughter is a doctor. I heard that Mr. Cavanaugh was unwell, so I brought her to check his pulse and examine him."

"Yolanda, this is Mr. Cavanaugh's daughter, Ms. Miranda Cavanaugh." Harold made the introductions. "Ms. Cavanaugh, this is my eldest daughter, Yolanda."

Miranda lifted her chin a little as she looked down at Yolanda with scrutiny. Frowning, she did not bother to greet Yolanda.

Harold noticed Miranda's reaction. His eyes dimmed as he continued, "My daughter has treated many patients. She runs her own clinic now, so please rest assured."

"Okay." Finally, Miranda nodded. "My father is in the study next door. Follow me!" Yolanda remained silent as she and Harold followed Miranda to the study.

The Cavanaugh family's study was luxurious; all their desks, bookshelves, and the coffee table were made of rosewood. The display cases beside the bookshelves held antiques. With a quick glance, Yolanda noticed that they were all genuine pieces.

On the couch by the coffee table sat a middle-aged man around Harold's age. Though his hair was meticulously styled with wax, his sunken eye sockets and purple lips betrayed his illness. It made him look frail.

This middle-aged man was Miranda's father, Lennox Cavanaugh, the president of the Cavanaugh Group. One look was enough for Yolanda to determine that Lennox had heart problems. However, she decided to hold her tongue for now after seeing how the Cavanaugh's treated them.

"Dad, Mr. Henderson is here." Miranda's manner instantly changed when addressing Lennox. Her voice became much gentler as she dropped her arrogant attitude.

"He brought a doctor to examine you." She purposefully glanced in Yolanda's direction. Clearly, she did not trust Yolanda's medical skills. But since they were already here, she could not dismiss them without her father's input.

"Mr. Henderson, my condition isn't serious enough for you to trouble yourself and bring someone over."

Lennox exuded an air of authority that made Harold nervous in his presence. Harold's hands fidgeted behind his back. He clenched and unclenched his hands several times before he managed a smile.

"Mr. Cavanaugh, you're too kind. We're business partners after all. When I heard you weren't feeling well, I had to come check on you."

"You're too considerate, Mr. Henderson," Lennox responded coolly to Harold's pleasantries. He did not invite Harold to sit nor call someone to bring some tea over. Apparently, he had no intention of treating Harold and Yolanda as proper guests.

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## Chapter 663

[ 568 words ]

Harold understood Lennox's intentions. Though embarrassed, he had to press on for Henderson Group's sake, so he forced himself to present his prepared gift.

"Mr. Cavanaugh, I happened to acquire this reishi mushroom from a friend. I hope you'll accept it."

Harold's gift to Lennox was a premium reishi mushroom worth over 100 thousand. It was neither too modest nor extravagant as a gift for a client. Seeing his choice of gift, Yolanda finally understood why Harold had once qualified as a potential heir to the main Henderson family in Creybia.

"That's thoughtful of you, Mr. Henderson."

Lennox did not reach for the gift box. During his illness, many people had sent him expensive herbs and tonics. Even a reishi mushroom that was worth six figures hardly impressed him.

"You probably know I came to Riverdale for two reasons. First, I'm here to ask Dr. Smith's team to treat my heart condition. Secondly, I'm going to discuss a partnership with Cinnamine Pharmaceuticals to sell their health products in our pharmacies."

Lennox changed his tone. "As for other matters, I'm not interested for now. Do you understand what I'm saying?"

He only agreed to see Harold out of respect for the main Henderson family in Creybia. Otherwise, he might not have even let Harold through the door.

"I understand, which is why I brought a doctor to help ease your concerns, Mr. Cavanaugh."

Though displeased with Lennox's attitude, Harold had to remain humble. He forced a smile and explained, "Mr. Cavanaugh, this is my daughter Yolanda. She owns Willow Creek Clinic. You may not know it, but it's a renowned traditional medicine clinic in Riverdale with over a century of history..."

Harold was now hoping that Yolanda could cure Lennox's illness and change his opinion.

"Did you say it's a traditional medicine clinic?" Lennox raised his eyes to examine Yolanda. She looked unremarkable. He would hardly believe she was a nurse, let alone a traditional medicine practitioner.

Besides, Lennox grew up in a port city like Dunhill. He was influenced by modern culture and distrusted traditional medicine. Except for famous practitioners like Derek and a few famous doctors from Havarria, he considered all traditional doctors frauds.

Though Lennox knew Harold would not dare bring a quack to treat him, he waved his hand dismissively. "I don't believe in traditional medicine. Besides, I've already arranged for Dr. Smith and his team to treat me.

"Perhaps you see your daughter as an exceptional practitioner because you love her, but she's too young. She should focus on studying and gaining experience rather than conning people through traditional medicine!

"Bold of her to call herself a miracle doctor at such a young age. She'll never amount to anything!"

Lennox felt insulted that Harold sent his daughter. He wouldn't have been so resistant even if Derek had come. Wasn't it absurd to have a girl under twenty treat him?

If his condition worsened because of Yolanda, the entire Cavanaugh Group would suffer. Dissatisfied with Harold, Lennox planned to withdraw previous projects from Henderson Group and end their partnership.

When Yolanda heard Lennon mentioning Russell, she realized Russell and his team must have stayed in Riverdale. However, she doubted Russell could cure Lennox's condition. It would surely be a letdown.

"Mr. Cavanaugh, Yolanda is really skilled. She previously cured..."

Before Harold could finish, Miranda impatiently cut him off, "Mr. Henderson, you're disturbing my father's rest!"

"My apologies..." Harold glanced helplessly at Lennox, who wouldn't even spare him a look. He finally decided to take his leave.

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[ 448 words ]

"We'll leave now."

"Miranda, see Mr. Henderson out and write him a check for 500 thousand dollars. Consider it compensation for his trouble."

The amount was clearly meant to insult Harold and Yolanda, who hadn't done anything. Then, Lennox spoke to Miranda in front of them, "Also, I won't see anyone else apart from Dr. Smith!"

His illness and fatigue had left him in poor spirits lately. If everyone was allowed to bring their second-rate doctors and disturb him, he'd never get any peace to recover!

"Got it, Dad. I'll warn the security guards right away." Miranda nodded earnestly.

Watching the father and daughter, Yolanda silently shook her head. Clearly, there was no point in offering treatment now. Since the high-and-mighty Lennox trusted Russell's medical team so much, they could only hope for the best.

"Mr. Cavanaugh, in a week, you'll experience severe angina, with bruises appearing near your heart. But that's just the beginning. Without proper treatment, you'll go into shock, lose your sight... and die within a month."

Before leaving, Yolanda offered this warning to Lennox. "If you don't want to end up as a cold corpse in a funeral home, come to Willow Creek Clinic and beg for my help."

With that, Yolanda turned to leave. Though Harold disapproved of Yolanda's offensive words, he stayed quiet since Lennox had first questioned and mocked her.

However, Miranda, who stood beside Lennox, flew into a rage. "How dare you curse my father with death?"

Just as she moved to block Yolanda's path and teach her a lesson, Lennox stopped her. "Miranda, as the future heir to the Cavanaugh Group, you shouldn't lower yourself by getting angry at such petty people."

"Okay." Miranda nodded submissively, though her eyes still betrayed her disgust as she watched Yolanda leave.

Yolanda and Harold quickly left the Cavanaugh residence. Since outside vehicles couldn't park freely in Cerulean Abode, their driver had left to wait outside after dropping them at the Cavanaugh's gate.

As Harold called the driver, the mansion's door opened again. A sharp-looking woman in an elegant business suit emerged, followed by two middle-aged security guards. Her name was Vex Blackman.

Seeing Yolanda and Harold, Vex immediately addressed them with a stern face, "Mr. Henderson, Ms. Henderson, Ms. Cavanaugh wants you to leave the premises immediately. Don't loiter at the gate!"

Even a mere assistant who worked for the Cavanaugh's dared throw her weight around. It made Harold's face darken. But knowing he had no power to challenge the Cavanaugh's, he suppressed his anger and replied, "We're waiting for our driver. We'll leave right away!"

Hearing this, Vex pulled out a stack of bills and threw them at Harold's feet. "This money is from Ms. Cavanaugh. Use it for your cab fare!"

"Damn it! This is too much!"

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[ 418 words ]

Harold could no longer contain himself, despite his reservations. Just as he prepared to confront the arrogant assistant, Yolanda held him back.

"Tell Miranda Cavanaugh that she must kneel at Willow Creek Clinic's entrance for an entire day if she wants to save her father-not a minute less!" Then she headed toward the neighboring villa.

Harold was caught off guard by Yolanda's sudden outburst, so he didn't immediately realize she was not walking toward the estate's exit. He quickly followed her.

"Hey, country bumpkins, that's the central district where the real elite live! The exit is to the right!" Vex called out after their retreating figures.

"Nobody else would be as kind as Ms. Cavanaugh to give you some cab fare! You'll only embarrass yourselves when they throw you out!"

"I live over there." Yolanda kept walking.

"You live there?" Vex let out a mocking laugh. The central district was the most prestigious area with sky-high prices; even the Cavanaughs couldn't secure a place there. Where did Yolanda get the nerve to make such claims?

But just as Vex opened her mouth for another taunt, she saw Yolanda pull out a keycard and open the gates to the most expensive villa in the central district. Her jaw dropped in shock.

Equally bewildered, Harold followed Yolanda into the villa under the stunned gazes of the Cavanaugh security guards. Ten minutes later, Harold sat dazed in Yolanda's living room while still trying to process everything. This wasn't a pleasant surprise for him-it was more like a shock.

"Do you want some water?" Yolanda emerged from the kitchen and tossed Harold an unopened bottle of mineral water. Since this was Harold's first visit, she felt obliged to offer some hospitality. Though reluctant, she managed to serve him bottled water.

"Yolanda... What's the story with this villa?" Harold asked after finally finding his voice, though it trembled.

"I already told you it's my home, didn't I?" Yolanda frowned and replied.

"How could you possibly afford a villa here?" The question burst from Harold before he could stop himself.

Realizing his harsh tone, he cleared his throat and tried to soften it. "I mean, the best location in Cerulean Abode isn't just about having money."

"True." Yolanda nodded. "This villa was a gift from Logan."

Her words hit Harold like a bombshell.

"Logan Fuel, the president of Fuel Group?" Harold's eyes widened. His breathing quickened with excitement.

"I happened to have saved his son," Yolanda explained casually.

"I see..." Harold knew Logan had only one son. If Yolanda had saved him, it made perfect sense that Logan would have gifted her such a villa.

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[ 591 words ]

Even though he was sitting in the villa, it still felt surreal to Harold.

Just over two months ago, Yolanda had been the Henderson family's most worthless daughter and was despised by everyone. Yet in that short time, she had established her own clinic, built her connections, and even gotten a villa worth hundreds of millions.

She seemed like a totally different person from the old Yolanda, who was weak and incompetent back then. Harold felt a sense of loss. Such an exceptional daughter should have been his pride, but legally, Yolanda no longer had any connection to him.

Yolanda noticed Harold's shifting emotions and understood why. She let out a cold laugh and said, "I need to return to the clinic. Once you've rested, please see yourself out."

For the original Yolanda's sake, she would offer the Hendersons limited help, but nothing more. She would never consider Harold and Diana family.

When Harold looked up again, he only heard the front door closing. Yolanda had vanished before he could say goodbye. Sitting on the luxurious couch in the villa's living room, he was still holding the water bottle Yolanda had given him.

He sighed dejectedly and muttered, "What have I done..."

...

Yolanda returned to Willow Creek Clinic before lunch. Instead of heading to the front clinic, she went directly to the small room in the back that had served as a temporary rest area.

The bloody smell from the courtyard had disappeared, which meant her blood-stopping medicine had worked.

She did not push open the door, knowing Elleven would be at his most defensive and alert. She didn't want to aggravate his wounds, especially since this room was only meant for temporary rest and not long-term recovery.

After some thought, she spoke softly from outside. "Food and medicine will be left at your door daily. Once you're healed, stay or leave as you wish."

She expected nothing in return. Saving him was merely luck on his part, as he had happened to hide at her clinic.

Yolanda walked around to Kieran's room through the side path in front of the small room. Selena had been staying there recently and had even brought several changes of clothes.

When Yolanda had offered them help in moving, Selena had not given a clear answer. So, Yolanda had Daniel's construction team renovate the new villa as well. Finding Selena absent, Yolanda checked on the still-unconscious Kieran before heading to the front clinic.

Upon entering, she smelled food.

"Ms. Henderson, perfect timing! Have you had lunch?"

Dunstan was happily eating a plate of tomato pasta. Having spent so much time at the clinic, he had become more down-to-earth and had been taking all his meals there. He was hardly the image of a rich heir anymore.

"Mrs. Morrison made us lunch." A young assistant got up awkwardly to offer Yolanda a seat. The clinic had a long table for staff lunches and occasionally storing herbs.

"Yolanda, come join us if you haven't eaten." Selena stood by the table. She was laying out dishes from the back courtyard. "I made green bean salad, honey-glazed ribs, and fresh fettuccine."

"They can order takeout for lunch, Mrs. Morrison." Yolanda looked at Selena helplessly.

The clinic wasn't large. But with Baxter, Dunstan, and the assistants and cleaners, they had nearly thirty people. Preparing food for so many probably meant Selena had been cooking since dawn.

"Well, since Kieran hasn't woken up, I don't have much else to do." Selena smiled sheepishly. "Besides, the market's quite close, so it's convenient for me to make food. It's all good as long as you don't mind my cooking."

"Of course, we don't!"

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## Chapter 667

[ 472 words ]

"Before anyone noticed, Dunstan had finished a large bowl of pasta. "Mrs. Morrison, your cooking tastes just like any restaurant chef's!"

"Would you like another serving then, Dunstan?" Selena's smile grew warmer at the praise.

Unable to resist Selena's kindness, Yolanda eventually had a plate of pasta too. She had to admit, Selena's cooking was excellent. "Mrs. Morrison, have you considered opening your own restaurant?"

With Kieran still unconscious, Selena had been making a living selling household items at the market. The profit she could earn was little, and after rent and miscellaneous fees, she barely made enough each month.

With her cooking skills, hiring one hardworking assistant chef would make the workload manageable.

"Well... opening a restaurant requires a huge investment, and success isn't guaranteed." Selena sounded like she had considered it before but gave up on the idea for various reasons.

"If you open a restaurant, Mrs. Morrison, I'll eat there every day!" Dunstan chimed in, earning enthusiastic agreement from the other nurses.

"Mrs. Morrison, don't worry about the preparations if you want a restaurant. There are some shops for rent near the clinic."

"Yes! If you open a restaurant nearby, we'll all have a great lunch spot."

"But I can cook for you now, can't I?" Bewildered by everyone's enthusiasm, Selena looked at Dunstan and the others.

"That's different. We can't just eat for free." Dunstan said half-jokingly, "Ms. Henderson, why not hire Mrs. Morrison as the clinic's cook with salary and bonuses?"

"So that you can boss Mrs. Morrison around?" Though Yolanda's tone was questioning, her eyes held a hint of amusement.

Having grown comfortable with Yolanda lately, Dunstan wasn't afraid to reply. "I wouldn't dare! That's why Mrs. Morrison should open a restaurant... Just keep me well-fed!"

Dunstan's comment sparked laughter throughout the clinic. Though nothing was settled about the restaurant, people were already offering menu suggestions. The meal ended in high spirits.

When the clinic closed that evening, Yolanda had a serious talk with Selena, who promised to consider it carefully. Selena seemed to want to discuss it with Kieran once he woke up, so Yolanda didn't press the matter further.

However, though she stopped mentioning it to Selena, she began surveying suitable locations near Willow Creek Clinic. With rent increasing yearly, buying a place would be more economical.

Yolanda had invested most of her medical fees, tips, and bonuses in stocks, leaving her with only 200 million in liquid assets. It was enough to buy a shop near the clinic anyway.

When she left, she received a call from Viktor and headed to Eternal Clan.

"Hasn't Mr. Yate returned yet?" Yolanda frowned a little when she noticed that only Viktor was present. Apparently, Donovan's matter was still unresolved.

"No, the Havarria Martial Arts Association is holding him. They won't let him return until they identify who killed Donovan."

Viktor looked exhausted. Looking at his bloodshot eyes, he seemed like he had been up all night.

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[ 533 words ]

"Besides, the Martial Arts Association announced that until the investigation

concludes, neither Eternal Clan nor Shadow Clan may involve themselves in any other power struggles."

"So Shadow Clan can't seek revenge against Eternal Clan, and Eternal Clan can't intervene in the confrontation between Riverdale's factions and Serpent Alliance. Is that right?"

Yolanda's voice turned cold. While this barely affected Shadow Clan and Serpent Alliance, it was a significant blow to Zach, Nigel, and others who had lost Eternal Clan's support.

"Exactly. The timing is too strange. I'm sure this was calculated!" Viktor spoke bitterly. "Even without your duel with Donovan, they would have found another way to frame Eternal Clan!"

Yolanda's involvement had actually minimized the impact on Eternal Clan. Though she was friendly with Xavier, she was not a member. While Xavier was detained, he was

merely staying at the Association. Given his status, no one would dare to interrogate him anyway.

"They're also sending people to supervise the upcoming duel, saying it's for fairness. In reality, they just want to prevent Eternal Clan from helping secretly!"

Viktor despised the Association's obvious bias, but at this point, they truly couldn't participate in the duel. Without Xavier's backing, various Riverdale factions were very worried. Zach had been using his influence to contact other skilled fighters but had not found suitable candidates yet.

"Have all the duel participants been confirmed?" Yolanda asked after a moment's thought.

"Seven are confirmed," Viktor replied. "Ms. Henderson, Mr. Wright specifically said he didn't want to involve you, so he never considered letting you join from the start."

If not, Xavier's absence would not matter if Yolanda was participating. With Eternal Clan's headquarters in Riverdale, a power shift would hurt them too. Even though Zach and the others did not want to involve Yolanda, he secretly hoped she would help in a crisis.

After all, if Serpent Alliance returned to Riverdale and caused chaos, Yolanda would be affected whether she wanted to be or not.

"Alright." Yolanda was not opposed to representing Riverdale in the duel. Rather, it was Zach and others who had more reservations, given Yolanda's previous low profile.

"I apologize. Mr. Wright told me not to tell you this, so I'm speaking only for myself." Viktor added, "Ms. Henderson, call me selfish if you want, but if Riverdale falls into chaos, it'll affect you greatly. Please consider it carefully."

Fighting Cayden's recruited experts in the duel would be risky in certain ways. Throughout Havaria, countless masters possessed unfathomable skills. The fact that she defeated Donovan did not guarantee victory against others.

"It's normal for you to think that way. You're not being selfish." Yolanda knew Viktor was not concerned about himself but about Eternal Clan and Riverdale's citizens.

"I'll consider it seriously." Yolanda did not agree immediately, as she was worried about complications if word leaked early.

"Ms. Henderson, let me share some insider information." Viktor lowered his voice. He felt somewhat relieved. "Word is that Cayden recruited a famous international assassin called Windchaser. He's supposedly from the Crimson Clan and is ranked thirty on the top assassins' list."

"I don't know what Cayden promised him, but be careful if you do participate. Those assassins' fighting style isn't about winning; it's about..."

"Killing with one strike!" Yolanda smiled faintly as she made a slashing gesture.

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## Chapter 669

[ 426 words ]

Viktor fell silent as he was taken aback by Yolanda's expression. "Ms. Henderson, are you familiar with assassins' fighting styles?"

Was Yolanda really just a student? Her skills and presence would fit perfectly with an experienced assassin.

Yolanda did not answer Viktor. She left only one message. "Tell Zach if they can't find anyone, don't bother looking."

It had been a while since she left Xenith Order. Perhaps it was time to reunite with some "old friends."

After leaving Eternal Clan, Yolanda didn't return to her villa immediately. The street next to Eternal Clan was hosting a food truck festival. It was at its busiest now. Yolanda had not seen Sharon in a while, so she considered calling her to grab some food.

As she walked, she pulled out her phone to call Sharon. Then, she noticed a crowd gathered ahead, with occasional shouts and cries.

Yolanda paused and glanced toward the crowd. In the end, she put away her phone and walked over.

"Grandpa, please don't leave me alone! You bastard, you killed my grandpa! I'll make you pay with your life!"

"Grandpa! Wake up!" As Yolanda approached the crowd, she heard a young man's desperate cries.

"What happened?" Yolanda asked a woman watching nearby.

"It looks like food poisoning. The ambulance isn't here yet. Someone might actually die!" The woman helpfully made space for Yolanda to see better. "Poor young man. These days, no good deed goes unpunished!"

Stepping forward, Yolanda finally saw the scene. A man in his sixties was lying unconscious on the ground. His face was a sickly purple. A young man named Wade Thane was kneeling beside him while sobbing hard.

Wade's heart-wrenching cries moved everyone watching. Next to them stood a helpless-looking young man. Yolanda was astounded when she noticed that it was Flynn.

She pushed through the crowd to Flynn's side and asked, "What happened?"

Flynn brightened seeing someone approach, then deflated recognizing Yolanda. "Why are you here?"

Ignoring Flynn's question, Yolanda looked at the elderly man on the ground. "Do you have anything to do with this?"

"None!" Flynn quickly responded. "I don't even know them!"

"You're just trying to dodge responsibility!" Wade looked up. He shouted at Flynn, "You're the one who killed my grandpa!"

"I didn't!"

Flynn desperately explained, "I just bought three pieces of bread and was eating when this old man came over saying he was hungry. He asked if I could help. I offered him money, but he refused and insisted on taking my last piece.

"I finally gave in and gave it to him. He collapsed after one bite—I have no idea what happened!"

"Are you still trying to lie?" Wade shouted.

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[ 502 words ]

"My grandpa ate your bread, so you're the one who killed him!"

Yolanda glanced at Wade, who was glaring at Flynn. Her eyes flickered thoughtfully. She crouched beside the old man named Hugh Thane to examine his condition.

"What are you doing? Don't touch my grandpa; I'm warning you!"

Wade became even more agitated after seeing Yolanda crouch down. He tried to push her away. But she grabbed his wrist before he could reach her, and he could not move at all.

"You..." Wade struggled desperately. "What are you doing? You're working with the murderer!"

"Did your grandfather have heart problems?" Yolanda asked coldly.

"No! He was poisoned!" Wade insisted that Flynn's bread had poisoned Hugh. Yolanda released his hand and took out a silver needle. She inserted it halfway into Hugh's PC6.

When she withdrew the needle, its color remained unchanged. "He wasn't poisoned."

"Why should I believe you?" Wade rolled his eyes. He grew more certain as he said, "Admit it—you're working with him! You're trying to kill my grandpa!"

"I'm Dr. Henderson from Willow Creek Clinic. If you don't believe me, check the official website for my medical license," Yolanda said while checking Hugh's pulse.

Hearing she was a doctor, Wade immediately pulled Hugh back and retreated a few steps. "I don't believe you! My grandpa's not breathing. You're both murderers!"

The crowd stirred when they heard that Hugh was not breathing.

They might sympathize with Flynn's misfortune since his good intentions had gone wrong. But Hugh had stopped breathing after eating Flynn's bread. He could not escape responsibility.

"I bought the bread from a stand ten minutes ago. I ate two pieces myself, and I'm fine. How could it be poisoned?" Flynn felt utterly wronged.

"If you don't believe me, go to that stand..." He turned to point. But seeing the empty back street, a chill ran from his feet to his head.

Having worked beside Gavin for years as his most trusted staff, he would be a fool not to realize he had been set up.

"What stand?" Wade pounced on the apparent hole in Flynn's story. "I didn't see any bread stands around here. You're lying to avoid responsibility!"

"Young man, you should get your grandpa to the hospital. There might still be hope! There's one right nearby!" A concerned onlooker suggested.

"Yes, you can deal with who's responsible later. There are security cameras here, so he can't run. Hurry and get your grandpa emergency treatment!"

The crowd meant well, thinking Hugh might just be unconscious rather than dead. But Wade ignored their advice and continued to make a scene. "I've already called an ambulance! And I can't let his killer escape!"

"Please help me watch him, everyone! Don't let him run away!"

Yolanda coldly observed Wade's behavior. Though he acted as if he was so concerned about Hugh, his actions showed little actual care for his grandfather's life. Such inconsistencies usually meant something was wrong.

When Yolanda had checked Hugh's pulse earlier, she had found none. But this was not her first time seeing such a case. A simple test would reveal whether he was truly dead.

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[ 651 words ]

"I'm a doctor. We don't need an ambulance. I can help your grandfather right now," said Yolanda.

"Why should I trust you just because you claim to be a doctor? Besides that, my grandpa isn't even breathing anymore!" Wade looked warily at Yolanda.

"Don't you dare play tricks on me, I'm warning you. Or else, I'll make sure you pay for it!"

"If I can't make him come back to life, I'll bear all responsibility. How's that?"

Yolanda looked around and declared, "He's my brother. As his sister, I'm willing to take responsibility on his behalf. Is there a problem with that?"

"Who're you calling your brother?" Flynn was reluctant. "This is my business. Stay out of it!"

Flynn didn't really believe that Yolanda was a doctor. Even if she was, he reckoned she probably wasn't a very skillful one.

"So, you're planning to stay here for a long while and go to the hospital with them?" Yolanda's words struck him like lightning. Flynn was at a loss for words.

He certainly didn't have time to waste here. He was supposed to complete the task Gavin had assigned to him.

He really couldn't tell for sure whether the appearance of that old man and insistently pestering young man was truly an accident or something orchestrated.

"Aren't you supposed to help Grandma today?" Yolanda continued fabricating her story without batting an eye. "Are you really okay with Grandma being home alone?"

"We're family. It doesn't matter who stays behind to wait. It's the same since we're not running away from this, right?" Yolanda deliberately directed the question to Wade.

"No way!" Wade gritted his teeth and carelessly left Hugh on the ground. He ran to Flynn and grabbed onto his arm tightly.

"I can't let my Grandpa's murderer get away!"

"Are you crazy?" If it weren't for the crowding bystanders nearby, Flynn would have already taught Wade a painful lesson. "I didn't do anything to your grandpa!"

This time, even the bystanders agreed that Wade might be mentally disturbed.

However, since this wasn't their business, they could only watch as the scene unfolded. There was nothing they could do.

Yolanda poked an acupuncture

needle into an acupoint near Hugh's heart the moment Wade went away. Then she took out a black-colored pill and shoved it brutally into Hugh's mouth.

After a short while, Hugh's eyes suddenly bulged, and he coughed violently like he was trying to cough the pill out with all his might. "Water... give me water," he croaked.

"Grandpa?" Wade, who was initially pestering Flynn, looked over and saw that Hugh was awake. However, instead of feeling joy, his first reaction was panic.

"Are you okay, Grandpa?" He couldn't care less about Flynn anymore. He rushed to Hugh's side and pinched Hugh hard out of sight of everyone else.

Hugh was still coughing violently. Yolanda's pill was too bitter.

He might have used

Aerovigormancy to temporarily stop his breathing and his heart, but he couldn't block off his senses. He wasn't able to withstand the pill and the effects of the acupuncture, so he had no choice but to "come back to life."

"Your grandpa merely choked on bread." Yolanda smiled and put away her acupuncture needles. She stood up and brushed the dirt off of her.

"When the ambulance arrives, bring him to the hospital for further examination. As his sister, I will take full responsibility on my brother's behalf."

Yolanda turned to look at Flynn, who was flabbergasted, and said, "Hurry up and head home!"

"Huh? Oh!" Flynn snapped back to his senses and checked his watch before dashing out of the crowd.

Wade and Hugh could only stare as Flynn went away. They no longer had any reasons to hold him back.

"Why isn't the ambulance here yet?" Yolanda asked innocently as the crowd slowly dispersed. "Did you dial the wrong number?"

"Why are you so nosy?" Wade growled as he noticed that no one else was watching. His expression became fierce as he no longer kept up his facade.

"He's my brother. How am I being nosy?"

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[ 666 words ]

Wade was at a loss for words.

However, he knew things weren't as simple as it seemed for someone to suddenly appear and claim to be a doctor.

Since they were not able to stop Flynn from leaving at that moment, they failed the assignment given to them by their superiors. When they got back, they would surely be punished because of this.

"Damn it! Don't let me see you again!" Wade waved his fist at Yolanda but his punch never landed.

Instead, he barked at Hugh, "Go after him!"

Yolanda looked at the direction the two had run in and chuckled lightly. She got up and went in the opposite direction.

According to Flynn's speed and awareness, it would be a far-fetched dream for them to catch up to him even with a five-minute gap between them.

Yolanda was a little curious regarding the task Gavin had sent Flynn to do, but that was about it since she wasn't very interested in the Savage family conflict. Quickly after that, Gavin called her and asked, "Want to have supper together?" On the other side of the phone call, he seemed to be in a pretty good mood.

"Problems solved?" Yolanda couldn't help but soften her expression as she heard Gavin's voice. "I'm craving barbecue. Are you okay with the smokiness?"

"Of course," Gavin replied matter-of-factly.

"Give me ten minutes, I'll come get you."

The First Academy gave its students a week-long break.

Harvey had given Yolanda a call personally after he got back. Yolanda gave him full authority to appoint and disband the members of the academy's board of directors.

Even though Yolanda wanted the managing authority when she had a bet with Hector and the rest, she merely wanted to remove the rotten apples within the academy's board of directors. As for the method used to do so, as long as Harvey was around, she didn't need to do it personally.

"I still need to thank you tremendously this time as well," Harvey said sincerely.

He had always known the dirty secrets the academy's board of directors held, but he was just an externally hired principal who was newly appointed. He had no means to fight against the academy's board of directors who had such intricate and deep-rooted forces.

The bet Yolanda made with the board of directors really did him a huge favor.

"The previous bet still stands. After the new academy's board of directors has been appointed, you still hold the decision-making power."

Yolanda didn't care too much about having the power to make decisions, but since this was decided in the bet, she didn't reject it.

After some casual conversation with Harvey, she hung up.

Since she didn't need to go back to school any time soon, she stayed back at Willow Creek Clinic to help out.

There weren't a lot of people at the clinic today, so she went back to the back wing during lunch break and

found that Elleven had fully recovered.

However, he was still living in that small room in the back wing with no intention of leaving.

Yolanda pushed the door open, and this time, no sharp dart weapons flew out from the inside anymore.

She saw Elleven seated on the folding bed. He was cleaning a short blade in his hand.

"You're fully recovered?" Yolanda closed the door behind her, and the room suddenly dimmed.

"Yes." Elleven nodded. When he saw Yolanda approaching, there was no longer anxiousness or wariness in his eyes. It was almost like he had accepted her as a part of his community.

"Thank you for saving me." Elleven stood up and presented his blade to Yolanda. "This is for you."

The blade was a dagger made of Damascus steel. The intricate pattern on it suggested that it was at least a thousand years old.

"Is this a thank-you gift?" Yolanda smiled faintly.

She didn't expect Elleven to nod very solemnly and repeat, "A thank-you gift."

"Is this why you never left? You were waiting for me to gift this to me?"

Elleven nodded, then shook his head right after. "My name is Elleven." "You don't know what your last name is?"

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## Chapter 673

[ 570 words ]

"Yes, I'm an orphan," Elleven replied. He seemed to be numb and stoic as he talked about his background.

"My name is Yolanda Henderson."

Yolanda extended her hand and wanted to shake Elleven's hand. Instead of extending his hand for a handshake, he knelt on one knee, like how a servant used to kneel in submission to their masters in ancient times.

"You've saved me. My life is yours from now on."

"Are you not planning to head back?" Yolanda asked, surprised as she looked at Elleven. However, she didn't make him get up immediately.

Young men like Elleven were surely supported by an organization. He couldn't have gotten skills like this alone.

"That's right. I'll follow you now, Master. I'll go where you go."

Yolanda was a little exasperated.

Even when she was back in the Hoffman family, she never had the habit of being addressed as "Master."

"If you want to stay, sure. But you have to change the way you address me." It was too much for Yolanda to have someone call her "Master" day in and day out.

"You can call me Ms. Henderson like the rest of the people outside. As for your room, I'll get someone to arrange an empty room for you on the east side of the back wing."

"No need." Elleven shook his head. "This place is pretty good."

"This room isn't suitable for permanent living." Yolanda thought about it and added, "Go to the front and look for Dunstan. Tell him you'll be staying in Willow Creek Clinic from now on and get him to arrange something for you."

"Yes, Mast-, I mean, Ms. Henderson."

Elleven wasn't used to the change in address yet but had also heeded Yolanda's orders and addressed her as Ms. Henderson.

After Elleven left, Yolanda thought about it deeply. "There shouldn't be a lot of other forces that would follow the ways of ancient Havarria nowadays..."

On Saturday, Yolanda was organizing medicinal herbs with Baxter at Willow Creek Clinic when Viktor suddenly came running in, looking for Yolanda.

"Ms. Henderson, things aren't looking too good where Mr. Wright is." Viktor looked very anxious like something very severe had happened.

"What is it?" Yolanda placed the medicinal herbs down and followed Viktor to the back wing.

"Their duel with Cayden had begun, but things aren't looking too good right now." "The duel? Isn't that supposed to be on Sunday?"

Yolanda was thinking of asking Zach tonight about the timing of the duel tomorrow just to be sure.

"The martial arts association made a last-minute change to the schedule." Viktor's face was stormy.

"Cayden's side already had the upper hand. Now that the timing had been changed, an expert Mr. Wright had hired could no longer make it in time.

IMS

"Mr. Wright had no choice but to send his bodyguard up to replace him." However, the skill gap between the bodyguard and the assassins was very huge. "Is the duel over yet?"

"Not yet." Viktor glanced outside. "My car is right outside the clinic. We can still make it there if we leave now."

"Let's go." Yolanda nodded and was about to step out when Viktor stuttered, "Uhh... M-Ms. Henderson..."

Viktor intended to seek help from Yolanda, but when Yolanda agreed without hesitation, he found himself hesitating instead.

"This is a very dangerous act that could rope you into the conflict between Havarria's underworld forces. Are you ready for that?"

"You talk too much," Yolanda replied as she continued walking. She was already a dozen steps ahead. "Think I'd be afraid of the underworld forces?"

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## Chapter 674

[ 674 words ]

"N-No..." Viktor replied as he sighed silently with relief. If Yolanda fully understood the pros and cons involved and yet still chose to help them, he wouldn't feel as guilty to accept her assistance.

Yolanda got into Viktor's SUV and as she buckled her seatbelts, she heard the passenger seat door open to find Elleven climbing into the car as well.

"You're coming too?" Yolanda asked.

"Of course," Elleven replied stoically.

At the back wing, he overheard Yolanda and Viktor's conversation unintentionally.

It was a good thing he did since Yolanda had no plans on bringing him along at all.

"I won't let danger approach you."

"Ms. Henderson, he is—" Viktor looked at Elleven and confusion flashed in his eyes.

"My bodyguard, Elleven."

Bodyguard? Viktor looked at Elleven again, carefully this time.

He must be really powerful for Yolanda to hire him as her bodyguard.

If not, with Yolanda's skills, it would be hard to distinguish between the protector and the protectee.

Due to the lack of time, Viktor didn't dare delay any further.

The duel between Cayden, Zach, and the others had caused quite a huge uproar amongst the underworld forces of Riverdale.

Naturally, the underworld forces of Riverdale didn't want Cayden to return, since his presence would not only affect the big families, but it would also bring major changes to the entire Riverdale underworld.

Viktor sped all the way. In less than 20 minutes, they arrived at the battle arena located in the basement of Perennial Tower.

Not only were there last-minute schedule changes, but the location of the duel was switched abruptly as well.

It was clear that the forces of Creybia had gotten involved, giving Cayden a major upper hand in this.

Viktor showed his invitation card at the door of the battle arena and brought Yolanda and Elleven in with him.

After walking through a dark alley, they arrived at a bright, open space.

Yolanda's first impression of that place was that it mimicked the Colosseum of ancient Roemo.

However, instead of it being like the dated buildings, this place had included more modern facilities.

A huge LED screen hung above the center of the battle arena, allowing the audience to see the details of the duel clearly.

The seats were categorized into normal seats and VIP seats.

Because of the uniqueness of the current duel, ordinary duel enthusiasts were not allowed to watch. The only people who were given invitation cards were either elite families in Riverdale or the heads of underworld forces.

Yolanda very quickly spotted Zach in the VIP seats. Nigel, Logan, Vic, and the others were there with him as well.

They all wore very solemn expressions on their faces. The bodyguards they brought also looked very serious. It was evident that the situation wasn't looking positive for them.

There was another party on Zach's right.

The lady seated in the middle was Renee Shaw. She had uniquely foreign facial features with platinum blonde hair but was wearing a navy blue traditional Havarian costume. Her eyes were steely and the air she exuded power.

"That's Cayden's daughter, Renee Shaw, Ms. Henderson. I heard her mother is Ambervalian." Viktor whispered to Yolanda.

Yolanda nodded, then shifted her gaze to the other side.

On Zach's left, there was a party consisting of a dozen males and females. They all wore traditional Havarian costumes with a dozen bodyguards dressed with protective gear by their sides.

Those people were probably here from Creybia to witness the duel. One of them should be Boris.

"What's the situation right now?" Yolanda lowered her voice and asked.

"The men Renee brought weren't hurt at all, but we only have half the amount of the experts left."

"Such a great gap between the two." Yolanda frowned. She thought the people Zach and the rest hired would last a little longer.

"Up next, the sixth match is about to begin!" The emcee on stage announced loudly.

"Let's welcome Riverdale's contestant, Zeke Yodd, to come up on stage." The emcee had just finished when thundering claps came from within the crowd.

Since this was Riverdale, it was only natural for the crowd to cheer loudly for the contestants from their home turf.

A lanky young man went up the stage.

"It's him!"

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[ 552 words ]

Viktor was shocked when he saw Zeke.

"What is it?"

"Zeke was supposed to be Mr. Wright's ace. He was supposed to come out last." Viktor was very worried. "For him to go up so early would only mean....."

He didn't finish the rest of his sentence, but Yolanda could tell the graveness of the situation from his tone.

"Zeke is an assassin with a pretty high ranking in the Havaria list. He's best at knowing how to counter big attacks with very little force. His unique fencing skills often inflict a great amount of damage."

Even if they were competing from within Havaria, other than the usual boxing and MMA style fighting, many Havarian specialty experts had also taken part in this, like Windchaser from Cayden's team, who was the first-ranking swordsman in Crimson Clan.

"Mr. Wright was probably taking the mental state of the other contestants into consideration. If we continue to lose, it will affect the rest of the contestants from performing well." Viktor sighed.

"Things are...not looking too good for us."

At the same time, the emcee announced, "Windchaser, Serpent Alliance's representative, please come up the stage!"

As the emcee had just finished, a nimble figure suddenly appeared on stage.

"What an amazing use of Airsteps!" Viktor saw Windchaser and couldn't help but exclaim his praise. "No wonder he's called the Windchaser."

Yolanda, on the other hand, saw a familiar face on the stage and chuckled lightly. "Is he good?" Yolanda wondered.

She was reminded of the time when her primary Xenith Order subteam had chased him around and ended up backing him up to a corner.

Viktor thought Yolanda didn't know who Windchaser was and assumed that his skills were mediocre based on his looks. So he quickly said, "Don't underestimate him, Ms. Henderson. He's best at striking and immediately killing his opponents with one move.

"He's known to have the fastest, most ruthless, and most accurate sword skills-"

Before Viktor could finish introducing Windchaser, there was a shrill voice coming from the VIP seats.

"Windchaser! Windchaser!"

Yolanda turned and saw that amid

the troop in traditional Havarian

costumes, there was Jean, a short-haired lady with a tank top  
op and

a mini skirt, who had jumped excitedly from the couch she was seated on.

She didn't seem like she was here to watch the duel. Instead, she looked like a  
fangirl who had come all the way to watch her idol perform.

Yolanda merely glanced at her and retracted her gaze.

"Hope Zeke is able to win against Windchaser and reignite the morales on our side."

Viktor was hopeful, but Yolanda thought otherwise.

Even though she didn't agree with the description of Windchaser's capabilities, Zeke  
was clearly not as skilled as Windchaser.

It would be hard if Riverdale wanted to use an ace like him to turn things around.

According to Yolanda's experience, Zeke's defeat was already clear even before the  
match had started.

"The sixth match is about to begin. Both sides, get ready!"

The emcee declared that the match was about to begin, and the internal betting system  
had once again reopened.

Battle arenas like these usually had a betting portion in every competition. It was no  
different this time. Since most of the people who had tuned up were influential and  
powerful people, the value of bets placed was also sky-high.

With the audience having their attention fixed on the duo on stage, Zeke looked a little  
nervous. In comparison, Windchaser's

demeanor was calm. Vel

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## Chapter 676

[ 741 words ]

Zeke knew about Windchaser and his fame, so he didn't dare to relax one bit. He had been watching Windchaser's every move the moment he got on stage.

Immediately after, he unsheathed his sword and swung it around in a seemingly casual way. But in reality, he was slowly unleashing his sword's power to suppress Windchaser's air.

A loud cheer erupted from the crowd. The solemn expressions on Zach's and the other's faces had softened a little in the sight of this.

Zeke's performance gave them some confidence back. They could only hope that Zeke was able to defeat Windchaser.

Windchaser was unaffected by the crowd's cheers and Zeke's showcase of power at all. Instead, a mocking smile appeared on his face.

He tilted his head up and looked down at his opponent haughtily. Disdain gleamed in his eyes. He had completely disregarded Zeke.

Yolanda wasn't surprised by Windchaser's response. Other than when he had met a formidable opponent, he would always portray an arrogant look and would look down on everyone else.

"Zeke is skillful indeed!" Viktor was a little excited. "No wonder Mr. Wright was willing to pay 100 million dollars to hire him."

"100 million dollars for one competition. If he loses, it would either end up with him being severely injured, or worse, dead. Was it worth it?" Yolanda thought aloud.

Some might envy Zeke for being able to participate in a competition and earn an amount of money that ordinary people, no matter how much they worked, would never see in their lifetime. However, he knew the risks involved.

Yolanda looked at the duo on stage and since the defeat was inevitable, it didn't spark her interest.

"He must have thought that it was worth it."

Viktor didn't quite understand what Yolanda had said, but he still tried his best to introduce the Creybia guests to Yolanda.

"Did you see the group of people on the other side of the hall? The middle young man is Boris Caldwell, who is known as Mr. Caldwell. Those who are around him are mostly from Creybia as well."

"Since the children of Creybia's old-money families are here, the officials had sent an impressive setup of people over to protect them due to their unique identities."

Yolanda looked at where Viktor was pointing and realized that Jean had already returned to Boris' side. However, she was still as fervent as ever with her fangirling.

Just as Yolanda was giving Boris a once over, Judas, a young man in a grey color suit, felt her gaze and looked back at her.

When he saw what Yolanda looked like, he was first dumbfounded before clear contempt shone from his eyes.

Yolanda had realized the disdain in his eyes and coldness coated her eyes, but she kept looking.

There were always people who would think that they were inherently superior to others, and would get offended when someone merely

glanced at them. What they didn't

realize was that no one saw them as untouchable deities.

To others, they were no different than a random stranger on the streets.

Yolanda hated people who were full of themselves. She also hated people who were arrogant know-it-alls. Sadly, Judas was both.

Viktor didn't notice the hostile gaze from the VIP seats. He continued to introduce the guests present to Yolanda.

"That's Malcolm Goldman, Ms. Henderson. He's the representative from the Havaria Martial Arts Association. He was asked to supervise the duel on the association's behalf.

"He was once a part of Shadow Clan

in Dunhill and was very close to Donovan, This time, when he heard that Donovan died in Riverdale, had deliberately submitted a request to the head of association to supervise the duel so he could keep a close eye on Eternal Clan, ensuring that they weren't given a chance to fight."

Yolanda nodded faintly.

Just as Viktor was about to continue, a loud and gong sound rang out.

The match had started. Viktor brought his focus back onto the stage nervously and said nothing at all.

"Where's your sword?" Zeke asked.

He had just noticed that his opponent, Windchaser, had not unsheathed his sword. He was a little displeased about it.

He felt like he had been underestimated.

"I don't need to use my sword to fight you."

Windchaser tucked his hand lazily behind his back as he stood across from Zeke. He didn't even bother attacking first. It was almost like he wasn't facing a battle of life and death with another expert,

Windchaser's attitude caused Zeke's temper to flare. He didn't care to be careful anymore. With a roar, he raised his sword and charged at Windchaser. "Die!"

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## **- Chapter 677**

### **Chapter 677**

[ 669 words ]

Zeke's attack was quick and accurate. The gleam of his sword transformed into bright light as he charged at Windchaser.

The audience couldn't help but yelp. Zeke was faster than they had expected.

Even Renee, who was casually playing with her bracelet, had retracted the disdain in her eyes. She raised her eyebrows and muttered, "He might not be as useless as I thought."

Windchaser was still standing rooted to the spot on stage. As Zeke's sword drew closer, he raised his hand all of a sudden and blocked Zeke's attacks with his bare hands.

Then, Windchaser moved. He started attacking Zeke with his hands.

The both of them were so quick that it was impossible to visually distinguish between the two. All that was seen was just a blur of motion.

In minutes, they had already exchanged a few dozen attacks. Windchaser still did not use his sword.

Even so, Zeke still felt an immense amount of pressure on his shoulders, which drove him to go all out at all times.

Windchaser was a difficult opponent!

The both of them exchanged another hundred attacks bare-handedly. Even though there was still no seeing who was winning yet, Windchaser had always just defended and had not attacked.

It seemed like it was a tie between them, but Zeke grew more and more afraid. His initial confidence was slowly chipping away.

Yolanda, who was off stage, saw Windchaser's movements and scoffed. She said in a low voice, "He's still the same. He often pretends to be so powerful because he likes the feeling of having ultimate control over the situation."

It wasn't like Windchaser couldn't launch attacks. He was just enjoying the chase of toying with his opponent.

For martial artists like Yolanda who preferred every battle to be over and done with quickly, she really couldn't understand the perverted mindset Windchaser had.

After a few more rounds, Zeke's speed slowed down. He couldn't find an opening on Windchaser all this while, and that had made him a little frustrated.

At this time, Windchaser's punching method changed abruptly. Not only was it faster, but its movements started becoming more unpredictable as well.

"The Seven Strikes Punch!"

Only Yolanda and a few others present there recognized Windchaser's punching method.

Yolanda looked at the battle on stage. After a while, she looked away.

The results were clear.

Just as Yolanda shifted her gaze to the other side of the VIP seats, Windchaser landed a heavy blow on Zeke, causing him to fly off the stage. Zeke passed out with severe injuries.

Zach shot up from his seat. His fists clenched tight and solemnness like never before clouded his eyes.

"Windchaser! My idol!"

After temporary silence, there was an eruption of cheer from the audience.

Jean, the lady who was cheering for Windchaser previously, cheered extra loudly.

Renee, who was sitting elegantly on the couch, smiled brightly.

"All you Riverdale people are trash! You've lost six matches straight. If I were you, I'd have admitted defeat a long time ago."

The people dressed in Havarian traditional costumes around Renee all looked at Zach and the rest with contempt.

"How dare the likes of you even try to stop us, the Serpent Alliance, from coming back to Riverdale? You're just a bunch of useless trash. Since you're so eager to die, let's fulfill your wishes!"

"Cripple them all, Windchaser! Show no mercy." Renee ordered. The people around her chimed in haughtily and mocked the Riverdale martial artists mercilessly.

"You're so weak! Is there no one else to represent Riverdale?"

"I think it's better if you'd admit defeat sooner. If your whole team goes down, you'll be the entire Havarria's laughingstock."

"They are a joke! They've lost six consecutive matches. I think they must have used despicable methods to force Mr. Shaw out of Riverdale all those years ago."

Renee's brazen attitude got Blake and the rest to nearly explode in anger.

Knox couldn't help but holler, "How shameless can you be? You played dirty, causing the Eternal Clan

members to be forbidden from

entering the duel, and here you are

spewing nonsense!

"If you've got guts, get Eternal Clan members up to fight against you! I bet you'll

be so painfully defeated!"

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## Chapter 678

[ 612 words ]

"The Shaws are all rats! Despicable, filthy, and up to no good!" Brigham, who was next to Nigel, retorted.

However, Renee was unfazed by Knox's insults.

"It's not like we're holding Eternal Clan members back from participating in the duel. It's all Eternal Clan's fault for being stupid, causing the martial arts association to ban them from participation. What's that got to do with us?"

"You dare say that you didn't have anything to do with it?" Brigham glared at Renee as he questioned her.

"Sorry, I know nothing about this." Renee opened her hands in feigned innocence and added, "Stop yapping. Send the rest of your contestants out."

"I don't have time to waste on lame competitions like these. The outcome is clearly one-sided. I'm so disgusted by clowns like you!"

"I advise you, don't even think about playing tricks by sneaking Eternal Clan members to represent you in this duel. Higher-ups from the martial arts association are here supervising the duel."

"If you dare break these rules, you'll be declaring war with the martial arts association!"

After Renee was done, the people around her erupted in fits of laughter, causing Knox and the rest to boil with anger, but they couldn't retort. They could only yell back uselessly.

"Smug pricks!"

"That's enough, Mr. Knox." Zach barked coldly.

"We haven't lost yet. We don't have to do this with them."

"You're just clearly stubborn!" Renee jeered coldly at Zach. "Mr. Wright, you're at wit's end now."

"No matter how tough you act, you can't possibly turn this around."

"Mr. Wright, Mr. Hansen Senior!" Suddenly, a young man came running out from the side of the stage.

When he came to Zach, Nigel, and the rest, he lowered his voice and said, "The rest of the martial artists refused to compete after witnessing Zeke's defeat to Windchaser. What do we do?"

"What? Refused to compete?" Knox was shocked. "Didn't they already sign the agreement prior to the competition?"

Knox was too loud. Renee, who was on the other side, heard what he said and laughed ridiculously.

"I didn't know your subordinates are as timid as mice, Mr. Wright. Windchaser has frightened them so much that they are all cowering in fear, huh?"

"Your defeat is certain. Riverdale will be the Shaws' territory from now on!"

The duel wasn't over yet, but the contestants were already so frightened they'd lost their minds. The outcome was evident. Not only had they lost the duel, but they had also lost their dignity.

At the same time, Malcolm, who had

not spoken previously, stood up

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from amongst the panel of judges and grabbed the microphone. "Riverdale, send your contestants up to compete immediately," he declared.

The audience erupted in an uproar as he added, "If no one representing Riverdale comes up on stage in the next three minutes, it would mean that you've admitted defeat on your own accord."

Malcolm's words caused Zach's and the rest's faces to fall.

"If there's no other choice, I'll do it." A young man dressed in full black behind Nigel stepped up.

He was the Hansen family's Shadow Knight.

"No..."

At the beginning of the New Era, the Havarian government had set a rule stating that other than the three biggest families in Creybia, no other families were allowed to have Shadow Knights anymore.

Even the most ancient of families had to disband their Shadow Knights.

Other families might have pretended to heed the government's rules in the open, but in secret, they still wouldn't disband their Shadow Knights.

However, since these Shadow

Knights now had an illegal identity, if their existence were to be known to others, the families they were

associated with would suffer from oppression from both the

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government and the three biggest

families in Creybia.

"It's too much sacrifice to get the Hansen Shadow Knights to participate in this,

Mr. Hansen Senior!"

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[ 676 words ]

Vic and the others were shocked. They quickly advised Nigel against it.

Now that they, a few of the bigger forces in Riverdale, were on the same boat, if the Hansens were to go down, the rest of them would be dreadfully affected as

well.

"I know the consequences of exposing the Shadow Knights to the world. But if we lose in this duel, things will be even worse for us."

Nigel was very clear on the urgency of different matters.

"It would be worth it to temporarily sacrifice the Hansen family in exchange for stability for the others. There's still hope."

"No, you can't do this!" Brigham stood up immediately and yelled, "I'll do it. I'll fight him to death!"

"Sit down!" Nigel roared. His temples were throbbing.

Brigham was very irrational. His going out wouldn't be to compete in a duel. Instead, it would be to guarantee his death.

"One more minute." Malcolm's voice boomed once more. To the people of Riverdale, it was like a ticking time bomb waiting to send them to their demise.

Just as Zach and the rest were stuck in a dilemma, a cool voice rang out suddenly from beside them.

Yolanda was standing by the railing of the audience seats looking amusedly at Windchaser on stage.

Her voice was just loud enough that the people seated in the VIP seats could hear her.

Judas, who was beside Boris, looked at Yolanda with increased disdain, like he was looking at an ignorant, foolish clown.

Jean, who was Windchaser's diehard fan, and the ladies around her were flabbergasted. When they snapped back to their senses, superiority was thick on their faces as they silently mocked Yolanda for not knowing her place.

Zach and the rest heard Yolanda's voice and were quick to stand up.

"What brings you here, Yolanda?" Zach had deliberately hidden the change in duel dates from Yolanda because he didn't want to get her involved, but she had still appeared anyway.

"I heard you were lacking contestants, so I came."

If Zach and the rest could take care of matters with Cayden themselves, Yolanda wouldn't get involved.

However, things were looking bad for Riverdale at that moment. As long as Yolanda was still in Riverdale, she wouldn't just watch from the sidelines.

For a despicable and evil underworld force to continue having its way, it would mean that many more innocent people would be harmed if no one stopped it.

Windchaser, who was on stage at that time, was a rival Yolanda was very familiar with.

Even though Yolanda had always thought that Windchaser wasn't worthy of fighting against the Xenith Order, he, and the Crimson Clan behind him, had still done many disgusting, and immoral things.

However, the Xenith Order that she was in represented a global intelligence agency. So, as the chief field agent, no matter how much she loathed Windchaser and Crimson Clan, she couldn't do anything to

them before they crossed Xenith Order's boundaries.

Now that Yolanda didn't have her previous identities restricting her, with her current mask as an ordinary student in Riverdale, it gave her more freedom to teach smug pricks like them a lesson.

"But Yolanda, this duel is extremely dangerous. I think it's better if you don't take this risk." Zach frowned. He didn't quite agree for Yolanda to compete.

Even though they were all clear that

Yolanda was greatly capable, especially since she was able to injure experts like Donovan, she was

still a student who wasn't even two

decades old with little to no

experience.

It would be a huge risk for her to have to go against assassins like Windchaser.

Mainly, it was also because everyone there was indebted to Yolanda, so none of them wanted her to take such a risk.

"I'm sure of this." Yolanda's tone was still calm and collected without a trace of emotions.

"Hah! Where did you come from, fool? Where did you get such confidence from?"

Jean, who was seated in a VIP seat, gave Yolanda a side-eye glance and scoffed. "Any Tom, Dick, and Harry can go up on stage and compete now, huh? I think you're really at your wit's end."

She couldn't sense any martial artist air on Yolanda at all.

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[ 621 words ]

How could an ugly, fat lady like her be an expert?

"Better to admit defeat than to allow such a disgusting creature on stage, I reckon," Jean snapped.

Judas, who had previously regarded Yolanda with contempt, was still looking at her haughtily as he gave her a once-over. As he reevaluated Yolanda, a mocking smile appeared on his face as if to jeer at how Yolanda was overestimating her abilities.

Yolanda remained aloof in the face of their insults, as if those jabs had nothing to do with her.

"Ms. Henderson..."

Just as Zach, Nigel, and the others were trying to talk her out of it, Elleven, who was standing silently and insignificantly behind Yolanda used Airsteps and leaped onto the arena with just a few strides.

He had a short dagger in his hand that didn't have a complicated pattern on it. It looked like a painfully ordinary knife.

Elleven was still a teenager. He was in a totally different category than Windchaser in terms of size and age.

It was a stark contrast between them as they both stood in the arena.

Elleven was looking especially frail having just recovered from his ailments. He looked so weak that it seemed like a strong gust of wind would knock him off his feet. The crowds were very shocked to see him on stage.

Even though those who were supporting Riverdale in their hearts were dumbfounded. They could hardly believe that Elleven was going to represent Riverdale in the duel. They were looking at him in disbelief like they were looking at an ignorant fool.

"So ridiculous!"

Jean shrieked hysterically toward the stage, "Finish this fool in one move, my idol! Show him your greatness!"

She hated arrogant people who had no skills to back them up. She hated them more especially if they were to try to compete with Windchaser, her idol.

What an insult it was to Windchaser!

After seeing Elleven appearing on stage, Zach and the rest looked at the stage nervously and helplessly.

This frail-looking young man just didn't look like a commendable opponent for Windchaser.

Yolanda looked at Elleven and said nothing even after a long while.

After that, she smirked and hollered, "You can do it, Elleven!"

Since this little young man was confident, she might as well allow him to try.

Even if Elleven ended up being no match for Windchaser, she wouldn't allow him to get hurt.

The only time she fought against Elleven was when she caught his dart weapon when he was on

brink of death. She wasn't cleve

how well he could actually fight.

as to

Yolanda's words caused a pin-drop silence all across the arena. Instead of Elleven, the rest of the people were now looking at Yolanda instead, like she was a dumb fool.

Those who had come to watch the duel looked at Yolanda with a complicated expression as their eyes filled with displeasure.

They started whispering amongst themselves, "What's going on? There must be a limit to how much bullshit is allowed in here."

"How could Mr Wright and the rest allow such a person to go up on stage?"

"We're finished. We're going to lose for sure."

"If we lost

fools, I'll beat them up after the. competition for sure. I've

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Yolanda didn't care about the mocking words of others. She was focused on the two people who were on stage at that moment.

Windchaser narrowed his eyes on stage and looked at Elleven with disdain.

"Are you here to die?"

Elleven replied to him with his knife.

Windchaser felt a rapid gust of wind sweeping across his face with a whoosh and he was shocked. His senses tingled as they detected danger.

In the next second, he wasn't able to move anymore.

Elleven used one move and managed to hold his knife against Windchaser's neck.

The battle arena was filled with pin-drop silence once more.

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[ 633 words ]

The mocking words that the audiences were muttering about Yolanda and Elleven were stuck in their throats.

Other than Yolanda, who wasn't too surprised with the outcome, Zach, Nigel, Vic, Renee, and others were dumbfounded as they stared at the two people on stage. It felt like lightning had struck them.

The panel of judges, including Malcolm and the rest, who were initially already ready to announce Riverdale's defeat, rubbed their eyes in disbelief, thinking that they were hallucinating.

Windchaser was a famous assassin in Havaria!

He had won six matches before this, and even Zeke was no match for him.

Windchaser hadn't even used his sword, and he had already defeated Riverdale's contestants. How could he lose to a young man with an unknown name in just one move?

That was simply impossible!

Boris and Judas beside him were initially no longer interested in the duel, but this turn of events had their faces contorted into one of extreme shock. It was clear that what they saw wasn't what they had expected at all.

Compared with the shock the rest were feeling, Windchaser, who was directly involved in this, was just clueless.

He couldn't accept that he was painfully defeated by an insignificant, frail young man with no chance to even counterattack at all.

As much as he wasn't able to accept it, the cold, sharp knife was held firmly at his throat and could take his life at any moment. He couldn't just disregard it.

Elleven would only need to push his knife forward a little and he wouldn't have any chance of survival.

"My idol has not even prepared himself yet. How could you attack when he is unprepared? That's too despicable of you!"

Jean shot up in rage and bellowed, "This doesn't count! Rematch! When Windchaser is fully prepared, he will finish you off for sure!"

"How shameless could you be to attack before your opponent is ready?"

She angrily fought to defend Windchaser, accusing Elleven emotionally of not honoring the ethical conduct.

She couldn't accept that her idol was so easily defeated by a nobody.

It was the utmost insult toward her and Windchaser!

Renee was shocked, but she quickly chimed in with Jean and said, "She's right. The emcee has yet to announce for the match to begin.

"Riverdale violated the rules! This is a sneak attack. This doesn't count!"

At the same time, people beside Renee were all hollering, "Rematch! Rematch!"

Knox was infuriated as he watched how shameless Renee and the rest were. He didn't care about his reputation anymore. He shot up to his feet and entered into a screaming match with them.

"They were both clearly standing there on stage! How dare you call this a sneak attack? Is Windchaser blind?"

"Didn't he know that when one went on stage, they were there to compete against him?"

"You bastard! How dare you speak ill of my idol?" Jean insisted on defending her beloved idol's dignity, so she glared at Knox and argued with him.

"Also, if your idol is so great, who can even accomplish a sneak attack against him? Is his placing on the assassins list fake?"

"Stop trying to argue! A sneak attack is a sneak attack! Despicable shameless prick!"

No one relented in the argument. It was a chaotic mess.

Against the havoc below the stage, Windchaser was unexpectedly unresponsive on stage.

Even though it was insulting to play

prick and claim that this match

didn't count, and to ask for a

rematch, it was still better than

losing to a child.

Elleven was stoic against all the arguments against him. His hand still wielded the knife firmly against Windchaser's neck.

Yolanda looked at Elleven with an amused expression. She felt like he was pretty similar to her when she was younger.

However, she soon realized that the

reason Elleven was ignorant to the rest of the voices wasn't because he

was calm and collected, but because he was waiting for her to give him further instructions.

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[ 595 words ]

This sparked Yolanda's interest further.

The judges were squirming in their seats. They were facing a dilemma.

According to the actual competition process, it was true that the match had not technically begun before the emcee's announcement.

However, those with experience would know that Windchaser had lost. Now that his life was still in Elleven's hands, if they were to announce that this match didn't count and to ask for a rematch, it would be very humiliating for Windchaser.

No matter which decision they went for, either the Serpent Alliance or Riverdale forces would be unhappy about it.

If the duel tonight were to get out of control, the conflict that was finally calmed would be riled up once more.

One side would have to give in so the competition could continue.

"The previous match didn't count. I can vouch that Windchaser was readjusting his stance after battling six opponents straight when the contestant from Riverdale struck suddenly. This is a sneak attack and it's against the rules."

Before the other judges could voice out their thoughts, Malcolm had already stood up and announced it independently without a discussion with the rest of the panel of judges.

"I declare for the match to restart, and for the Riverdale contestant who didn't obey the rules to be warned and punished. If he still has obvious violations of rules like this again, he will lose the right to compete."

The other judges frowned when they heard Malcolm's biased speech toward the Serpent Alliance.

They might be very displeased with it, but since Malcolm held a high position in the martial arts association, they didn't dare to go up against him in the open.

The people who were on Zach's side were furious after they heard what Malcolm had said.

Asher was so angry he roared, "How is that a sneak attack? Does he have to loudly announce with cymbals and horns that he is going to attack before it's considered a non-sneak attack?"

"All you old geezers are so

shameless! You were the ones who said that if no one came to the stage in three minutes, it would be considered self-disqualification from the competition. Now that we've sent someone, you said that Windchaser had competed against six opponents straight and needed rest.

"If only everything you said was right, then why do we still need the duel? Since you're so powerful, why won't you just announce that the Serpent Alliance has won?"

Knox and the rest all chimed in to speak against Malcolm's decision. Even Blake couldn't help but speak about how unjust the panel of judges was.

It was almost like Malcolm couldn't hear all these questions against him as he barked at Elleven, "Didn't you hear what I said? Release him immediately!"

"You've used despicable methods to win this, so this doesn't count!"

Malcolm had placed himself on the high horse with just a few words and had matter-of-factly ordered Elleven around.

However, Elleven merely stood his ground quietly. He was unmoving.

"How dare you ignore my orders, you bastard?" Malcolm was so enraged he pointed at Elleven without caring about his image and shrieked, "If something were to happen to Windchaser, the entire Havaria Martial Arts Association will make you pay!"

"Someone! Come! Seize him!"

This time, to help with the duel supervision, the Havaria Martial Arts Association had hired the top ten experts to stand by as backup. anyone were to go against orders, the top ten experts would be sent to punish the rule breakers.

Renee saw that Malcolm was on their side and felt smug as she yelled, "How dare off!"

he go against the Havaria Martial Arts Association's orders? Kill him! Finish him

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[ 608 words ]

As long as Renee could win, who cared about their reputation?

Underworld forces like the Serpent Alliance have naturally despicable members. They were so used to doing evil they didn't care about their dignity at all.

"I didn't know that the Havarria Martial Arts Association had become a one-man show." Yolanda scoffed and said to Elleven, "Elleven, since they want to be defeated again, just give them what they want."

She had suggested that Elleven do a rematch with Windchaser not because she was afraid of the top ten experts, but because she wanted the Havarria Martial Arts Association to be humiliated as well.

Since Malcolm went all out to side with Renee, she wanted him to know his place. No matter how biased he was, Serpent Alliance would not win.

After hearing Yolanda's orders, Elleven retracted his knife and took a few steps back, distancing himself from Windchaser.

Malcolm sneered. There he thought that Elleven was so skilled, but they still had to admit defeat after he had scared them just a little like this.

Blake and the rest saw that Elleven had retracted his knife and were a little worried.

However, they knew that this was Yolanda's decision, so they said nothing more.

Elleven was a part of Yolanda's team, so no matter if he won or lost, they could not say anything about it.

However, experienced people like Nigel and Vic believed that no matter how many times they rematched, Elleven would be able to defeat Windchaser, because when Elleven struck, he had a clear win in terms of power.

"Since they want to die so eagerly, you don't have to show any mercy,

Windchaser!" Renee said it like Windchaser had shown mercy to Elleven

previously and had not released his full power.

Brigham and the rest nearly flipped the patio table full of snacks and drinks before them when they heard what Renee had said.

Jean hollered haughtily, "My idol, make this weakling cry in defeat!"

She had despised Yolanda and Elleven since the beginning. She felt like such ordinary people were not worthy of appearing before her. How dare they try to announce their existence in her presence? They were just looking to die!

People like them were untouchable and glorious. They were not someone bumpkins as lowly as Yolanda from third-line families could ever compare against. Windchaser silently breathed a sigh of relief as he pulled out his sword.

He dare not underestimate Elleven's capabilities anymore.

When the crowd eventually quieted, the emcee picked up the microphone and declared, "I hereby declare for the seventh match to officially begin."

The moment the emcee was done, Windchaser charged quickly and leaped at Elleven.

This time, he needed to have a head start before Elleven. He needed to quickly finish off this ignorant kid!

Windchaser roared as he charged at Elleven. He was so quick others couldn't see him clearly. All they could see was the dust of his motion.

The crowd went crazy when they saw his stance and speed. They were astonished and extremely fired up.

"Windchaser has now shown his true power!"

"There he is, the top 30 assassin of Havarial!"

"You can do it, idol!"

Jean leaped and shrieked as she was overwhelmed with emotions like irrational diehard fans when they met their idols. She was undignified and uncaring of who she was.

Windchaser, who was making his way quickly toward Elleven, smirked.

He wanted to win with ultimate speed and power. To make sure

counterattack, he used his ultimet

Elleven had no room to

kill move without any hesitation.

Elleven was unfazed by

Windchaser's attack. He gripped his knife firmly as he stayed put. It was almost like he was so frightened that all he could do was stand there, unable to respond to Windchaser's attack.

"Haha! You're dead this time!" Jean cackled.

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[ 593 words ]

"Finish him!" Jean roared.

Instantly, Elleven found Windchaser's opening in his flurry of attacks.

He didn't use any fancy moves, the air around him wasn't piercing either. However, the speed at which he had struck with his knife was equally as fast and merciless as the previous match.

This time, Elleven's knife had found its way to Windchaser's neck once more, just like the previous time.

In that instant, Windchaser's forehead beaded with cold sweat.

Elleven had used the same, singular move to tether him at the edge of death.

Other than when he was up against that certain organization, he had never experienced such humiliation.

How was this possible?

He was so confident with his speed and move. Other than his mentor, no one else was a match for him in the entire Crimson Clan.

How could he lose to a nobody?

This time, those who were boldly cheering for Windchaser stopped their cheering abruptly. It was like someone had caught them in a chokehold, causing them to not be able to make a sound.

Jean, who was full of hope that her hero would win, was so shocked that her features were contorted. When paired with the specially curated makeup she had worn, she looked exactly like a witch from hell

Renee and the rest who were very confident about Windchaser were all dumbfounded.

Silence swept through the entire place.

No matter if they could accept or not, Windchaser had lost once more. He was the one who had attacked first and was then defeated in a second. It was even more humiliating than the previous time.

"Elleven, didn't that old man ask for you to follow the rules just now? Why are you still doing a sneak attack?"

A cold voice broke the silence in the arena.

Yolanda casually leaned on the railing on the seat and every word from Yolanda's mouth was driving Malcolm up the wall.

"This doesn't count. Rematch! You have to wait for him to finish all of his killer moves, then you move."

Rematch again?

This suggestion sounded like a beneficial idea for Serpent Alliance, but it was just a suggestion to deeply humiliate them, stomping heavily on their dignity.

Renee's face was stormy. She couldn't even muster a smile.

As for Yolanda, it was like she hadn't

seen their dejected faces as she said to the judges, "My team member had violated the rules again remembered that old geezer mentioning that if he violated the rules twice more, he would be disqualified.

"This would mean we have another chance to rematch, right?"

"You're too much, bastard!"

Jean snapped back to her senses and yelled at Yolanda while pointing at her. "Who do you think you are? How dare you order the judges around?"

Judas, the usually aloof young man beside Boris, also looked at Yolanda with anger on his face and thought that she was being too smug.

Yolanda was completely oblivious to their anger and told Elleven, "This is your last chance, Elleven, you cannot violate the rules anymore.

"By the way. The contestant from Serpent Alliance must be tired, right? Should we get him a chair so he can rest for a few hours on stage?"

Yolanda's words not only made Malcolm lose his cool, but she also made Windchaser, who was on stage, nearly combust in anger.

However, since he was on stage, he couldn't just forgo his reputation rush off stage, and argue with a

woman, so he could only glare at Yolanda and pretend that he didn't care.

When he saw Yolanda's expression, he thought she sounded familiar.

Very quickly, he was reminded of a certain someone else that he loathed unadulteratedly—the same person he had always wanted to kill but failed.

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## Chapter 685

[ 710 words ]

When Windchaser got the news that a certain someone had met with her demise in an accident, he nearly died.

Initially, he felt sorry that a certain someone had died, but now, he realized that there was one more person who could make him so angry he would die of a heart attack.

Windchaser swore that when he had gone off stage later, the first thing he would do was to beat that woman who had mocked him incessantly so dreadfully she would be handicapped and wish that she was dead.

"Sure, if you want so badly to die, let's just continue." Malcolm's face was stormy. A murderous intent was potent in his beady, cold eyes.

Since he no longer had any reputation left, he might as well do all he could to get Windchaser another chance to fight.

All in all, it was his wish that Riverdale wouldn't win in this duel.

After that, Malcolm cleared his throat and announced with a booming voice, "The seventh match has officially begun again."

The panel of judges was very disappointed with Malcolm, who was clearly biased. The people who had come to watch the duel had also strongly suspected the fairness and justice of the Havarria Martial Arts Association.

Yolanda smirked nonchalantly.

Malcolm was very obedient indeed. She laid down a trap for him and he had eagerly jumped into it.

The reason she ordered Elleven to compete again was not only to humiliate the other party but mainly also to cause Malcolm to lose his credibility, making his position in the Havarria Martial Arts Association plummet.

As for Renee, what other choices did she have? She had to continue to compete no matter what.

Perhaps the stage crew at the duel were also displeased with how openly Malcolm was biased to one side, so when they heard what Yolanda said, they got Windchaser a chair for him to rest.

Windchaser was just held at knifepoint twice by Elleven at his neck, but his face was not even as stormy then as it was when he saw the chair.

Renee might be so angry she had lost her mind, or she might be so determined to win that she went all out without caring for her reputation anymore. She had her men prepare a set of protective gear for Windchaser and had presented it to him. Windchaser's features twisted with anger, but he still put on the protective gear. He wanted to win. He wanted a glorious, table-turning victory over Elleven.

Windchaser wore his protective gear and it was almost like he was

- med inside and out. The air

was more formidable

what he was previously.

It could be because of the

overwhelming anger that had gotten him to decide to go all out, but this time, Windchaser had decided that he was going to do everything he could to redeem himself.

How dare a man a decade younger than him try to step over him to garner fame?

If he really was defeated, how else could he regain influence in the underworld?

Such a thought had unleashed Windchaser's full potential, causing his air to increase a few notches in power.

Windchaser, with him being full of murderous intent and desire to win, had once again caused him to be the center of attention.

The people who were just disappointed with him had all had their passion reignited once more.

"This is the Windchaser I know!" Jean screamed. "The hibernated lion has now awakened!"

She was extremely excited as she ran from the VIP seat to the railing up front. She waved her hands frantically at Windchaser, who was on stage.

"You can do it, Windchaser! Kill that puny nobody!"

Judas' face softened. He reckoned that Yolanda would be sure to suffer a huge blow.

Elleven was Yolanda's subordinate. His defeat signified Yolanda's defeat.

If Elleven had lost, Yolanda could not be so smug anymore.

The emcee on the stage had never seen anything like this before. He paused for a while before finally picking up his microphone and, announcing over the roaring crowd, "The seventh match has now begun!"

The moment he was done, Windchaser shot forward like an arrow released from a bow.

His sword trembled with power and his eyes thick with murderous intent. He wanted to finish off his opponent in one swift move.

Just as he struck, he also whipped out some dart weapons at the same time.

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## Chapter 686

[ 537 words ]

A few dozen knives flew toward Elleven at the same time. They blocked nearly all his escape paths, making it impossible for him to retreat.

It was forbidden for contestants to use dart weapons in a duel, but Windchaser no longer cared about rules and regulations. He merely wanted to win.

"Despicable! He's cheating!" Knox roared angrily.

Jean, who was leaning on the railing, was muttering to herself manically, "Die, all of you! Windchaser has to be the most powerful of all."

Her eyes burned with hysterical insistence. It was like she had already seen Elleven die after being struck by Windchaser. Her smile widened.

"Die!" Windchaser exerted himself fully. His power exploded as he struck Elleven with everything he had.

However, in a blink, the knife in Elleven's hand spun swiftly, halting the attack of all the flying knives.

"What?"

Elleven's response had caught Windchaser off guard. In the split second that he was stunned, the knife that Windchaser was so familiar with, was once again resting menacingly on his neck.

It was still the same position, struck with the same speed. Even with Windchaser despicably breaking the rules and using dart weapons illegally on stage, he couldn't escape the same fate of losing to the same attack instantly.

This time, he was not as fortunate as the first two times. The moment Elleven had held his knife against Windchaser's throat, he no longer hesitated. His knife glided forward with one fluid motion.

Hot, crimson blood sprayed from the knife's point of contact, coloring the knife red.

Windchaser fell on his knees with a thud. As his breathing stopped, his eyes were still bulging out in disbelief.

He had not expected to die defenseless against a puny nobody.

When Windchaser collapsed, the entire battle arena was deathly silent.

As much as the rest were already mentally prepared after seeing Elleven effortlessly win against Windchaser the first two times, they hadn't expected Elleven to really kill Windchaser off with just one move.

After a while, Yolanda's sing-song voice rang out, "How could you make all his dart weapons fall to the ground, Elleven? Is this considered a violation of the rules?"

"Oh no! This is already your last chance. Would the panel judges still think we've lost?"

The crowd looked at Yolanda. They were speechless.

Windchaser was already dead. If they still determined that Elleven had lost, the Havaria Martial Arts Association should just be disbanded there and then.

Jean's gaze was fixated on Windchaser, who had collapsed on stage, as grief flooded her eyes. She slapped the railings hysterically and shrieked, "Damn it! What have you done? I'm going to kill you, fucker!"

No matter how much she shrieked, it couldn't change the situation.

Before the emcee could say anything, Malcolm stood up furiously and announced, "You did not violate any rules. Riverdale won the seventh match."

As shameless as he was, he couldn't lie with a straight face anymore.

Windchaser was already dead. What use could revoking Elleven's competing rights do?

"Oh? That doesn't seem right. Didn't you say that we violated the rules in the first match? Has the rules changed once more?"

It was almost like Yolanda couldn't see how angry Malcolm was, and how he was staring daggers at her as she continued, "Isn't this a little unfair for the panel of judges to do this?"

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## Chapter 687

[ 585 words ]

Malcolm glared at Yolanda, and even though he was speechless, he took a deep breath and declared, "The rules have not changed. Riverdale has won."

His voice reverberated through the entire battle arena. Zach and the rest, who were seated anxiously in the VIP area, finally breathed a sigh of relief as smiles crept onto their faces.

"We've won!"

Brigham and Knox were so emotional they tackled each other in a hug. If it wasn't for the lack of space, they might have just leaped with joy.

"Damn it. Damn it!" Contrary to the joy Riverdale was feeling, Renee had lost her mind in anger

She was still in Havarian's traditional costume, but she no longer looked elegant. Instead, she was throwing a tantrum like a crazy woman.

Windchaser was the ace the Serpent Alliance had hired. If he was defeated, it would be very hard for the rest to win against Elleven.

Renee really wanted to get someone to kill Yolanda and Elleven off. However, since it was Riverdale's home ground, with Elleven's undefeatable capabilities, all she could do was swallow her hatred.

"That bitch! That cursed bastard! How dare they kill my idol?"

Jean was so angry she nearly exploded. She continued cussing, "I suspect that this bastard had poisoned Windchaser. I request for the panel of judges to intervene!"

"Give us justice! This is a true and just competition. How could just any random person come and compete in it? For such lowly trash to compete on stage, I'm sure he had used dirty tricks to make sure he could win!"

Even when no one paid any attention to her, Jean still relentlessly lamented her sorrow and resentment.

"Are you still not humiliated enough, Jean Yorkshire?"

At this time, Judas, who was beside Boris barked, "The one who died is just a servant. Why are you making such a big fuss over it?"

He was very disdainful as he watched Jean lose her mind fangirling over Windchaser. Not only was she humiliating herself, but she was also bringing the Creybia aristocrats down with her.

"What do you mean?" Jean was looking for a place to release her anger, and she had found it. She turned around and quarreled with Judas. She screamed, "Who are you showing your bitchy face to?"

"If it wasn't for Mr. Caldwell, I wouldn't even want to be seen with you!"

"That'll do it. Stop fighting, you two," said a plump young man who was standing on the other side as he tried to pacify the situation.

"I think that Elleven is actually a little capable. Riverdale is filled with hidden talents indeed. My eyes have been opened this time.

"No wonder so many forces who had wanted to take root in Riverdale had not succeeded."

"Hah!" Jean scoffed unhappily.

"They are Riverdale locals in their home ground, thinking that they're royalties here as they brag and boast. But if compared to the

self-proclaimed Riverdale aristot

families at Creybia, these

are nothing but trash!

"The moment they leave Riverdale is the moment I'll send for someone to finish them off."

Jean, who was from Creybia had a sense of haughtiness. She thought that only those with the same social standing as her were true

2UTS

aristocrats. For the self-proclaimed heir to wealthy families herein Riverdale, no matter how well-off their family was, were all underexposed frogs in a well for her.

Then, Boris, who had not spoken all this while, said, "That ugly one is pretty interesting."

"You like her?" Judas, who was by his side, asked Boris incredulously. "It's so degrading to even stand beside ugly people like her!"

"You seemed to loathe her a lot, Judas."

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[ 689 words ]

Boris smirked meaningfully at Judas and cocked his eyebrow at him.

"The one we chose is Renee, Mr. Caldwell," Judas replied without a change in expression. "If that punk won, the investments we've made in the past would all be in vain."

"Hah, you're worried about this?" Boris responded nonchalantly. "They've only won one match. We really can't tell the final outcome for sure."

"Even if we were to lose the duel this time round, we're not at a major loss. It doesn't affect our future plans. Cayden is now honing his martial arts skills in isolation right now. If he could break through to another level in his martial arts, it really doesn't matter if they won today."

"If Cayden, who had broken through to the Major Achievement Realm, wanted to return to Riverdale, who could stop him?"

Boris fished out a cigarette and put it in his mouth. The beauty behind him immediately stepped up to light it up for him.

"Things aren't the same anymore. It's impossible for Riverdale to be as secure as a fort."

Judas glanced unwillingly at a creepy young man behind him and asked, "Do we get Faunus Lange to go up next?"

Even if Elleven was powerful, he couldn't be better than Faunus, their subordinate with Level Nine Minor Achievement Realm power.

"We're here to watch the duel, Judas. It's not up to us to butt into other matters," Boris responded solemnly.

"If we make it too obvious, we might trigger desperation in Vic and the rest, and that would be a hassle. Also, to get our men to personally take part in this is a humiliating act."

"You're right." After pondering for a while, Judas nodded in agreement.

Renee had lost all rationality for the rest of the competition. She had ordered all the experts within her team to participate in the competition.

She wanted to drain Elleven out and get the ultimate victory.

Sadly, all these experts were useless weaklings when it came to fighting with Elleven.

Elleven might look frail and weak, but his explosive power and speed were astonishing. Even the experts Renee had spent a fortune hiring were nothing against his attacks.

Malcolm was crumbling internally. He desperately wanted to find fault with Elleven, but sadly, no matter how biased he was, he could not stop Elleven from winning.

Elleven fought in ten matches representing Riverdale and had won against the top ten experts in Renee's team alone.

Malcolm could hardly muster a smile.

After witnessing Riverdale winning the rest of the ten matches, Boris, who was once watching the duel calmly, couldn't help but frown.

He didn't think that the obstacles he had set up for the forces of Riverdale would be so easily resolved.

"Riverdale and Serpent Alliance have

both sent ten contestants each for today's duel. Riverdale has one man standing, whereas Serpent Alliance has none. Riverdale has won."

Alas, an old man from the panel of judges stood up and announced the final results. Malcolm's face was stormy, but he said nothing.

"I hereby announce that from today onwards, Serpent Alliance members have to do as agreed and are no longer allowed to step foot into

Riverdale. If anyone were to net

violate

this agreement, it would mean that they are fighting against the Havarria Martial Arts Association and the Havarria Underworld Forces.

"Secondly, Serpent Alliance

members are ordered to leave Riverdale in latest a week, and in the next five years, are not allowed to be in any conflict with any of the

Riverdale underworld force

Those

who violate this will face the same consequences as mentioned above."

After the announcement of the results, it was all done and dusted. Riverdale had won this time.

Brigham and Knox were so emotional that their eyes were red-rimmed. Nigel, Vic, and the rest breathed a long sigh of relief. The burden on their hearts was finally lifted.

Even though Renee was unhappy with the results, it was finished. She could no longer cause any more trouble. She could only unhappily accept defeat.

Without Boris' help, no matter how many experts she had on her team, they wouldn't be able to change the situation at Riverdale.

At that moment, no matter if it was Boris or Malcolm, no one could find an excuse to help her out anymore.

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## Chapter 689

[ 517 words ]

Zach went up to Renee, and with a formal tone, he said with a smile on his face, "I acknowledge your efforts, Ms. Shaw."

Since both parties had not burnt all bridges yet, appropriate PR interactions were still required.

"Hah! You won't be happy for too long."

Renee refused to play the game. She glared at Zach and left with her men.

After Renee and her troops were gone, Nigel had ordered his subordinates to watch their every move, just in case Serpent Alliance members became desperate and turned to extremes.

Malcolm had brought his men along and left the judge's seat. When he passed Yolanda, he glared daggers at her as he spat, "You're Yolanda Henderson?"

Yolanda didn't look Malcolm in the eye. She replied faintly, "Yes."

"So many talents and experts residing in Riverdale now, huh?" Malcolm deliberately emphasized "talents and experts," almost like he was too eager to mince Yolanda up if he could.

He was old and held a high position in the Havarria Martial Arts Association. It was really petty of him to be so calculative to someone that much younger than he

was.

Yolanda naturally didn't respect him as her elder.

She would also never take to heart such "threatening" words. Instead, she gladly accepted it as a compliment.

"You're too kind. Serpent Alliance has more talented people around. If I recall correctly, Windchaser was the top 30th in the Havarria's Top Assassins' List."

Nothing was more humiliating for Serpent Alliance than having so many skillful experts around and still losing.

The more haughty Serpent Alliance's supporters were previously, the more ashamed they felt right now.

As expected, Yolanda's words caused Malcolm's face to darken even more. He huffed and left with his men in a flurry.

He would avenge Donovan one day. He would let Yolanda be smug for a little while more.

Elleven saw the murderous intent in Malcolm's eyes and whipped out his knife immediately. He wanted to kill so that he wouldn't be a

threat in the future. fo FindNovel

"It's fine, Elleven." Yolanda held onto Elleven's arm and shook her head. "There's no point being petty with people like him."

Yolanda was confident that Malcolm wouldn't be able to harm her, so it was only natural for her to disregard what he had said.

As for Elleven, Yolanda felt like his worldview didn't seem to be too accurate.

For example, if he was someone who had grown up amid normal social etiquette, he definitely wouldn't have acted like he did.

Even if he wanted to kill someone, he would choose to assassinate them.

In Elleven's world, killing someone seemed to be as common as a daily activity like eating and sleeping.

Yolanda stared at Elleven pointedly

Even though she might not know the kind of environment Elleven grew up in, it seemed like she needed change Elleven's worldview. bit by bit. s̄wnovel

If not, society would have no place for him.

"Do you mind introducing us, Ms. Henderson? Who's this young man?" Suddenly,

Vic and the rest had come in as well.

They all didn't know who Elleven

was. They were made even more

curious about

Elleven even after he

had won against the Serpent

Alliance's contestants alone. They

seemed to be more curious as to who he was from then on.

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[ 509 words ]

Elleven glanced at Vic and the others, then turned away. Clearly, he was still

unwilling to speak. Over the past couple of days, Yolanda had noticed that Elleven really did not like talking at all. Even when he had to speak, he never used more than ten words at a time.

When Elleven remained silent, everyone's attention shifted to Yolanda. With a gentle smile, she explained, "This is Elleven, my younger brother."

At these words, Elleven whipped his head around. As he stared at Yolanda in shock, he looked a lot like a startled hamster. Finding his reaction amusing, Yolanda could not resist ruffling his messy hair.

"Elleven's pretty shy and isn't used to strangers. He'll be staying in Riverdale for a while, so I hope you guys can look out for him. Don't let anyone bully him."

Vic and his group exchanged knowing glances. Who would dare bully someone who could take down Windchaser in one move?

Despite the attention, Elleven kept quiet and stayed close to Yolanda like a shadow. While he seemed almost invisible at first glance, anyone who had witnessed the earlier match couldn't possibly ignore his presence.

"Ms. Henderson, we really owe you one for tonight. If you hadn't sent Elleven in, our fighters would've been toast!" Though they were all familiar with Yolanda, Vic's group expressed their sincere gratitude.

"And you, young man. We made it through this crisis all thanks to you!" Vic turned to the expressionless Elleven. He addressed Elleven earnestly despite knowing he wouldn't respond.

This time, Elleven acknowledged Vic with a slight nod. But in his mind, he was not helping them. He was just protecting Yolanda so that she wouldn't need to fight herself.

The group was perceptive enough to quickly pick up on Elleven's quiet

nature, so they didn't push him to speak. However, this did not

dampen their enthusiasm. "Man,

your sword skills were incredible! I've

never seen anyone faster than Windchaser before!"

"If Windchaser's ranked 30th on the top assassins' list, this guy must be up there with the best of them!"

"Though I bet Ms. Henderson could've pulled it off too if she'd stepped in!"

"Yeah, I heard her fighting skills are amazing. I wonder if we'll ever get to see them..."

As they excitedly discussed the recent fight, Jean emerged from inside with her companion. Overhearing their conversation and noticing Yolanda at the center of attention made her face twist in disgust.

"Hmph! She's just riding on others' coattails! To her, Yolanda had no real skills, but she loved to bluff. She succeeded only because of Elleven's strength. How dare this nobody soak up all the praise?"

Jean stood at a distance, frowning as she listened. Just as she prepared to throw some insults Yolanda's way, another young woman behind her pulled her away.

"Alright, Mr. Seinfeld. We can celebrate later. Let's handle business first." Nigel, who had been quiet until now, interrupted the chatter.

With that, Nigel solemnly produced an ornament. It was a black cord holding a plain, circular gold pendant inscribed with the words "Titan Merchants Association."

"Ms. Henderson, as of today, we've unanimously chosen you as the Association's president."

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## Chapter 691

[ 421 words ]

The Titan Merchants Association united Riverdale's prominent families and underground forces. Membership was exclusive. It was limited to top-tier families like the Hansens, Kaufmans, and Seinfelds, along with the Wright family and a few underground organizations.

Yolanda could only access one faction's resources with the VIP card Zach and others had given her earlier. However, she could tap into all of Riverdale's connections and resources as the Association's president.

Taking the pendant from Nigel, Yolanda felt somewhat surprised. She had been in Riverdale less than three months, yet her network had grown faster than expected.

Originally, she had planned to consolidate Riverdale's resources before heading to Creybia University next year. But Nigel's gesture meant that work was already done.

What intrigued her more was the Savage family's absence. Despite their prominence in Riverdale, they seemed detached from local affairs. Even Nigel and Zach rarely interacted with them.

With that thought in mind, Yolanda asked, "Why isn't the Savage family part of the Association?"

"The Savages?" Nigel and Vic were taken aback, then remembered Yolanda's engagement to Gavin.

They exchanged awkward glances. Clearing his throat, Nigel explained, "They weren't excluded; they just considered themselves above associating with Riverdale's factions. They're originally from Creybia, and their move to Riverdale involves events from decades ago."

He did not elaborate on what drove the Savages from Creybia to this small city "Ms. Henderson, I knew you were destined for greatness ever since we met. Whatever path you choose, the Association stands with you."

"Absolutely!"

"Our resources are at your disposal, Ms. Henderson!"

Vic, Logan, and others voiced their support. Their families and organizations shared common interests, and Nigel must have consulted them before offering her the president's position.

In

Yolanda accepted the pendant, planning to integrate these local powers into her own network. The three major families in Creybia would eventually face upheaval. Though her four brothers handled most of the Hoffman family matters, she couldn't remain uninvolved.

The Hoffmans had dwindled to just her and her brothers. If Caleb hadn't commanded enough respect to become head of the family, they might have lost even their main residence.

Caleb had sent her to Talon

Academy as a child, both to study under Vat and to ensure her safety. She had been completely unaware of the family crisis while at the academy. It was something she deeply regretted.

Now that she had a chance at a fresh start, she needed to prepare early.

Remembering her past, a shadow crossed her eyes.

"Ms. Henderson?" Nigel noticed her change in expression, so he could not help but ask, "Do you have any other concerns?"

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[ 452 words ]

"No." Yolanda shook her head.

"That's great then!" Hearing her words, everyone around let out a sigh of relief. They had been worried she might turn down the president position.

"Ms. Henderson, Elleven, you both need to stay alert these days. Especially you, Elleven. After defeating the Serpent Alliance's top fighters, Renee won't let this go easily. Until they leave Riverdale, we can't let our guard down!"

"Got it." Yolanda nodded, but neither she nor Elleven were particularly concerned about Renee. The Serpent Alliance's defeat was final. Even if they were bitter about it, they couldn't cause much trouble anymore.

Classes resumed at First Academy the next day. After the reshuffling of the academy's board of directors, the school appeared unchanged on the surface. But significant shifts had occurred behind the scenes.

Harvey had discussed with Yolanda earlier about inviting her to the annual board meetings. He had even set aside a private office for her. Those were unprecedented privileges for any student in First Academy's history.

The students who had earned their admission fairly admired how Yolanda had stood up to the entire board. Combined with her first-place victory in the Southdale Physics Competition, their admiration grew so much that some even started a fan club for her.

Unfortunately, the club's forum was hit by an anonymous hacker on its first day. It lasted only five minutes before becoming inaccessible. The devoted fans hired expensive hackers to restore the site, but nothing could be done.

Not wanting to give up, they switched to showing their support in person. On reopening day, several girls from Class A, led by Aileen, printed banners with Yolanda's name and distributed them during lunch break.

Thankfully, Yolanda was napping in her classroom, or she would have been mortified by such flashy displays.

"What's this? Such ugly colors! And that name is so tacky! Who still does this kind of old-school thing?" As Aileen enthusiastically handed out banners to passing students, a harsh voice cut through the air.

She looked up to see three girls in Zenith Academy uniforms striding through the school gates. Zenith Academy was Riverdale's premier private school, known as a school for the rich. While First Academy was the top public high school in Riverdale, Zenith Academy led among private institutions.

First Academy always outperformed Zenith Academy in academics, whether in provincial competitions or Havarian exams. However, Zenith Academy held its own ground.

With numerous wealthy students and an emphasis on well-rounded development, they excelled in extracurriculars. Their students often dominated art and athletic competitions, overshadowing First Academy all the time.

When First Academy students won provincial math competitions, Zenith Academy students would soon counter with piano championship victories.

The rivalry between these schools had simmered for years with students from both sides locked in constant competition.

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[ 465 words ]

When the three students from Zenith Academy approached, Aileen and her

friends instinctively frowned. The curly-haired girl in front snatched a banner and read it aloud mockingly.

"Queen of Physics? What a lame title! Just because someone won the Southdale Physics Competition doesn't make them special. Being a bookworm isn't something to brag about.

"And what's with this fan club nonsense? Know your place!" Zenith students were bitter about First Academy winning the physics championship, so they seized this chance to mock them.

"First place belongs to our school. Do you have a problem with that?" Aileen reached for the banner but missed.

"Hmph! We don't waste time arguing with nerds. If your so-called Queen of Physics is really that amazing, let her compete in the Crystal Queen pageant!"

Aileen and her friends' faces darkened at the mention of the Crystal Queen pageant.

"Hah! Just mentioning Crystal Queen makes you all go pale. You're so pathetic!" The three Zenith students strutted past them toward the academic building.

"I can't stand their arrogance!" Aileen sighed once they had left. "But it's really a shame for Yolanda. If she had better looks, she could definitely win the Crystal Queen pageant!"

"Drop it." Her friend tugged at her sleeve. "Yolanda's focused on academics. She wouldn't care about this stuff."

"Yeah, we're out of banners anyway. Let's head back."

The Crystal Queen pageant, officially called the "Havarian High School Crystal Queen Pageant," was held around Valentine's Day at high

schools nationwide. Each citizen

winner earned the title "Luna Queen" and an invitation to the prestigious Moonlight Gáta hosted by Creybia's three major families.

For girls from other cities, this competition offered their best chance to enter Creybia's elite circles. Many regional families groomed their daughters from childhood for this event.

Only seventeen-year-old female students could enter, and preliminary rounds eliminated most contestants. The pageant tested more than just looks-their talents, cultural knowledge, and equestrian skills were all evaluated.

Zenith Academy had dominated Riverdale's competition for years. It was a source of immense pride for their students.

But last year, First Academy's campus belle, Faith Jillard, unexpectedly defeated Zenith's representative. She had secured First Academy's first-ever Crystal Queen title. The entire school had celebrated while Zenith Academy students remained bitter about their loss.

Yolanda learned all this from her classmates' chatter, which spread quickly after

the Zenith students' visit.

During afternoon study hall, their

new homeroom teacher, Mae Lomerby entered the classroom. In her thirties, Mae wore thick-framed glasses and dressed conservatively. Despite her traditional appearance, she was highly qualified in language subjects.

She was a top graduate from Creybia University with teaching experience at Crown Academy in Creybia. First Academy had only secured her because she had returned to Riverdale to care for her ill mother.

"I'd like to introduce your new classmate, Yvonne Henderson!"

Just after she said that, Yvonne walked in carrying her backpack. "Hello everyone, I'm Yvonne Henderson."

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## Chapter 694

[ 359 words ]

"Yvonne placed tenth in the Southdale Physics Competition, so the academy has approved her transfer to our honors class. Let's welcome our new classmate!" Mae announced.

The classroom erupted in applause. Yvonne was already quite popular at school since she was beautiful, academically gifted, and multi-talented. Even before joining the honors class, she had been a constant topic of conversation.

"Yvonne, you can take the empty seat on the left in the back row for now. We'll adjust seating after the next exam."

Mae glanced at the two available spots in the class. There was one next to Yolanda and another near the back door.

"Ms. Lomerby, may I sit next to Yolanda?" Yvonne asked Mae. "She's my sister."

"Oh, in that case, go ahead."

"Thank you!" Yvonne flashed Mae a grateful smile before walking cheerfully to Yolanda's side. "Yolanda, we're finally in the same class! You'll help me out, won't you?"

Yvonne's warm attitude toward Yolanda crushed many circulating

rumors. The students who had

believed Yolanda had stolen

Yvonne's fiancé began doubting the

gossip. If Yvonne could treat

Yolanda so kindly after such

betrayal, she would have to be a

saint.

Watching Yvonne settle in beside her, Yolanda's lips curved into a smirk. With Yvonne sitting next to her every day, she would need to take more sick days than

she couldn't stomach the idea of sitting next to someone putting on a daily show of sisterly love.

Shortly after introducing Yvonne, Mae left the classroom. Yolanda contemplated asking Harvey for a month-long absence note. Just as she was planning to return only for the monthly exam, Yvonne's unwelcome face suddenly appeared inches from her own.

"Yolanda, what are you thinking about?" After organizing her desk, Yvonne leaned

in uncomfortably close. She was even trying to peek at Yolanda's notebook. "Let's walk home together after school, shall we?"

"We're not even going in the same direction," Yolanda said expressionlessly and pushed her away coldly.

"Yolanda, are you still not going to come home after all this time?" Yvonne sighed. Her face fell. "I've talked to Mom and Dad. They won't scold you if you come back now. We've all missed you while you've been away."

"Really?" Yolanda turned. She stared at Yvonne with a cold smile.

"Of... of course."

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## Chapter 695

[ 468 words ]

Yvonne nervously gulped. Something about Yolanda's gaze seemed to pierce right through her. Had she discovered her true intentions? No way! Absolutely impossible!

Under her desk, Yvonne secretly pinched her arm while trying to regain her composure. She had been so careful, so there was no way Yolanda could know about that incident. Once the scented candles had burned away, there wouldn't even be any evidence left.

Even if Yolanda wanted to investigate later, she would find nothing.

Forcing another smile, she changed the subject. "By the way, I'm entering the Crystal Queen pageant. You'll support me, won't you?"

She flashed Yolanda a sweet smile like a perfect little sister. "I'd be so disappointed without you there cheering me on!"

After all, her triumph would not feel complete without Yolanda witnessing it. Yvonne wanted to show Yolanda that even if she got the top grades, Yvonne would still shine brightest in the crowd.

She wanted Yolanda to witness how she claimed the Lunar Queen title as First Academy's campus belle. She would enter elite social circles while Yolanda could only look on enviously. Even if Yolanda had stolen Gavin from her through underhanded means, Yolanda would always be the loser.

Winning the Lunar Queen title was like getting a golden ticket into Creybia's prestigious social circles. Yvonne was confident that with her beauty and tactics, she would quickly integrate herself among the elite heirs and heiresses.

As for Gavin, how could he possibly ignore her once she established herself in Creybia's social scene? Lost in her grand visions of the future, Yvonne did not even notice whether Yolanda was listening.

Yolanda found Yvonne's desperate attempts at conversation ridiculous. As she stood to visit Harvey's office for a leave of absence, Andrew, the student council president, appeared at the classroom door. "Ma'am! Could you come here for a moment?"

"What brings you here?" Yolanda stepped out into the hallway, and Andrew followed.

"Zenith Academy's representatives just came by with a challenge from their student council president!"

"Challenge?" Yolanda raised an eyebrow. "What kind of challenge?"

"It's for the upcoming Crystal Queen

pageant!" Frowning, Andrew

ek

explained worriedly, "Last year, our senior, Faith, beat their campus belle and won the finals. Their new council president isn't taking it well, so they sent someone over to issue a formal challenge!"

"What's the problem with that?" If it was just a simple challenge, Andrew would not have rushed to find her.

"Zenith Academy set their own stakes. If we lose, we have to give them all our student council sponsorships and internship opportunities."

The academy did not interfere with student council expenses or internships. The opportunities available to students depended entirely on the council president's capabilities.

Thanks to his father Blake's

connections, Andrew had secured numerous internships and sponsorships since he was elected as the president. Because of him, this term's council was the most well-funded compared to the previous ones.

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## Chapter 696

[ 400 words ]

Thanks to these funds, First Academy had offered more extracurricular activities than ever before. Losing all these benefits to Zenith Academy would severely impact their school.

"If you're worried about losing, why not just decline?" Yolanda was puzzled by Andrew's dilemma.

"Well..." Andrew was now regretting his choices. "I already accepted."

Under Yolanda's questioning gaze, he explained reluctantly, "They kept provoking us and looking down on our school. They called us country bumpkins and nerds who didn't deserve to compete for the Crystal Queen title, so I lost my temper and agreed."

"So why come to me? Do you want me to enter?" Yolanda asked incredulously. Surely Andrew was not desperate enough to pin their hopes on her.

Besides, Yolanda had zero interest in these meaningless competitions that focused on superficial qualities. She had never even attended the Moonlight Gala, despite the Hoffmans being one of the organizers.

"No... I was hoping you might know how to cancel this bet." Having accepted Zenith's challenge in the heat of the moment, Andrew now hoped Yolanda could find a way out.

"I can't help," Yolanda replied without hesitation. "Even if you wanted to cancel, would the students from Zenith Academy agree?"

She could technically resolve this through the Hansens or use her authority as president of the Titan Merchants Association. After all, many Zenith Academy students' families relied on the Hansens and Seinfelds for business. But it would be absurd to involve them in such trivial matters, so she refused to do so.

If Andrew had impulsively accepted the challenge, they should face the outcome honorably rather than running away.

"Is there really no way?" Andrew's hopes were initially high when seeking Yolanda's help, but now crumbled at her firm refusal.

"Is there nobody suitable at our school?"

"Well... the stakes are just too high. We can't guarantee a win."

Andrew scratched his head dejectedly. "We've only won once in the Crystal Queen pageant's history. Though we have plenty of beautiful and talented girls, compared to Zenith..."

He suddenly caught himself, changing topics. "Ma'am, I didn't mean... you're already incredible..."

"Instead of worrying about this mess, focus on winning the competition."

Yolanda had chosen to present herself this way, so she was unconcerned with others' judgments of her appearance. Whether well-meaning or malicious, she truly believed a person's looks weren't that important. s̄wnovel

"Got it!" Andrew straightened up, abandoning thoughts of canceling the bet. Though victory seemed unlikely, he could only pray they would not lose too badly.

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## Chapter 697

[ 406 words ]

During lunch break the next day, Yvonne was away helping the music teacher. Yolanda finally had a break from her stupid act. After finishing lunch with Aileen at the canteen, Yolanda headed back to class when excited shouts erupted nearby. "Quick! To the courtyard! Zenith Academy's student council president is here!"

"What do they want?"

"They're probably here to cause trouble again!" Two girls rushed past Yolanda and Aileen, then turned back. "Yolanda, the student council president from Zenith Academy, Skye Montel, is demanding to see you!"

"Me?" Yolanda paused. She did not even know who Skye was.

"Yolanda, do you have beef with Skye? They look ready to start something. Maybe you should avoid them," one girl suggested kindly, but her warning only piqued Yolanda's interest.

"Let's check it out," she told Aileen.

"Huh?" Aileen hesitated. "Why don't we head back to class instead? I wanted your help with a math problem!"

She clearly remembered how contemptuous the students from Zenith Academy looked when mentioning Yolanda yesterday.

"I'll help you with math later." Yolanda started toward the courtyard, leaving Aileen to hurry after her. A crowd had already gathered. It was clearly divided into First Academy and Zenith Academy students.

"Where's Yolanda Henderson? I'm talking about that champion from the physics competition! Get her out here!"

The Zenith Academy students stood out in their designer uniforms, which were far more elegant than First Academy's standard attire. Each girl wore perfect makeup and expensive accessories to maintain their elite image even at school. Compared to First Academy's studious students, they commanded an imposing presence.

In the crowd, Aileen spotted yesterday's three troublemakers. One was shouting through a megaphone. But they were not the main attraction today.

Beside them stood two other girls. One had chestnut curls, a model's figure, fair skin, and flawless features. Her domineering presence and height advantage allowed her to look down on everyone with disdain from the front of the Zenith group. This had to be Skye.

Next to her stood a girl with flowing waist-length black hair and delicate features. Though less intimidating than Skye, she perfectly embodied refined grace.

"Yolanda, Skye in the middle is their council president. The dark-haired one next to her is Judy Savage, the vice president. They're Zenith's campus belle and class belle, so they're famous throughout Riverdale's schools."

Yolanda nodded while observing Skye, Judy, and their three boisterous followers.

They seemed to be typical sidekicks who had mastered nothing but riding coattails.

"Where's Yolanda? Is she too scared to show up?"

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[ 405 words ]

The girl with the megaphone was growing impatient. "Wasn't Yolanda so arrogant before?"

Arrogant? Yolanda let out a soft laugh. Though she could not recall being arrogant to these people, she did not mind showing them what "arrogant" really meant.

Just as she stepped forward, a familiar figure appeared before Skye's group. "What business do you have with my sister?"

It was Yvonne. Yolanda halted, and a cold glint flashed in her eyes. She held back as she was curious to see what scheme Yvonne had planned.

"You're Yolanda's sister?" Skye looked Yvonne up and down. Her tone was dripping with contempt.

"Yes, I'm Yvonne Henderson. Whatever you have to say, say it to me!"

Yvonne's gentle voice carried an unusual firmness. Her slight tremor when confronting others made her seem vulnerable. It evoked the onlookers' protective instincts rather than the willing submission commanded by Skye's queenly presence.

Seeing Yvonne step up, the First Academy male students, who had been stunned by Skye's beauty, snapped out of their daze. They rallied behind Yvonne.

"You're at First Academy! Leave if you're here to cause trouble!"

"Who gave you the right to boss our students around?"

"Do you think you're special because you're from an elite school?"

"Compared to Yvonne, you don't know the first thing about class!"

Facing the male students' provocation, Skye's expression remained unchanged. A mocking smile played on her lips. "So you're First Academy's campus belle?"

"I don't care about titles. But if you want to

go thrully Yolanda, you'll have to

go through me first!" Yvonne's clear eyes met Skye's without fear "If you want to start something, come at me!"

"You might actually be worth competing against." Skye changed the topic. "But I'm here to challenge Yolanda to face me in the Crystal Queen pageant!"

The three students who came to issue the challenge yesterday had seen Yolanda's banners at the gate. They exaggerated her influence to Skye and claimed that the whole school supported her.

Meanwhile, Judy was Zenith Academy's student council vice president and Gavin's cousin. She had never met Yolanda but heard from Priscilla that she was an ugly, fat country bumpkin. As she despised Yolanda for seducing her cousin, Judy deliberately provoked Skye by portraying Yolanda as the school's idol.

Combined with Yolanda's recent physics victory, this had irritated the prideful Skye enough to come to challenge her personally.

Her words drew strange looks from First Academy's students. Though Yolanda excelled academically, they couldn't imagine her in the Crystal Queen pageant. Nothing about her suggested pageant queen material.

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## Chapter 699

[ 405 words ]

While the First Academy students admired Yolanda's academic achievements, they knew the Crystal Queen pageant demanded more than good grades. Appearance and talent were crucial requirements.

With Yolanda's unremarkable looks and figure, how could she possibly compete? Though First Academy students supported their own, they were realistic enough to know that her participation would embarrass the school.

"Aren't you mistaken?" Yvonne asked, puzzled. "Yolanda never said she would enter the pageant."

"Isn't she your school idol?" Skye became impatient. After seeing Yvonne, she had assumed Yolanda wouldn't look bad either. Now, Yolanda's absence seemed deliberate and condescending.

"School idol?" Hearing those words, Yvonne's expression turned strange. "I think you've misunderstood what kind of idol..."

"Enough! Get her out here!" Skye had run out of patience. "Some people saw your students handing out banners supporting her yesterday. Wasn't that publicity for the pageant?"

Her words were met with silence. That was not the reason at all.

"Banners? What's this about?" Yolanda frowned in the crowd.

"Yolanda, that's not it... I just wanted to celebrate your championship!" Aileen never expected her impulse would cause such a misunderstanding and put Yolanda in the spotlight.

She apologized guiltily, "I'm sorry. I didn't think it'd make people misunderstand."

"You've got it wrong!" Yvonne pretended to throw a casual glance at the crowd before firmly addressing Skye. "If you want a competition, I'll face you. Leave Yolanda alone!"

But her protests only fueled Skye's curiosity about Yolanda.

"What's wrong? Is Yolanda too ashamed to show her face?" Skye swept her contemptuous gaze across the crowd. "I said get her out here!"

"Who are you to demand to see Yolanda?" Yvonne was angry too. "She's too busy to waste time on you!"

"Hmph, busy? More like scared!"

Judy said with a sneer. "Some school idol, hiding in the crowd

Weren't you so high and mighty before? If you can't face people, stop being arrogant!"

Judy's words dripped with unexpected venom. She was abandoning her usual refined manner. Yolanda found their attitudes interesting. While Skye seemed driven by competitive pride from rumors she had heard, Judy displayed inexplicable hostility

toward Yolanda.

Yolanda did not remember meeting her, and the original Yolanda had no memories of her either.

Judy Savage...

If she was a Savage... Yolanda realized who she must be.

Judy and the other Zenith Academy girls continued their taunts as they tried to provoke her into appearing. Meanwhile, First Academy students watched uncomfortably, but

none of them wanted Yolanda to show herself. They felt her confronting Skye would only bring more embarrassment.

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## Chapter 700

[ 408 words ]

Observing everyone's reactions from the crowd, Yolanda suddenly found this Crystal Queen pageant interesting. Since they all thought she could not possibly compete or challenge Skye, why not waste some time playing their game?

After all, nothing was impossible for her.

"Yolanda?" As she stepped forward, Aileen grabbed her sleeve. "Don't act on impulse. They'll just mock you! Someone as brilliant as you doesn't need to be judged by looks! It's not fair!"

Aileen truly believed in Yolanda's excellence but knew one person could not fight society's prejudices alone. She did not want Yolanda to become a victim of this unfair battle or have her confidence destroyed.

"It's fine." Yolanda gave her a calm smile. "Do you think I'm afraid of them?"

Aileen had not expected Yolanda to smile at a time like this. But seeing her composure, she released her grip. She could not stop Yolanda from making her own choices no matter how worried she was.

Yolanda emerged from the crowd to face Skye. "I'm Yolanda. I heard you were looking for me."

"You're... Yolanda Henderson?" Skye stared in disbelief. Could this plain, fat girl possibly be the school idol of First Academy? What a joke!

Feeling mocked, anger burned inside her. "Even if Yolanda won't show herself, there's no need for such an insult! Do you expect me to believe you're the school idol?"

"She really is my sister..." Yvonne's timid voice turned the atmosphere even colder.

"Hahaha!"

"School idol?"

"Hahaha!" First came the

exaggerated laughter from the three

Zenith Academy troublemakers,

then Skye's visibly darkening expression. Standing behind her, Judy smirked coldly.

Yolanda took it all in before saying something that stunned everyone: "Since you're so eager to be defeated by me, I'll see you at the Crystal Queen pageant."

"What? You want to compete against me?" Skye thought she must be hearing things. "Are you joking? Are you even qualified to join?"

"Yolanda, this competition isn't for you! You shouldn't participate!"

The students from First Academy spoke up to dissuade her.

"That's right! Just stick to academic contests! Why join the Crystal Queen pageant?"

"Our school's pageant record is bad enough without this embarrassment!"

The First Academy students clearly did not

thought her to compete. The

thought of her facing the region's campus belles mortified them. They would surely be humiliated.

"As it happens, I enjoy a good spectacle," Yolanda replied on purpose.

"Yolanda, you're not serious, are you?" Yvonne's bright eyes were fixed on her, and her tone was pleading. "Don't worry, I'll prepare seriously and defeat Zenith, Academy for you! You don't need to..." *śwnovel*

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