

The Enigmatic Return (Neera and Jean)

Chapter 1201

Upon hearing this, everyone carefully stepped aside to avoid the confrontation.

However, due to the narrowness of the open space, they inevitably ended up crossing paths with the two forces engaged in combat.

With just one glance, Caleb's expression subtly changed.

Meanwhile, the two forces were solely focused on their current conflict, paying no attention to others. Consequently, no one noticed Caleb and his people.

Observing the situation, Neera breathed a sigh of relief and stuck close to Finnley, eager to leave this "battlefield" as soon as possible.

However, Caleb remained motionless.

Naturally, his people also came to a halt.

Neera turned around and saw them standing still. She quickly lowered her voice and asked, "Mr. Medicina, why aren't you moving? Hurry up and catch up."

Upon hearing the sound, Shane stopped. "What's wrong?"

He glanced at Caleb, then at the two groups fighting each other, noticing something. "Do you know these people?"

Caleb's eyes darkened slightly, his previous carefree demeanor vanishing without a trace.

"Yes, these are the people from Lordsworth Estate, the Beasley family, who have collaborated with the Medicina family before."

Shane understood. "So, you want to help them?"

Caleb nodded. "They're at a disadvantage now, and I can't just stand by and watch them perish. Mr. Gordon, you guys should go ahead. Don't get involved in this matter anymore. Once I've dealt with this situation, I'll catch up with you."

"Sorry, but I have to disagree," Shane shook his head. "You've been supporting the Gordon family all this time. Now that you're in trouble, wouldn't we be utterly heartless if we just walk away? The Gordon family can't do such a thing. We'll stay and help you."

Caleb was somewhat taken aback, quickly furrowing his brows.

"But Lordsworth Estate and Bartitsu Guild have always been at odds. Along this journey, the Gordon family and the Medicina family traveling together is already somewhat inappropriate. If we were to help save the forces from Lordsworth Estate, I'm afraid the Gordon family's situation with Bartitsu Guild would become even more difficult. I've heard that Ms. Garcia was previously questioned by the Gordon family elders and the people from Bartitsu Guild because of matters related to Lordsworth Estate. So, it's best if you leave."

No sooner had he finished speaking than Neera, who had come over, calmly and firmly rejected his suggestion.

"The relationship between Lordsworth Estate and Bartitsu Guild is not good, but that has nothing to do with our two families. The stance between the powers does not represent the position of the Gordon family. I remember all the help that the Medicina family has given to the Gordon family. Naturally, we won't just leave you behind."

Shane pointed ahead. "If you continue to resist, the people of Lordsworth Estate may not be able to hold on any longer."

He recognized another force, the Frazier family, affiliated with the Ancient Martial Arts Guild.

Seeing their determination to help, Caleb no longer declined their offer.

"Alright, thank you all very much. Let's get going!"

As soon as the words were spoken, he and Shane gave their respective orders, and their men charged forward.

Over there, both the Frazier and Beasley families were taken aback, not expecting someone to suddenly intervene.

Due to the sudden and overwhelming arrival of the Gordon and Medicina families, the situation was swiftly resolved. It was akin to cutting through tangled hemp with a sharp knife.

The Beasley family was rescued, while the Frazier family attempted to escape, but they were intercepted and captured by the Gordon family.

"You... You are from the Gordon family!"

The members of the Frazier family recognized Shane and Neera and immediately started questioning them.

"The Gordon family is part of Bartitsu Guild, yet you don't share our enmity against the Beasley family. Instead, you're colluding with the Medicina family! What are your intentions? Aren't you afraid of the guild's punishment?" [SEARCH THE WEBSITE TO ACCESS CHAPTERS OF NOVELS EARLY AND IN THE HIGHEST QUALITY.](#)

Shane grabbed him by the collar, sneering coldly, "Stop using the guild as an excuse in front of me. If you dare, go ahead and report us, the Gordon family, to the guild. I'd love to see if you have the guts to do that!"

"What... What are you trying to do? Are you going to attack your own people?" The person was instantly filled with shock and anger.

At that moment, Neera also sneered.

"If we're talking about taking action, hasn't that already happened just now? As for being on the same side, that's not necessarily the case. Once we enter this dense forest, what's the difference whether we're from Lordsworth Estate or Bartitsu Guild? Isn't every power just looking out for their own family's interests? Do you really think the guild's forces would give way to each other and not fight for the white flag?"

The person was instantly speechless, his face turning red.

Shane had no patience for his nonsense and asked him directly, "Tell me. Why did you target the Beasley family? We're still a long way from the white flag on the mountaintop."

The person gritted his teeth, stubbornly retorting, "Why do you have so many questions? If they're the enemy, of course, we fight whenever we want to!"

At that moment, someone from the Beasley family shouted, "We've been ambushed by them!"

"Ambush? What's going on?" Caleb had a vague feeling that something was off and immediately pressed for answers.

While it was normal to encounter conflicts along the way, they usually only escalated into major battles after significant conflicts.

But it was not yet the critical moment, and the Beasley family wasn't exactly a formidable opponent. Why should they go out of their way to ambush them?

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Chapter 1202

Just Give Up

Only a few members of the Beasley family remained, and one of them, who could still speak, coughed up blood before speaking.

"Mr. Medicina, thank you for your timely assistance. Without you, the Beasley family would have been wiped out. We will never forget your kindness! We were ambushed before we could prepare to defend ourselves, and we have been retreating ever since. We were chased and blocked all the way here, losing five people along the way. Now, only a few of us remain. We have never had any disputes with the Frazier family, and we have always followed the rules. Furthermore, we have never intentionally offended anyone. So, we don't understand why we were targeted for this ambush..."

Upon hearing this, Caleb's eyes darkened, and he shifted his gaze back to the Frazier family members.

"I'm giving you one last chance. Speak up. Why did you set up an ambush?"

Everyone in the Frazier family seemed to have taken a vow of silence, refusing to utter a single word.

Caleb suddenly laughed, but his eyes did not share the mirth, making it rather chilling.

"Alright then, since you choose to do it the hard way. Don't blame me for being impolite."

After he finished speaking, he turned to Shane, "Leave them to us. After all, you are from the Bartitsu Guild. If word gets out, it won't be easy for you to explain."

Shane did not refuse. He loosened his grip and allowed the Medicina family to take them into the nearby woods.

Before long, a series of horrifying screams echoed from that direction, filled with utter desperation, chilling to the bone.

Neera felt a chill run down her spine, causing goosebumps to rise all over her body. [SEARCH THE website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.](#)

At that moment, Darcel walked over. He did not say a word, but just stood in front of her, positioning himself between her and the forest, like a silent wall.

Before long, the group finally confessed the truth as they could no longer bear the torment.

"Last night... last night, nearly two groups of people were... were eradicated. Someone has put out a hefty bounty to find the culprit. We're just trying our luck..."

As these words were spoken, Caleb's expression subtly changed, and he instinctively glanced at Darcel.

At the same time, the depth of Darcel's eyes became even more profound, as if they were dyed with ink, and covered with a layer of frost, chilling to the bone.

In this subtle moment, a silent exchange of glances between the two of them went unnoticed by everyone else...

Due to this minor incident, the group decided to take a short break here.

Neera had been walking for so long that her legs were too tired to carry her any further, so naturally, she had no objections.

She and Finnley found a rock to sit on, sighing and muttering to each other.

"We've only been in the forest for two days and so many conflicts have arisen. It seems the days ahead will be even more challenging. We must be careful."

Finnley, however, was quite carefree, leisurely savoring the coffee from the thermos.

"Rest assured, peace is not an option here. What do you think this is? It's a power struggle. From the moment we entered Mount Cloud, life has not been peaceful. All that remains is endless danger. Relax a bit, there's no need to be overly tense. We'll face whatever comes our way and adapt to the situation. No matter what happens next, we'll overcome it, even if we have to confront it head-on."

Neera was initially a bit nervous, but hearing him say this, she was amused and felt like laughing.

"I've noticed that your mindset is truly admirable. It seems like even the most tumultuous events are nothing to you."

The old man just shook his head and looked a little smug.

"Well, what did you think? That I've lived all these years for nothing? I've experienced so much more than all of you many times over. How could I possibly act like you youngsters, getting startled at the drop of a hat..."

Meanwhile, Caleb walked up to Darcel and asked him, "What's your take on this matter?"

Darcel glanced at the members of the Frazier family. Their faces were bruised and battered, and a glint of sharpness flashed through his eyes.

"Most likely, someone is operating behind the scenes, trying to form alliances with other forces and doing their best to eliminate any opposition. This way, they can save some energy. Otherwise, someone is trying to create chaos, so they can take advantage of the situation."

"A third party will benefit from a conflict between two parties. Ha, if that's the case, it's indeed a well-played strategy."

"It's not particularly wise, but sure enough, someone still falls for it."

"Let's not talk about this for now. What should we do about those people from the Frazier family? If we just leave them be, I guess they'll be rescued soon."

"Didn't you hear what they just said? If someone rescues them, the Gordon family will inevitably be dragged into this."

Caleb suddenly slapped his own forehead. "Oh right, I forgot about your sweetheart. We can't involve her in this. So, what's your plan? To get rid of them directly?"

After a moment of silence, Darcel said coldly, "Just discard them."

Caleb raised an eyebrow, "Alright, whatever you say, we'll do it your way."

So, he signaled his men, instructing them to drag those people into the woods for handling.

As for the remaining five from the Beasley family, they were taken in by the Medicina family, joining them on their journey...

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Chapter 1203

Before embarking on their journey, Neera looked around curiously.

"What about the people from the Frazier family? Have they been set free?" she asked.

Caleb didn't respond immediately. Instead, he glanced at Darcel.

Darcel wore an expressionless face and replied indifferently, "I've left them in the forest to fend for themselves. There is no need to worry about them."

Neera didn't dwell on it too much and simply nodded to show her understanding.

Caleb's lips twitched slightly as he thought to himself, "Love really does bring about a world of change."

"Is this still the man I know? The one who is decisive and ruthless, who wouldn't even hesitate to seal someone's fate?" he wondered.

"How come he has become so gentle in his actions now, even his words have become so tactful?" Caleb found it odd.

He remembered the time when Tiago had excitedly called him to vent about Jean, and he didn't believe it. Now he understood why Tiago had such a strong reaction.

"What are you looking at? Let's go," Darcel interrupted Caleb's thoughts, urging him to move.

Caleb snapped back to reality and saw that everyone had finished preparing. He nodded and said, "Let's continue."

Next, they embarked on another aimless journey up the mountain.

As dusk approached, Luna, who had been absent for a long time, suddenly returned.

She still maintained her cool and aloof demeanor as she walked straight to Darcel's side and began to report with utmost respect.

"We have a problem. We're being followed," Luna informed them.

Upon hearing this, both Darcel and Caleb came to a sudden halt.

They didn't look back, but their attention was clearly focused on the surrounding area behind them. Using their peripheral vision and straining their ears, they tried to catch every detail of the situation unfolding behind them.

However, in the dense forest, apart from the thick tree trunks, they discovered nothing else.

With his back facing the rear, Luna spoke in a hushed tone, "I've noticed that a considerable number of people have gathered behind us, following us at a safe distance. It seems they have no intention of attacking at the moment. However, since they've been tailing us for so long, they surely won't be doing it for nothing. I fear they might launch a surprise attack on us tonight."

Darcel's eyes narrowed slightly, and a hint of ruthlessness appeared in his obsidian-like gaze, fleeting and quickly replaced by a cold indifference.

"I understand," he finally replied. Then, he hurried to catch up with the Gordon family, accompanied by Caleb.

"I have something to discuss with you," Darcel deliberately walked over to Neera, strolling alongside her.

Neera was talking to Shane when they both heard something and turned to look at him, stopping in their tracks.

"What is it? Go ahead and tell me," Shane said.

Darcel said, "Don't stop, and don't look back. Keep walking and talking as if we're having a casual chat while strolling."

Shane quickly grasped his meaning, his pupils abruptly contracting.

Neera took a moment to process the situation. Before she could react, Darcel's hand had already moved past her, landing on her other shoulder.

In the next moment, he straightened her body to face forward.

His large hand slid down to briefly rest on her back before quickly withdrawing with a gentle push.

"Keep walking and talk as we go," Darcel instructed smoothly. His expression remained unchanged, as if nothing had happened at all.

Neera's heart pounded uncontrollably, followed by a wave of annoyance and a touch of anger.

She was angry at this man's behavior and at herself for allowing him to get so close.

Apart from Jean, there hadn't been another man who could get this close to her.

"What the hell did he just do? Isn't that a bit too rude?" she thought.

At the same time, she was angry with herself, feeling disappointingly weak.

It was just a small gesture, but why did her heart rate increase?

Could it be because of the sense of familiarity she felt with this man?

But he was not Jean....

"Neera? Neera? What are you thinking about?" Shane waved his hand in front of her eyes, pulling her back from her thoughts. Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

She quickly apologized, "I'm sorry, I was lost in thought. What were you saying just now?"

Darcel lowered his gaze to her and repeated, "Someone is tailing us from behind, and not just one person. They're probably waiting for an opportunity to strike."

Upon hearing this, Neera's heart immediately skipped a beat. She wanted to look back, but she knew she couldn't act rashly and risk being noticed.

After regaining her composure, she asked, "So, what do we do now? Should we try to shake them off?"

Shane dismissed the idea immediately.

"No, it won't work. We have a sizable group. If we move together, we'll be too conspicuous and it will be difficult to lose anyone following us. Besides, we're in the mountains, surrounded by dense forests. If we're not careful, we could easily get lost, especially if we split up. We can't take that risk."

Darcel shared the same thought. "Exactly. If we act rashly, not only will we fail to shake off those people, but we might also be detected. There's a chance that they might launch a surprise attack in advance. The enemy is in the dark while we are in the light, so they might have already figured out our situation, yet we still don't know anything about them. The situation is very unfavorable for us."

Neera frowned. "So, should we just let them keep following us? Doesn't that mean a conflict is inevitable?"

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Chapter 1204

Darcel pondered, lightly tapping his chin. "The other party clearly came prepared and determined to take action. No matter how cautious we are, there will always be a moment of negligence. Therefore, violent conflict is inevitable."

Neera expressed deep concern. "How could this happen? Could it be the same people who attacked us in the middle of the night before?"

The first attempt didn't succeed, so they've brought enough manpower to try again?

Darcel shook his head. "It's not that group of people."

Seeing his resolute assertion, Neera couldn't help but question, "How can you be so sure?"

Caleb remained silent on the side, muttering complaints to himself.

Of course, he knew that he had already sent those guys to meet their maker.

Lord of the Night paused for a moment, then responded calmly, "That group was severely hit by us recently. They won't recover so quickly."

"I see..." Neera didn't quite understand, but she chose to believe whatever he said. "If it's not them, then who is it this time? Does the Gordon family have so many enemies?"

Shane's face turned serious. "Actually, it's not too bad. However, the guild's attitude towards the Gordon family this time is rather intriguing, and it's attracting a lot of attention. So, it's hard to say how things will turn out."

Caleb casually rubbed the back of his head, his tone as laid-back as ever, showing no signs of nervousness.

"Actually, whether we have enemies or not is no longer important. Once you enter this dense forest, everyone wants to break through the encirclement and come out on top. Whether it's between the guild and Lordsworth Estate, or within the guild and the estate itself. In fact, their relationships have long been strained."

Darcel also said, "Now is not the time to worry about who they are. We'll figure out what's going on once we've captured them and thoroughly interrogated them."

"Capture them? But are we confident enough to confront them directly?"

A shadow passed over Darcel's eyes. "If conflict is inevitable, then we should steer it towards the outcome we desire. They have the advantage in numbers, so we can't overpower them. Instead, we must outsmart them."

Shane also agreed. "That's right. Even if we confront them head-on and win this round, the journey ahead is still long. Who knows what violent conflicts might occur in the future? If we exhaust all our energy and strength here, causing casualties, it would not be beneficial for us in the long run."

Neera understood their intentions.

"So, your idea is to strike first, catch them off guard, minimize our own involvement as much as possible, and aim for a swift victory?"

"Bingo!" Caleb gave a thumbs up. "That's exactly what I mean."

The group chatted as they slowly moved forward.

After some thought, Neera casually glanced around, pretending to be nonchalant.

"If we want to gain the upper hand, the only thing we can use right now is our surroundings. But looking around, aside from the dense forest, there doesn't seem to be much else we can utilize."

In the face of the current situation, although she was slow to accept it at first, once she understood, her mind worked quickly.

"Ms. Garcia, you're so clever," Caleb praised her with a smile, "Just a moment ago you seemed confused, but now you've quickly come up with a strategy."

Neera felt somewhat embarrassed by his compliments.

"Mr. Medicina, you flatter me. I'm just brainstorming, I haven't come up with a solid plan yet." SEAR*ch the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Beside her, Darcel watched her intently. A hint of admiration surfaced in his deep, obsidian-like eyes.

Shane spoke up at this moment, "There's nothing here we can use to our advantage, but that might not be the case up ahead. It seems to open up more in the front, like a relatively flat valley."

Darcel nodded. "That's right. The valley lies ahead. The surroundings are flat, but the middle is slightly lower, forming a pond. We can take advantage of that place to set a trap."

Neera was surprised. "You seem very familiar with the terrain here. Have you been here before?"

Upon hearing this, both Caleb and Darcel's expressions subtly changed.

Caleb thought to himself. How could I not be familiar? This guy rose to power during the initial election at Lordsworth Estate, it all started from this very place!

No one probably knows the situation here better than this man...

Darcel would certainly not admit it, so he casually made up an excuse, "Before I came in, I checked the information and maps drawn by others."

Neera chose not to doubt his explanation and nodded. "So that's how it is."

Shane said, "Alright, let's do it this way. We'll catch the prey in the trap when the time comes. It will definitely save us a lot of effort."

Darcel nodded. "For now, let's pretend we haven't noticed anything. We'll set up camp when we get there. They've been following us all this time without making a move. They surely don't want to reveal anything. They'll probably wait until the dead of night to act. We can discuss further once we're there."

And so, the matter was settled.

And so, the group continued on their journey as if they hadn't noticed a thing.

As evening fell, they finally reached the valley.

Darcel had given prior instructions, specifically to not venture into the valley, but to pitch tents along its edge instead.

This way, those who were tracking them could not get close, remaining completely unaware of the situation in the valley...

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Chapter 1205

Neera felt a bit uneasy at first.

"Is this really okay? This valley is semi-enclosed, with only one exit. If we station ourselves here and they launch a surprise attack at night, we'll have no choice but to enter the valley with them. If they outnumber us and completely surround us, wouldn't our plan fail?"

Darcel raised an eyebrow. "I understand your concerns, but as the saying goes, the most dangerous place is often the safest. This valley may seem dangerous, but if we use it well, we can achieve unexpected results."

"Catch them off guard?" Neera asked curiously, leaning forward unconsciously. "What's your plan?"

She didn't notice that they had unintentionally moved closer while talking.

At this moment, their shoulders were almost touching, their breaths closer than before, allowing them to catch the faint scent of each other's freshness and fragrance.

Darcel noticed that, and a flicker of emotion passed in his eyes. On his rigid, cold face, a hint of a smile emerged. It was faint and not easily detected by others.

But Neera noticed it nonetheless.

In those beautiful almond eyes, there was a moment of bewilderment, followed by a mix of surprise and suspicion.

Meanwhile, some expectations took root in her heart, spreading rapidly.

She had always felt an inexplicable sense of familiarity with this man. [SEARCH THE WEBSITE](#) to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

At first, she thought it was an illusion, as she felt that her excessive longing for Jean was playing tricks on her mind. So, whenever she saw even the slightest hint of something familiar, she would instinctively think of him.

"But the more time we spend together, the stronger that feeling becomes."

"Especially when this man is around, he gives me a sense of security."

"Just like when Jean is around, he always inexplicably puts me at ease!"

Just now, she clearly caught the emotion in this man's eyes, such tenderness, the same as what she saw in Jean's eyes!

"Could it be him?"

"Is the man by my side Jean?"

For a moment, images flooded her mind of the countless encounters in the dense forest. Each time, this man had appeared by her side just in time, guarding and protecting her.

His extraordinary care and concern for her now seemed to make sense.

"And so, the unusual beating of my own heart makes sense..."

Her innermost feelings were revealed through her eyes.

Darcel's pupils contracted slightly, his hands subconsciously clenched into fists.

In the next moment, he abruptly shifted his gaze away. When he spoke again, his voice was significantly colder.

"The so-called strategy is actually quite simple. It's about using that pond to kick a dog when it's down."

He steered the conversation back to the most pressing matter at hand.

Neera was taken aback when she noticed his sudden indifference.

How come... that familiar feeling has disappeared?

Looking at the man's profile, she gently pursed her lips, the light in her eyes dimming slightly.

Darcel didn't look at her, so he didn't notice. He just calmly discussed the upcoming strategic deployment.

"By nightfall, everyone will move into the valley. We will split into two groups, each lying in ambush on either side of the valley's exit. The plan is to counter-attack when the enemy charges in, leading them towards the pond. The goal is to knock as many as possible into the water. Once they are in the water, they will essentially be defenseless."

Upon hearing this, Shane pondered and nodded slightly.

"This idea is feasible. Let's proceed with it and work out the specific details."

Darcel nodded, quickly summoning everyone in groups and arranging them accordingly.

Roughly an hour later, all preparations were in place. Everyone carried on with their usual chatter and laughter, while subtly heightening their guard, ready to tackle any trouble at a moment's notice.

Neera preferred to stand by and listen quietly.

For now, she set aside her own worries.

Yet, her eyes just couldn't look away, automatically drawn to that man.

"Am I overthinking it?"

"Perhaps this man is just somewhat similar to Jean..."

"Neera?" Suddenly, Shane called out to her.

Neera regained her focus. "Shane, what's wrong?"

Shane looked a bit peculiar. "Shouldn't I be the one asking you what's wrong? You seem... a bit off."

He paused, seemingly contemplating whether or not to ask.

"I notice you're always staring at Darcel, seemingly lost in thought. Is there something wrong with him?"

Neera was taken aback, her cheeks suddenly turned red, and she instantly felt a bit embarrassed.

"I..."

Seeing how she hesitated to speak, Shane felt somewhat apologetic.

"I understand that it's not my place to pry into your personal affairs. If you don't wish to discuss it, that's perfectly fine. I didn't mean anything by it, but I just find this man a bit peculiar."

Neera blinked. "Do you also think there's something off about him?"

"Mm, of course, I'm not questioning his loyalty. I just feel that his care for you is a bit excessive. Even if it's an order from Caleb, I still find it strange. After all, the Medicina family and the Gordon family are not on the same side. They are with Lordsworth Estate, and we belong to Bartitsu Guild. Although there's no conflict between the two families due to different affiliations, we should just be acquaintances, nothing more. It's not so good that we would travel together, especially in such an important competition..."

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Chapter 1206

Upon hearing his words, Neera also found them a bit strange.

"But what could the Medicina family be planning if they have hidden motives? Besides, Mr. Medicina has always been sincere towards me. If he truly wanted to do something, there would be no need for him to wait until now..."

Shane nodded, glancing at the few people who were planning a counterattack.

"I'm not sure if the Medicina family has hidden motives or if they genuinely have no interest in the district president. I don't know Caleb well, but he has had a good reputation over the years. He is a non-competitive man who avoids trouble. The Medicina family is also fully dedicated to the field of medicine. If they suddenly have the urge to help the Gordon family, that would be the best outcome. We would definitely remember their kindness. However..."

"We should not have ill intentions towards others, but we must also be cautious of those who might harm us. We don't know the Medicina family well, and it's difficult to understand their intentions. Moreover, the two families have different levels of power. I know it may sound paranoid, but it's better to stay vigilant." Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Next, he brought up a point that he was particularly concerned about.

"Furthermore, some of the people the Medicina family brought with them don't seem to be part of the Medicina family itself. Luna and Darcel, their skills are not something inherited within the Medicina family. But I've never heard of the Medicina family joining forces with any other family. So, what exactly is the identity of these people?"

Neera understood what he meant.

"I understand. I will be cautious."

Shane let out a deep sigh. "This election has everyone on edge. It would be better if it ended soon."

Neera nodded thoughtfully, her gaze falling on the group of people engrossed in discussion.

As she recalled Shane's words, she also became distracted from the situation over there.

Gradually, she noticed something strange.

Even though Caleb was clearly the leader of the Medicina family, she couldn't help but feel that Darcel, somehow, seemed more like the main figure...

Once everything was settled, Caleb pulled Darcel aside.

"Do you need something?" Darcel responded with his usual indifference.

Caleb raised an eyebrow. "Ms. Garcia and Shane were watching you the whole time you were making arrangements. I wonder what they were talking about."

Upon hearing this, a slight movement flickered across Darcel's eyebrows, but he remained silent.

Caleb leaned against a rock, a blade of foxtail grass dangling from his mouth that he had picked up from somewhere, looking every bit like a carefree and idle young nobleman.

"I'm thinking, Shane probably wants your precious fiancée to be wary of us. After all, you are officially representing the Medicina family now. Yet, you are so devoted to her, always attentive, and even go out of your way to protect her. It wouldn't be surprising if Shane suspects that you have hidden motives."

Darcel glanced towards the Gordon family and immediately found Neera in the crowd. Seeing her sipping some water, he paused for two seconds before shifting his gaze away.

"So what?"

Caleb turned his head to look at him. "You seem to not care about anything. Of course, the Gordon family wouldn't do anything to the Medicina family. At most, they would just be a bit cautious. However, I don't think Ms. Garcia sees it the same way. Don't think I didn't notice earlier, but the way she looks at you is completely different from before. Perhaps you have done too much and revealed something? Maybe she already suspects you."

Darcel leaned against a large rock with one leg bent, and his arm casually draped around his leg. His ordinary face was resolute and indifferent, yet his gaze was profound, his expression inscrutable.

"She won't recognize me," he said.

Caleb was confused. "I heard you two had a falling out? Was it because of the things that were posted online? Haven't you made up yet? Is that why you chose to be with her in this way? Isn't that unnecessary? I don't think she's the type to hold grudges. From the way she looked at you just now, she probably wishes you were him. Can you bear to disappoint her? Even if the truth comes out, it wouldn't be a big deal, right?"

Upon hearing this, Darcel recalled the phone call he received after arriving in District Twenty-One.

Recalling what she said...

"We have reconciled, and there are no hard feelings anymore."

"There you go!" Caleb tossed aside the foxtail grass. "So what's holding you back?"

Darcel stood up. "My identity could bring her trouble. I cannot reveal myself until everything is settled."

Caleb sighed. "Given your status, it's not impossible for you to protect her. Besides, people are bound to find out sooner or later, so why make things so complicated?"

Darcel's gaze was deep. "For now, it's better to leave things as they are to avoid unnecessary complications."

Caleb gave in. "Alright then, you have your own reasons, so do as you wish. It seems you truly cherish her, huh. Tsk tsk, I never thought I'd see the day when you'd fall deeply in love..."

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Chapter 1207

The night gradually grew darker.

Above the valley, where the dense canopy of trees no longer obstructed the view, the deep blue night sky stretched out, adorned with a brilliantly bright moon.

Despite the brightness of the moon and the sparse stars, the night in the mountains had a unique charm. Many twinkling stars could still be seen.

After finishing her dinner, Neera decided to sit outside the tent, gazing dreamily at the night sky.

I wonder what my aunt and uncle are doing right now.

Are Grandpa, Grandma, Uncle Jeremiah, and Aunt Nadine enjoying themselves on the small island?

Are the triplets behaving?

In quiet moments, one often missed their loved ones. Neera missed them dearly, so she reached for her phone with the intention of sending them a message.

However, as soon as she took it out, she remembered that she was in the mountains where her phone couldn't get a signal.

Nevertheless, she still opened WhatsApp and scrolled through her previous chat history.

As she looked through her messages, her fingertips once again rested on Jean's name.

Upon opening the chat box, she saw that the messages were still from the day before she went into the mountains.

"No matter what happens, I'm here for you. Once you've figured things out, I'll come to see you."

That man could clearly sense her unease over the phone.

So, he sent those words after hanging up.

Is he here...?

Subconsciously, she lifted her gaze, her eyes traveling past clusters of people resting here and there, finally settling on the figure of Darcel.

Darcel also turned to look in her direction, as if he had sensed something.

Their eyes met. Although they were separated by a distance, their emotions were not clearly discernible to each other.

Then, Neera saw him stand up and walk over, with Caleb following by his side.

"Ms. Garcia, you should rest early when you get a chance. Try to sleep if you can. We don't know when a surprise attack might happen at night, and it's not good to keep waiting."

Neera stood up, brushing off the dirt from her clothes.

"I don't think I'll be able to sleep. The thought of what's going to happen tonight keeps me awake. I'll stick with Shane later, and I'll try my best not to cause any trouble for all of you."

She knew that in the face of such violent conflicts, she was mostly useless. All she could do was try her best not to cause them any trouble.

Caleb raised an eyebrow. His casual demeanor did not suggest that anything significant was about to happen.

"Ms. Garcia, you shouldn't think of yourself as a burden. If someone gets injured, they'll need your help for treatment."

Neera chuckled helplessly. "Although you're right, I'd rather not be needed in such situations. It's best if everyone could avoid getting hurt."

Caleb smiled faintly. "I've just discussed with Mr. Gordon to have him and Darcel protect you together."

Neera paused slightly, glanced at Darcel, and hesitated. "Having Shane should be enough, right? We probably don't need to bother Darcel..."

"It's safer this way," Caleb insisted, "The people following us are mainly after you and me. Without a leader, this family won't have a reason to fight, so it's better to have more people protecting you."

Neera felt a bit embarrassed. "I'm really sorry... I can't be of much help and always seem to be holding you back..."

At this moment, Darcel spoke calmly, "No, tonight, after they fall into the water, you can use stealth weapons to catch them off guard. I will assist you then."

Upon hearing this, Neera's eyes lit up. "Really? Can I do that too?"

Looking at the sparkle in her round eyes, Darcel felt a hint of amusement but managed to hold back his laughter. He pursed his lips and nodded. "Hmm."

With this, the burden in Neera's heart finally felt a bit lighter.

"Great! I will definitely do my best to help all of you!"

She had a serious look on her face, as if she had been entrusted with an important mission.

Seeing her like this, Darcel really wanted to ruffle her hair.

...

In the early hours, the campsite was enveloped in silence.

Everyone was awake, holding their breath in anticipation of the imminent surprise attack.

As expected, the group of people thought they had gone unnoticed. They had been lying in ambush in the nearby dense forest for quite some time. Now, they finally found their opportunity and swiftly moved towards the camp.

Upon closer inspection, they realized that no one was on guard.

This took them by surprise.

However, they had received the order, and it had to be carried out tonight.

Therefore, they overlooked these anomalies and began searching for traces of the Gordon and Medicina families in the valley behind the camp.

And so, step by step, they walked into the trap set for them by both families...

The unexpected happened in an instant!

The moment this group reached the entrance of the valley, two large groups of people suddenly rushed out from both sides and charged at them fiercely!

Their attention had initially been focused on the valley ahead, so they did not expect an ambush here. As a result, they were caught off guard and taken by surprise! Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

In a flash, they responded in a flurry of confusion, scattered by the blows. While counterattacking, they were simultaneously retreating in the opposite direction.

Due to the darkness of the night, they failed to notice the pond not far behind them...

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Chapter 1208

Thud!

The sound of splashing water echoed as they fell into the pond one after another.

Followed by the screams of those individuals.

Clearly, this was an unexpected and unprepared situation for them.

The people on the shore didn't give them a chance to catch their breath. They relentlessly beat them and prevented them from reaching the shore.

Meanwhile, not far away on the hillside, three pairs of eyes were intently watching the situation across the pond.

It was indeed Darcel and Shane who were faithfully guarding Neera.

"How did we end up here?" Neera asked, carefully navigating her way with night vision goggles, paying close attention to the stones under her feet.

What concerned her more was the cliff not far behind her.

"This place seems quite dangerous..."

Darcel reached out his hand towards her. "Don't be afraid. Grab my hand and jump over."

Following behind Neera, Shane slightly furrowed his brows upon hearing those words.

However, the current situation didn't allow him to say much. He gently patted Neera's shoulder, soothing her in a soft voice, "Go ahead. I'm right behind you to protect you. Nothing will happen."

Neera preferred to gaze at the jumble of rocks in front of her. She took a deep breath, reached out, but did not grasp Darcel's hand. Instead, she just held onto his wrist, showing restraint.

The glint in Darcel's eyes flickered subtly as he caught her slender wrist. With a gentle tug, he pulled her to his side.

Due to her rather large leap, Neera almost bumped into his embrace with her nose lightly brushing against his chest.

"Thank you," she said softly, her expression subtly changing.

Just now, she caught a whiff of his scent. For some reason, the familiarity it once held for her had vanished.

Although it still smelled fresh and pleasant, it was not what she remembered.

She had no time to dwell on these messy thoughts as the clamor from the valley below quickly drew her attention back.

"Why are we here? Aren't we supposed to use stealth weapons?"

Pointing downwards, Darcel asked, "Can you see clearly?" Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Neera adjusted her night vision goggles. "Hmm, it's very clear."

This was her first time experiencing this, and in such a perilous environment no less. She could feel her blood coursing faster through her veins, and her heart pounding rapidly in her chest.

It felt as if there was a tiny flame inside, crackling and burning away.

"Alright, this spot is not far from the pond and it's elevated, making it convenient for you to aim at them. Don't worry. Just throw the darts freely, and consider it as practice."

Neera swallowed, feeling somewhat embarrassed.

These are living, breathing individuals we're talking about. It seems a bit too cruel to refer to them as mere practice. Don't you think?

However, she wouldn't be blinded by kindness.

She knew very well that these individuals were after their lives.

In this battle, one shall stand and one shall fall.

With this in mind, she took a deep breath and pulled out the carefully wrapped darts...

Somehow, her aim was unusually good tonight, almost every dart hit the mark.

Of course, she didn't aim for vital spots. Her targets were areas like the arms and shoulders, places that wouldn't be fatal, but would hinder their movements.

Inside the pond, those individuals were already struggling to move. Now, they were further tormented by these darts that appeared out of nowhere, gradually leaving them with no room to defend themselves.

From a high vantage point not far away, Neera was delighted to see that the situation below was almost entirely under the control of her people.

As this was the first time she participated in real combat and achieved significant results, she excitedly shook Darcel's arm.

"I did it! I really did it!"

A hint of amusement was hidden in the depths of Darcel's eyes as he spoke warmly, "Hmm, you've done it, and done it very well. You've contributed greatly to this surprise attack."

Beside her, Shane was also quite surprised.

"Neera, you have made rapid progress!"

Neera chuckled, feeling a bit embarrassed by the praises. "It's all thanks to Finnley's good teaching. He's put in a lot of effort during this period. When I see him later, I really need to express my gratitude to him."

Darcel observed the situation below, and when he saw that the time was right, he said, "Let's go. We're heading down."

Neera nodded slightly, then stood up to walk back.

Shane jumped over the pile of rocks before her, taking the lead.

But just then, an unexpected turn of events occurred!

A thunderous boom, akin to a startling clap of thunder, exploded right beside their ears. Accompanying it was the earth and mountains trembling!

"What... what happened!"

Neera was shaking so much that she could barely stand, almost falling down.

Still, it was Darcel with his sharp eyes and quick hands, who caught her in time.

Meanwhile, many stones of various sizes tumbled down from above their heads, conveniently forming a barrier between Neera and Shane.

"Neera! Ahem, ahem... Neera!" Shane's anxious voice came from the other end.

It was too late before Neera could respond. The number of stones rolling down increased, and two of them hit her and Darcel.

At the same time, the tremors on their side were becoming increasingly intense, as if the mountainous terrain beneath their feet was also shifting!

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Chapter 1209

How could this happen! Search the [website](#) to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Neera was completely shocked, desperately trying to steady herself.

But the tremors were growing stronger, shaking Neera to her core as if all her internal organs were shifting.

Meanwhile, it felt as if something was descending upon them from above.

In her haste, she lifted her gaze, her pupils suddenly constricting.

The mountain!

A large section of the mountain had collapsed!

Countless chunks of the mountain crumbled like snowflakes, hurtling towards them!

Neera's mind was buzzing with activity. She knew that her immediate priority was to escape, to quickly find a place to hide.

For the first time, she was faced with such extreme danger. However, her body couldn't keep up with the pace. It was as if her feet had become rooted to the spot, rendering her unable to move.

At this critical moment, it was Darcel who held her tightly, intending to take her behind a pile of rocks.

However, their current location was perilous, with the terrifying cliff right behind them.

The mountain shook more and more violently due to the collapsing rubble. The two people couldn't even stand steady, let alone move to escape.

Just as the fragments streamed towards them, about to crash into them, Darcel took a risk. He held her and rolled out of the way!

In the next moment, both of them tumbled off the cliff, falling downward under the force of gravity.

The sudden sensation of weightlessness startled Neera so much that her heart nearly leaped out of her chest.

At that moment, Darcel's voice suddenly echoed in her ears.

"Don't be afraid." These few words, without a trace of panic or fear, carried a profound sense of determination and comfort.

Neera was momentarily stunned, then felt someone protecting her.

She felt a strong arm supporting her back and the back of her head.

And there before her was that warm and dependable chest.

For reasons unknown, her heart, once filled with unease, was miraculously soothed by these simple words.

As if by magic, she felt that everything would be alright...

Throughout, Darcel was constantly trying to steady himself, trying to stay rational and calm even as he tumbled.

Fortunately, the edge of the cliff was covered with vines, providing some obstacles on their descent.

Also, at the bottom, there were thorny bushes serving as a cushion.

Although the sight of those thorns was shocking, it was still much better than falling directly to the bottom of the cliff.

Even with some cushioning, the impact of falling from a cliff was not to be underestimated. So, when the two of them finally came to a stop, they were battered and bruised, knocked unconscious. Before they could even register the pain, they had already passed out...

When they woke up again, several hours had already passed.

Darcel regained consciousness before Neera did.

Before he came to a stop, his only conscious thought was to protect the woman in his arms. He made sure to land on his back, holding the woman securely against his chest.

At this moment, he was still holding Neera, his arms scratched and scarred by the thorny bushes, yet he didn't loosen his grip in the slightest.

The moment he regained consciousness, pain swept through his entire body. Every limb ached as if it had been run over by a car.

He gently touched the woman's shoulder, moved her slightly, and couldn't help but draw in a sharp breath.

At this moment, Neera slowly regained consciousness.

She lifted her eyelashes, and upon seeing the chest before her, she was momentarily taken aback.

The events that occurred before she fell unconscious quickly flooded her mind. Instinctively, she lifted her head, accidentally bumping into the man's chin.

A muffled grunt sounded above her head. The man's voice was deep and slightly hoarse when he said, "Don't move yet."

Suddenly, Neera dared not move.

"I'm sorry... I didn't mean to. Are you okay?"

Leaning against the man's chest, she was too worried to be embarrassed or flustered.

"I'm fine," the man responded softly.

Then, she felt the man start to move and quickly stopped him. "Don't move. This place is full of thorns you'll get hurt!"

The man continued his actions without pause, his voice sounding somewhat suppressed. He held his breath as his body tensed with intensity.

"Even if we don't move, we'd still be lying here. The most pressing matter now is to find a safe place."

Having said that, he endured the piercing pain throughout his body and sat up.

Neera was just about to look at him when he changed the way he was holding her.

In the next moment, the man finally stood up with her in his arms.

At this moment, Neera finally saw his face.

Thankfully, his face was unharmed, just a bit dirty.

Soon, Darcel carried her out of the thorny bushes and arrived at a clearing, where he gently set her down.

Almost at the very moment when Neera wished to set foot on the ground, he seemed overwhelmed, his legs devoid of strength, and he collapsed entirely.

"Darcel!" Neera was startled and quickly squatted down to help him.

Darcel was too heavy for her to move, so all she could do was help him lie down on the open ground.

"I'm fine, don't worry. I'm just a bit tired. A little rest will do me good."

Darcel looked at the clear worry on her face, soothing her in a low voice.

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Chapter 1210

He asked her again, "Are you alright? Do you have any injuries?"

Neera shook her head. "No, I'm fine."

When she fell from the cliff, Darcel protected her well. Besides a few scratches and abrasions, she wasn't seriously hurt.

However, Darcel himself was not doing well as he had focused on protecting her.

When Neera saw his usual expression just now, she felt relieved that he was okay.

But now, upon closer inspection, she noticed that his entire body was covered in scrapes and bloodstains. His clothes were mostly dyed red with blood, a sight that was truly shocking.

"Are you okay? How did you get hurt so badly..."

Guilt filled Neera's heart as she thought about how he only became like this after he protected her. Her eyes reddened at the mere thought of it.

Seeing her tears, Darcel immediately propped himself up.

"Don't worry, these are just superficial wounds. They may look terrifying, but they're not serious."

He deliberately downplayed his injuries, hoping to reassure her.

"But I find it hard to believe," Neera said skeptically. "You fell from such a height, landed directly on the ground, and got all bruised and battered. You've bled so much, so how could it possibly be just superficial injuries? Don't try to fool me. Give me your hand. Let me take your pulse and see." [SEARCH THE WEBSITE TO ACCESS CHAPTERS OF NOVELS EARLY AND IN THE HIGHEST QUALITY.](#)

As she spoke, she reached out to touch his wrist.

Yet, Darcel skillfully dodged, gently refusing, "Really, there's no need. I'm not lying to you. They're just minor injuries. If you don't believe me, take a look."

As he spoke, he lifted his aching arm, slowly unbuttoning his shirt.

Soon, all his scars were laid bare before Neera's eyes...

Neera's gaze suddenly froze, her eyes wandering over the blotchy scars. Her expression was complex, as if she was lost in thought.

Most of those scars were old wounds accumulated over the years. Some were cuts created by the thorns when he rolled off the cliff, and there were also traces of bumps and bruises in various shades of blue and purple, crisscrossing each other, which was startling to look at.

Darcel was observing her expressions, capturing the surprise in her eyes and the fleeting sense of loss.

"You can relax now. There are no serious injuries. Don't worry."

He spoke with an air of nonchalance, pretending not to notice her emotional state.

Neera took a deep breath before saying, "Yeah."

Darcel buttoned up his shirt, casually asking her, "What's wrong? Is something amiss?"

Neera did not know what to say.

The moment she saw those old scars, she couldn't quite articulate her feelings.

There was surprise, there was the unexpected, there was the expected, and there was disappointment...

All doubts and suspicions were laid to rest at this moment.

He was not him.

That man didn't have these scars.

As expected, she was overthinking it.

That's right. This is Phison, after all. How could he possibly come here?

"It's nothing." All her doubts were swept away by the night wind. She shook her head and spoke softly.

With a profound look in his eyes, Darcel asked again, "So, are you scared?"

Neera looked up at him, her gaze different from before. It was familiar, yet it felt appropriately distant. Her expression was now calm.

In this world, probably only that man could make her show a flustered, helpless, worried, and scared expression. As for other people and other things, she could face them rationally.

"There's nothing to be scared of. Don't put on your clothes yet. We need to treat your wounds or they might get infected. I brought some medicine with me. I'll clean and bandage them for you. It might hurt a bit, so bear with me.'

Luckily, she didn't lose the bag she was carrying with her. It came in handy at that moment.

Darcel nodded silently, obediently taking off his shirt.

Looking at those startling scars, Neera pursed her lips, her hands moving as she softly asked a question, trying to divert his attention.

"Darcel, how did you get these wounds? Do you often get hurt?"

Due to the potency of the medicine, his wounds throbbed with intense pain. Darcel's body was tense with discomfort. His voice was suppressed as if he was speaking through a mouthful of sand.

"Yeah, I've been practicing martial arts since I was a kid, so getting hurt is pretty common. It's no big deal."

Neera applied the medicine and bandaged him up.

"Do you fight often?"

"Yes."

"What just happened? Why was there such a sudden disturbance? It was like a landslide."

"It wasn't a landslide. Someone took advantage of the chaos and blew up the hollow of the mountain."

"Blew up the mountain?" Neera was shocked, pausing momentarily in her actions. "That's insane... If something goes wrong, wouldn't everyone die together?"

While they were talking, she had already bandaged his wounds.

Darcel sat up, dressed himself, and slowly let out a breath.

A thin layer of sweat formed on his forehead. He paused for a moment before explaining to her.

"The other party wanted exactly this outcome. We were careless. They must have had a backup plan ready to deploy when things didn't go their way. Unable to complete their task, they chose to die together. Moreover, once they blew up the hollow of the mountain, everyone panicked and ran in all directions. This gave them the perfect opportunity to escape in the chaos."

"

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Chapter 1211

The more Neera listened, the more her brows furrowed.

"If that's the case, these people are incredibly malicious. I wonder who is so desperate to see us dead."

Darcel shifted his arm slightly. Thankfully, there wasn't any serious issue.

"It's not clear at the moment, but judging by their methods, it's likely the influence of the Bartitsu Guild." Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Neera recalled what Chad had said before. The power they had at Lordsworth Estate was mostly moderate, while the Bartitsu Guild would go to any lengths to achieve their goals. She felt that this was highly probable.

"I keep thinking that this incident is somehow related to the people who ambushed us last time," she mused. "Both of these large-scale attacks were clearly targeted, and the number of people involved this time was noticeably more than the last. The plan was also more comprehensive than before, as if they've learned from their previous failure, hence the increased investment and meticulous preparation."

After some thought, Darcel nodded. "It's not impossible. However, if it's related to the previous group, we'll need to be even more cautious going forward."

Neera was puzzled. "Why?"

"Last time, there must have been at least two family forces gathered. Afterward, they suffered heavy losses and left. This time, those people definitely won't be involved again. However, the fact that the mastermind behind this can still send out so many people indicates that this person has likely rallied even more forces behind the scenes to serve him. Given this, it won't be easy for the Gordon family to deal with it."

Hearing him say this, Neera couldn't help but feel deeply worried.

"I wonder what's happening on the other side of the valley now. I hope Shane and the others haven't been injured. And those people who attacked in the night..."

Seeing her worry, Darcel comforted her in a gentle voice, "Don't panic. Everything is fine. Before the landslide, we were in a good position. Most of their forces were in the water. It's almost impossible for them to turn the tables. At most, they could take advantage of the chaos to escape. They wouldn't harm the Gordon family. Besides, Caleb is there. They will help the Gordon family. Don't worry."

Indeed, that was easier said than done. She couldn't help but feel anxious since she couldn't see them and didn't know what the situation was.

Because her thoughts were all focused on Shane, she failed to notice the small detail of Darcel directly calling Caleb by his name just now.

"Don't worry about them for now. You're injured too—you should take care of yourself."

"Ah, this? It's nothing to worry about." Neera glanced down at the scratch on her forearm, seemingly unconcerned.

Yet, with a serious expression, Darcel insisted, "What do you mean it's nothing to worry about? An injury is not a trivial matter. It needs to be taken care of. Let me help you."

After he finished speaking, he reached out to grab her hand.

Neera, however, chose to dodge his hand, just as he had dodged her hand earlier.

"This is just a minor injury. I can handle it myself. I'll take care of it."

Neera chose to step back and obediently follow instructions, but she refused the man's offer to help.

No matter what, Darcel was an outsider. She needed to maintain propriety and distance.

Darcel's hand paused mid-air, and he glanced at her. Her head was slightly lowered, her expression calm, her eyebrows subtly raised.

"All right, you handle it yourself. Take a break here. I'm going to check out the situation and see what we should do next."

Neera nodded. "All right, just be careful."

At that time, Shane and his companions had already escaped from the valley.

The recent landslide almost buried them inside the valley.

Luckily, they reacted quickly and didn't linger in the fight.

However, it was a pity that the group managed to escape during the chaos. They couldn't catch anyone.

"Damn it! They got away, and we don't even know who's pulling the strings behind the scenes!"

The members of the Cox family were all disheveled, cursing loudly in their anger.

Shane was not in the mood to deal with these matters at the moment, his gaze incessantly wandering around his surroundings.

"Is Neera around? Has she not come out yet? Has anyone seen her?" Unable to spot Neera, he grew anxious, his questions coming out in a rapid-fire manner.

Everyone shook their heads, both Charles and Finnley's faces looking terrible.

"We didn't see her. Wasn't she with you before? How did you two separate?"

Shane gritted his teeth. "We were together initially, but when the mountain collapsed, we were separated by the rolling stones. I couldn't get across, nor could I see what was happening on her side! As the rolling stones increased, I had no choice but to descend first. I kept thinking she must have run down another path with Darcel!"

Charles' face turned even more unsightly when he heard that.

If something were to happen to Ms. Garcia, how would we ever explain it to Mr. Gordon?

Just then, Caleb spoke in a soft voice. "There's no need to worry so much. Ms. Garcia will be fine."

Currently, Finnley was also full of worries, his tone somewhat unpleasant.

"What do you know? How can you be so sure! You don't seem worried at all. The one who disappeared with Neera is one of your people. You're so calm. Don't tell me you don't care about their well-being at all?"

If anyone else had said this, Caleb would probably have been frowning by now.

However, since Finnley was an elder and a highly respected individual, he would naturally show some respect. He explained in a calm and unhurried manner, "Easy there, Mr. Weaver. It's not that I don't care about their well-being, but I trust in the abilities of Darcel. He's been through a lot of these situations and has managed to escape death every time. Rest assured, he's got a strong life force. He definitely won't die in a pile of rubble. He'll surely escape with Ms. Garcia."

With a hum, Finnley voiced his doubts, "Do you really trust him that much?"

With a resolute expression, Caleb said word by word, "My trust in him exceeds that in myself."

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Chapter 1212

Shane and the others looked at him with solemn expressions. Their lips moved slightly, but they remained silent.

Caleb continued, "I understand how you feel, but please trust me. Darcel will definitely bring Ms. Garcia back safely. The most urgent matter now is our next course of action."

Charles furrowed his brows in uncertainty. "So, what should we do now?"

Caleb's eyes narrowed slightly, his gaze deep and distant as he looked towards the valley, strewn with countless shattered rocks.

"It's quite simple. We head towards the mountain peak while searching for Darcel and Ms. Garcia along the way. Since we've all been separated, we must find a way to regroup. Given that we all share the same destination, they will surely head towards the mountain peak once they escape from danger. All we need to do is move forward."

He paused, his tone taking on a somewhat profound significance.

"But before we set off, we should definitely sort things out here."

Shane was puzzled. "What else is going on here?" search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

"Don't you find it strange? The mountain was perfectly fine, so how could it suddenly collapse? And before the collapse, did any of you hear an explosion?"

Charles immediately nodded. "I heard it! It seemed to come from above the valley!"

Caleb raised an eyebrow. "That's correct. So this mountain collapse wasn't a natural disaster, but a deliberate act. Someone caused it."

Shane also realized. "Are you saying that it was those individuals from earlier who did this?"

"It's highly likely. As the saying goes, 'a person can't run away forever.' It's not always about people. Traces are left behind after something is done. The clues you're searching for are right here, within your reach."

Both of them were perceptive individuals. Shane immediately grasped the implications of his words. He turned his head to gaze deep into the valley, at the collapsed section, his eyes filled with darkness and coldness.

...

"Are you well-rested?" After surveying the surroundings, Darcel returned to inquire.

Neera nodded. "I'm actually fine, but I'm more concerned about you. With all those injuries on you, are you sure you can handle leaving now? If you strain yourself, it could be really painful."

Darcel appeared nonchalant. "It's alright. Your medicine is very effective, and I'm feeling much better now. We should depart as soon as possible. They might be searching for us right now, probably heading towards the mountain. It's not ideal for us to be separated, so it's best if we catch up with them as soon as possible."

Neera understood that her medicine wouldn't work immediately, but she also realized that time was of the essence and they couldn't afford to waste any more of it.

"Alright. Let's go then." She stood up, brushing off the dirt from her clothes, and tidied up her hair, trying her best to appear presentable.

"But what should we do next? We're at the bottom of a cliff. I'm not sure if there's a way to climb back up the mountain..."

Darcel walked to the bottom of the cliff and pointed at the vines.

"I've checked. There's no path to take. The only way is to follow the vine and climb back up."

Neera tilted her head back, swallowed, and said, "Alright then."

There's no other option at this point. No matter how challenging it becomes, she had to persevere.

And so, the two of them quickly grabbed onto the vines, climbing up bit by bit.

Although this cliff wasn't completely vertical, there was still a slope, making it relatively easier to climb.

However, gravity played a role in everything. Overcoming their own weight proved to be quite a challenge.

Neera had only climbed halfway when her fingers and palms became raw, causing intense pain.

In addition, the injury she sustained a few days ago had reopened due to the strain on her shoulder, leaving her feeling overwhelmed.

While switching hands, a sudden sting caused her grip to loosen inadvertently, almost causing her to fall.

Luckily, Darcel was right beside her. Seeing this, he quickly and skillfully wrapped his arms around her.

"Don't be afraid. Just hold on to me, and I'll take you up there."

The man's deep voice resonated above her head, causing Neera to hesitate, instinctively wanting to refuse.

"No need. I can do it myself..."

However, Darcel insisted, "Don't push yourself. Your hands are injured. If you continue like this, your hands will be ruined."

Neera gritted her teeth. "But you're in the same situation."

Darcel remained calm. "No worries. I'm a grown man, so I can certainly handle this weight. Just hold on tight to me."

Neera hesitated for a moment, feeling that it wasn't right. However, the current situation was a matter of life and death. Therefore, she wrapped her arms around his waist without further hesitation.

Nevertheless, she didn't rely on him completely, but kept one hand free to hold onto a vine.

"By using your strength like this, I can also help you conserve some energy."

Seeing her determination, Darcel pursed his lips and nodded in agreement.

After a strenuous climb, the two of them finally reached halfway up the mountain again at daybreak.

As they climbed, both of them were exhausted to the point of collapse, instantly falling onto the flat ground, panting heavily, with no desire to get up.

"Finally... I made it up here. I'm so exhausted. This is way more tiring than staying awake for three days and three nights in the lab without eating or sleeping..."

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Chapter 1213

Neera observed the indirect sunlight appearing on the horizon, breathing heavily while muttering to herself.

Darcel glanced at her, a slight smile forming at the corner of his mouth.

"After all, our efforts were not in vain. We survived a great disaster and were able to rise again. We're truly fortunate."

Neera agreed. "Exactly, when the mountain collapsed, I thought it was the end for me. I wondered what would happen to my family if I died here. Thankfully, you were there, Darcel. Thank you for protecting me. We've truly experienced life and death together. If you ever need anything in the future, don't hesitate to ask. I will definitely repay your kindness."

Darcel didn't look at her, his gaze fixed on the gradually brightening sky, a hint of restrained tenderness flickering in his eyes.

"I can ask for anything?" he suddenly asked.

Neera, despite her exhaustion, nodded firmly. "Anything you want."

With the great kindness Darcel had shown her, she felt it was only right to repay him with all her might.

However, something seemed to cross Darcel's mind, deepening the curve of his smile.

After a short rest, the two of them regained their strength.

Neera sat up, still concerned about Darcel's injured hands.

"Darcel, your hands are injured. Let me clean them up and bandage them for you."

Darcel also stood up, his gaze falling on her hands full of wounds. His drooping eyelashes concealed the pain in his eyes.

"Why do you always take care of others? You're the one who's injured. I can handle it. Let's take care of your wounds first."

After speaking, he took Neera's medicine without hesitation, grabbed one of her hands, and began tending to her wounds.

Neera couldn't refuse, feeling somewhat helpless.

In her current state, she was unable to help others. She couldn't even worry about maintaining a distance from the opposite gender. Now, she had no choice but to let him assist her.

When the medicinal powder scattered on her hand, she couldn't help but wince in pain and recoil.

Darcel held her back, not allowing her to dodge. He lowered his head and gently blew on her wound with utmost care.

"It will feel better this way. Just bear with it a little longer, and it will be over soon."

Neera looked at him, momentarily lost in a daze as the image of that man resurfaced in her mind.

Seeing her silence, Darcel glanced up and noticed she was staring at him. He asked softly, "What's the matter?"

Neera snapped out of her thoughts, smiling apologetically as she shook her head. "It's nothing. I was just thinking of someone."

Darcel's eyebrows twitched slightly. "Who is it?"

Neera didn't explicitly say his name, she simply replied, "Someone very important."

Darcel's heart raced, but he didn't press for more information. He continued to tend to her wounds, bowing his head.

During the following process, neither of them spoke again.

Once they had finished bandaging each other's wounds, they couldn't help but laugh as they looked at the gauze wrapped around their hands.

"Darcel, we're truly sworn friends now."

With a slight smile, Darcel didn't say anything but helped her to her feet.

At that moment, they realized that the place before them was not the valley they had fallen into, and they couldn't see their original campsite. Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

"Where are we?" Neera was completely lost in the mountains, unable to determine directions or recognize any paths.

Darcel looked around, but he wasn't very sure either.

"I don't know, but it doesn't matter. All we need to do is head towards the mountaintop."

As he spoke, he turned his head to look at her. His gaze was deep and serene, radiating a comforting strength.

"We may encounter other forces along this journey, but you don't need to worry. I will protect you. Just stay close to me."

After everything they had been through, Neera had come to trust him deeply.

In that moment, her eyes curved into a smile.

"Yes, I feel at ease with you, Darcel. You remind me of someone I know. I even thought you might be him at first."

Darcel's eyelid twitched, and he asked calmly, "Oh, who is it?"

Neera didn't explicitly mention his name, she simply said, "A very important person."

Darcel's jealousy seeped into his words, though he tried to hide it. "Is that the person you mentioned earlier, the one you consider your fiancé?"

Neera was initially taken aback, then couldn't help but laugh. "Of course not, he's not my fiancé."

Darcel knowingly asked, "Is that so? But currently, the whole of Phison is buzzing with the news that you two are engaged. The Cox family has even acknowledged you as their future daughter-in-law and defended you to the Gordon family."

Although he concealed it well, a hint of jealousy slipped into his words.

Neera, however, didn't catch on as her mind was focused on clearing up the misunderstanding.

"No, it's true that there was a marriage arrangement between the Cox and Gong families, but I never wanted this union. The marriage was never finalized, so Mr. Cox and I are completely free. We are not engaged. Mr. Cox initially used this pretext to help me gain a foothold in the Gordon family."

After hearing her explanation, the jealousy in Darcel's heart subsided a bit. He continued to feign ignorance, coaxing her to share more.

"I see. So, is there someone else who is your fiancé?"

Neera nodded slightly, her eyes and brows warming at the thought of that man, a radiant smile tugging at the corners of her mouth.

"My fiancé is the only man in my heart..."

With his head slightly lowered, Darcel responded nonchalantly with a simple "Hmm." However, the amusement in his eyes was almost impossible to hide...

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Chapter 1214

On the journey ahead, his mood visibly improved, although he didn't speak much.

Neera didn't know what had come over him, but she seized the moment and poured out her longing that she had been holding back.

"Darcel, you probably don't know, but you really resemble him. Your demeanor is almost identical, and your eyes, they're just like his too."

"It's been a long time since we last met. At first, I thought you were him, but then I felt I was overthinking. This is Phison, so how could he possibly find his way here?"

Darcel listened quietly, his lips never ceasing to smile.

He was always someone rational, but he couldn't help but feel a surge of emotion upon hearing these words. Unable to contain himself, he asked, "Do you miss him a lot?"

Neera walked with her hands behind her back, casually kicking the small stones on the road as she went along. She nodded her head slightly.

"Yeah, I do miss him, and I miss him a lot. This is the longest we've ever been apart. And before we separated, we had a quarrel. But we've made up now, so I really want to finish everything here as soon as possible. I want to leave this place soon and rush back to see him."

At this point, she lifted her head, watching the warm sun rise, and revealed a smile that was even brighter than the sunlight.

"Before I entered Mount Cloud, I had contacted him. He said he would come to see me. However, he doesn't even know where I am. How could he possibly find me? It seems I'll have to go see him instead."

"He will," Darcel suddenly said, "He will come."

Neera looked at him quizzically, tilting her head. "Huh? But he doesn't even know I'm in Phison, so how could that be possible?"

Darcel's gaze was deep and mysterious, his eyes bright. His voice was low, as if he was suppressing something.

"Since he said he would come to see you, he will definitely come. Men do not make promises easily. They will do what they say. Even if he doesn't know where you are, he will definitely find a way to locate you. What you need to do is believe in him."

She didn't expect him to say these words. Neera was somewhat surprised, her eyes slightly doubtful.

"Darcel, the way you speak, it's as if you know him very well..."

Darcel's gaze faltered slightly, realizing he had been a bit too hasty earlier. He steadied his emotions before speaking again.

"I just feel that the man who can hold a place in your heart wouldn't be the type to make promises lightly without taking responsibility. You're so outstanding, and the man who deserves you won't be any less. So, if he said he would come to see you, he definitely will."

"I see..." Neera touched her nose and smiled slightly. "Alright then. I'm looking forward to it."

After she finished speaking, she started to feel a bit embarrassed. Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

"Um... Darcel, I got a bit carried away earlier. I found you very approachable, and I might have spoken a bit too much due to my excitement. You don't mind, do you?"

Darcel hooked his lips into a smile. "No, you can say whatever you want, and I will pay attention."

How could he possibly mind? To him, these words were the most precious treasure.

Neera let out a "hmm," feeling that her longing had been mostly expressed. The excitement had passed, and she felt too embarrassed to say anything more, so she simply changed the subject.

The two of them chatted as they walked up the mountain. The journey was rather peaceful, and they didn't encounter any danger for the time being.

By the time noon arrived, Neera was feeling a bit hungry.

Gurgle...

The sound of a growling stomach echoed, and Neera immediately covered her abdomen in embarrassment, feeling somewhat awkward.

"Sorry, I'm a bit hungry, but it's okay. Let's keep going. We might run into Shane and the others soon."

With a slight smile, Darcel said, "There's no need to apologize. We've been walking all morning. If you're hungry, let's take a break. Who knows when we'll run into them. It's important to replenish our energy first."

Luckily, there were some emergency rations, enough for the two of them to have two meals in the backpack that Neera chose to carry with her.

And so, the two of them sat down right there and shared the bread.

Darcel didn't really mind, but he couldn't help but feel a bit unsettled seeing Neera willing to eat dry bread.

"It's tough on you, a young girl, to participate in such a brutal and harsh election."

Neera didn't really feel anything unusual.

"There's no question of difficulty or ease here. As the head of the Gordon family, once I've assumed this position, I must shoulder the responsibility, whether I'm forced into an unwelcome situation or not. This is an important election, so I can't avoid making an appearance as the family head. Besides, I just need to persevere, no matter how tough or challenging the situation can be. It will pass somehow."

Darcel nodded silently, yet in his heart, he thought, "This girl remains as tenacious as ever."

While the two were taking a break, suddenly, a few people appeared out of nowhere. They looked disheveled, just like refugees, and they ran straight towards them.

The color drained from Darcel's face instantly. Without any hesitation, he pulled Neera behind him, firmly shielding her.

Neera watched these few people, his heart suddenly on edge, his gaze alert.

"Who are these people? What are they running over here for? They wouldn't be planning to take advantage of us, would they?"

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Chapter 1215

As the group approached, Neera became increasingly confused.

The other party seemed ecstatic, as if they had just reunited with a loved one. Their emotions were so overwhelming that they were on the verge of tears.

If it weren't for Darcel's intimidating aura, Neera believed that this crowd would have eagerly embraced them.

"Leave if you don't want to die," Darcel coldly rebuked, showing no concern for the odds. His aura was powerful and unpredictable.

The few individuals swallowed hard and hesitated to step forward. However, they were unwilling to leave and remained nervously in their original spot.

"Um... Sir, please don't be scared. No, I mean, please don't be angry. We... we're a little frightened..." the tall man leading the group hesitated before speaking, his tone tinged with a sense of grievance.

Darcel watched with a cold gaze.

Neera was speechless, her face filled with exasperation. What on earth was happening?

What kind of introduction was this? Couldn't he be a little more subtle?

They had approached and immediately played the weak card. It was quite candid.

However, Neera and Darcel remained cautious.

The other party's behavior could be a ploy to catch them off guard. They were unsure if it was a deliberate act or genuine naivety.

Neera scrutinized the man who had spoken, analyzing him with her gaze.

He had a handsome and refined appearance. If it weren't for his disheveled state, he would probably look quite energetic.

He doesn't seem like a scheming person, Neera thought.

Behind him stood five others, all wearing tense expressions, some even showing signs of embarrassment.

It seemed they had encountered some sort of trouble to end up in such a sorry state.

With that thought, Neera became distracted again, glancing at herself and Darcel.

Hmm... Our current state isn't much better. We look like refugees, just like these people.

Darcel's sharp and imposing gaze swept over each of their faces.

Those who caught his gaze immediately straightened up, standing tall and firm like poplar trees guarding the frontier.

Seeing that Neera and Darcel remained silent, the man at the forefront began to fidget, nervously rubbing his hands together. He then awkwardly scratched the back of his head, looking utterly lost.

"Miss, sir, we mean no harm. There's no need for you to be so wary. We have no ill intentions, nor do we wish to hurt anyone. We just wanted to ask if we could join your team. It seems there are only two of you, and this gentleman here looks very dependable. If we stick together, we'll surely be safer!"

Darcel stared at him coldly, his vigilance unwavering, and began to interrogate.

"Who are you people?"

Upon hearing him speak, the man's eyes instantly brightened a bit. He quickly responded, "My name is Cayden."

Darcel's eyebrows slightly furrowed. "Are you the head of the Massey family?"

Cayden nodded enthusiastically. "Yes! That's me!"

Neera almost facepalmed, internally rolling her eyes in exasperation.

Really? Are you serious?

This is actually the head of the Massey family!

She had thought it was someone else's mischievous kid! [search the website](#) to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

She had thought her uncle was outrageous enough before, pushing her into resuming the position of family head. But she hadn't expected the Massey family to be even more absurd than the Gordon family...

Cayden had a pair of doe eyes, which were somewhat adorable as they were moist and sparkling.

He caught a twitch at the corner of Neera's mouth, blinked his moist eyes, and asked her, "Are you mocking me?"

Neera was surprised. "How did you know?"

Cayden said, "I knew it. Everyone reacts the same way when they hear about my identity. They all can't believe it, finding it unbelievable that I'm actually the head of a family. But I truly am the head of the Massey family, as real as it gets!"

He patted his chest proudly, but patted too hard and choked himself, coughing twice.

Despite the tense situation, his antics somehow managed to inject a bit of comic relief.

Neera couldn't help but shake her head. This guy is really wasting his talent by not being a comedian.

Darcel was left somewhat speechless, his face stern, by his antics.

"So why do you want to team up with us?"

Cayden's face immediately fell, and he poured out his woes with a bitter laugh.

"We were having such a great time on this trip, enjoying the mountains and waters, truly having the time of our lives. We thought this journey was well worth it. We planned to camp and rest last night, then throw a barbecue party

to unwind. But for some unknown reason, we were suddenly attacked. Our campsite was destroyed, some of us got injured and had to be carried down the mountain. Now, only a few of us are left."

"I'm worried that someone might take a dislike to us again and attack us, so we won't dare to rest. We'll have to keep moving. But our numbers have been cut in half now, and I fear we might not make it to the mountain top. So, we're looking to team up with others who are also on their own, to travel together."

As he spoke, his gaze swept over Neera and Darcel, sizing them up.

"Judging by your appearances, it seems like something has happened to you too. Have you been separated from your companions?"

Ignoring his question, Darcel asked again, "Do you know who attacked you?"

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Chapter 1216

Cayden shook his head. "I'm not sure, but it seems like it's the power of the Bartitsu Guild. The other party is wearing a mask, so it's hard to tell who they are specifically."

Saying this, he irritably ran his fingers through his hair, messing it up like a bird's nest.

"Ugh, what a ridiculous election. If it wasn't for the guild insisting that all families must participate, I wouldn't have bothered! What does being the district president have to do with me? The Massey family doesn't care about such things. All this fuss for nothing, not to mention it's exhausting and I almost lost my life. The other families are the same, fighting tooth and nail over such a trivial matter. It's really pointless..."

He had been bottling up his dissatisfaction all along the way, and now he began to complain incessantly.

Neera was left speechless for a moment, the corner of her mouth twitching repeatedly.

What a barbecue party, sightseeing, and vacation. It looks like this guy really doesn't care about the position of the district president.

I'm afraid that even Caleb would feel ashamed in his presence.

Darcel stared at him, his gaze as sharp as a knife. His eyes then swept over the faces of the others, intent on discerning the truth behind the words that were just spoken.

He had read countless people, so he was almost able to discern their thoughts at a glance.

After a few seconds, the wariness in his eyes slightly diminished. In a calm voice, he said, "I've heard before that the Massey family lives a peaceful and non-competitive life in Phison. Seeing it today, it seems the rumors were not unfounded."

Seeing that his face was no longer as terrifying as before, Cayden's eyes lit up.

"Yeah, we Masseys are just honest businessmen. As long as we can make money and live to spend it, that's all that matters. We really don't want to get involved in those power struggles and fights for profit. Now, mister, you finally believe me, don't you?"

With a nonchalant expression, Darcel responded, "Barely passable."

Cayden's face immediately lit up with joy, as if he had received some extraordinary approval.

"That's good, that's good. Rest assured, we will absolutely not cause any trouble for you! When necessary, the Massey family might even be able to help you! So, let's travel together now!"

Neera found it amusing to see him getting comfortable so quickly.

However, since Darcel had agreed, it seemed these people pose no threat to them.

And so, the two groups journeyed together.

At first, Darcel and Neera were somewhat cautious, maintaining a certain distance from them.

Neera took the opportunity to ask him, "Darcel, what's the story behind the Massey family? Do they really not compete for anything?"

Darcel positioned her on his inner side, adopting a protective stance to shield her from the Massey family members.

"Indeed, the Massey family is one of the powers within the Bartitsu Guild, but that's only because they are located within the guild's sphere of influence and were automatically included. The Massey family itself doesn't really have a stance. For centuries, they've been solely focused on doing business, never involving themselves in the internal conflicts of the Bartitsu Guild, nor the disputes between the guild and Lordsworth Estate. In a way, they could be considered a neutral family.

"However, Cayden is somewhat different. Rumor has it that he values loyalty highly, and for this reason, he has broken the ancestral precedent of not participating in conflicts. But it wasn't for any profit disputes, but rather, he stood up for some of the lower-ranking families in the guild.

"Lower-ranking families?" Neera was somewhat surprised. "I thought every family in Phison was not to be underestimated."

Darcel turned his head to look at her, giving a light chuckle.

"Phison is vastly different from the outside world. On the surface, every family appears to have the strength to compete freely. However, in truth, it's just like the outside world, with clear distinctions of class hierarchy. Where there is strength, there will be weakness. It's just like the Eight Elders in the Bartitsu Guild. It's precisely because they are more powerful than other families that they can take the elder seats, becoming the leaders within the Bartitsu Guild."

"For the weakest, the lowest-ranking families, although they are stronger than many of the prestigious families outside, they are extremely vulnerable under the rules of Phison and are the easiest to be oppressed. I heard that once, Cayden stood up publicly to the elders of the Bartitsu Guild to protect two low-ranking families from being humiliated and almost ended up in a bloody fight."

Surprisingly, the man who seemed to lack seriousness also had such a righteous side. Neera began to see him in a new light, even developing a bit of a liking for him.

"So, what happened in the end? What was the outcome? The Massey family couldn't possibly have defeated those elders, could they?"

Narrowing his eyes, Darcel answered with profound meaning, "That may not necessarily be the case. I must say, the ancestors of the Massey family were all exceptionally astute. Even though the Massey family does not participate in the power struggle in Phison, appearing as if they have been marginalized, it's actually not the case."

"The Massey family is a renowned prestigious family, famous across the global business circle. Phison is not an isolated utopia, so its existence inevitably requires economic support. Almost half of Phison's economic lifeline is held by the Massey family. If the Massey family were to fall, at the very least, the Bartitsu Guild would definitely suffer a significant blow, not to mention Phison." Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

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Chapter 1217

Neera finally understood. "In all matters, profit comes first. To ensure the prosperity of the Bartitsu Guild, we must ensure the prosperity of the Massey family. They rise and fall together. Therefore, even the elders dare not act recklessly against the Massey family."

Darcel nodded. "Exactly. Haven't you noticed? Even though the Massey family was ambushed, they weren't annihilated. They even left Cayden alive. The reason those people did this was simply to ensure that the Massey family wouldn't have the chance to compete for the district presidency, and also to ensure that the Massey family wouldn't experience any turmoil due to this conflict."

Neera took a moment to digest these words, feeling somewhat moved.

"I never expected it to be this intricately complex, with so many nuances."

The corners of Darcel's mouth lifted slightly, but the smile did not reach his eyes.

"Indeed, in this land of freedom, various forces are suppressing and competing with each other. On the surface, things may appear calm, but there's a raging storm beneath it."

Then, he added, "I agreed to let them go together because of Cayden. However, we still need to be cautious."

Neera nodded. "Yes, I know that."

As the two were talking, Cayden had joined them unbeknownst to them. Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

"My dear lady and this gentleman, I realize I don't know who you are. Would it be possible for you to tell me who you are? Otherwise, I'm not sure how to address you."

Neera gave Darcel a glance, noticing a slight tuck of his chin. Then, she decided not to hide anything and revealed her true identity to him.

"My name is Neera Garcia."

Upon hearing this name, Cayden's eyes widened in surprise, his mouth agape as if he could swallow an egg whole.

He portrayed his shock quite convincingly, then began to stroke his chin, circling around her in a manner that he was studying her.

What is this?

Suddenly, she felt that the new light she had just given him must be because her mind was playing tricks on her.

This person seems like an idiot no matter how I look at him.

She tried to tolerate it, but she just couldn't stand his monkey-like antics.

As it turned out, she didn't even get a chance to speak. Darcel made the first move, his face visibly turned dark, clearly showing his displeasure.

"Have you seen enough?"

Cayden's gaze remained steady as he casually waved his hand. "No."

With a cold laugh, Darcel said, "If you don't want your eyes anymore, I'll gouge them out for you."

Cayden shivered all over, suddenly leaping away. He looked just like a startled fawn, gazing at him in terror.

"My God, you... you mustn't act recklessly in broad daylight, okay? Stay calm, stay calm!"

What's this all about? I didn't really run into an idiot, did I!

Darcel remained silent, his gaze coolly fixed on him.

"Ahem, ahem..." Perhaps Cayden felt a bit awkward, so he cleared his throat, rubbed the back of his head, and explained with an embarrassed smile.

"Mister, please don't be angry. I was just so surprised that I wanted to see who Ms. Garcia really is. I didn't expect to meet the head of the Gordon family by accident! So, I got a bit excited for a moment, hehe..."

What does he mean by that? No matter how Neera tried to understand it, it just felt awkward.

"I'm just a regular person with one nose and two eyes. There's nothing particularly extraordinary about me."

"No, no, this statement is not right!"

Cayden immediately corrected her, bringing up the gossip in Phison.

"Ms. Garcia, you may not realize this, but you are now the center of attention in the entire Phison! First, the former head of the Gordon family spared no effort to push you to the top, then the head of the Cox family served you loyally, protecting you at all costs. Later, there was a commotion, and Lordsworth Estate stepped in to back you up. Each of these events is unheard of in history!"

Neera's face fell. "You're being overly dramatic. You should be a storyteller."

"Tsk, Ms. Garcia, I'm not exaggerating. It's all true. Everyone is so curious now, wondering how you did it. I even thought you were a witch before I met you. It's hard to imagine that the real you is just a young girl."

A witch...

A twitch tugged at the corner of Neera's mouth; she felt like hitting him.

Cayden was still enthusiastically talking. "Ah, come to think of it, she is indeed the woman Avery Cox has taken a liking to. She's naturally beautiful and has a great aura. He is truly lucky..."

Neera was at a loss for words.

Even though he had praised her, she didn't feel like saying thank you!

"Stop it right there." She couldn't bear to listen any longer, so she interrupted him and stated solemnly, "Mr. Cox is not interested in me. Our relationship is purely platonic, so please don't spread rumors."

Cayden let out a "Huh," his face full of curiosity.

"Don't you two have an engagement? And there are rumors everywhere saying that Avery Cox is spending a fortune just to make you happy..."

11

What the f*ck!

Neera could feel a headache coming.

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Chapter 1218

She took a deep breath and patiently reiterated, "So, please don't make things up if you're not sure. Those are just rumors. It's true that there's a marriage arrangement between the Gordon family and the Cox family, but Mr. Cox and I have not made any commitments, nor will we marry each other. Do you understand?"

Why do I have to explain myself to everyone I meet?

It seemed that her name was now associated with Avery Cox, and that was a significant problem. Once she escaped from this dense forest, she would have to quickly find an opportunity to clarify things.

Cayden seemed lost in thought. "Really?"

At this moment, Darcel began to speak. His tone was deep and carried a hint of warning.

"Everything has been explained clearly, so why is there still so much unnecessary chatter?"

Cayden shivered all over, for some unknown reason, he didn't dare to confront this man.

"Alright, alright, I'll stop rambling. And you, sir? Are you also a member of the Gordon family?"

Darcel gave him a cold glance. "No, I am Darcel, from the Medicina family."

"The Medicina family?" Cayden was puzzled. "How did the Medicina family get involved with the Gordon family? Aren't you part of Lordsworth Estate?"

Darcel was annoyed with him. "Any problems with that?"

Cayden rubbed his nose. "Darcel, we're now in the same boat, aren't we? You don't have to be so cold all the time."

On the side, Neera couldn't help but lower her head and laugh upon seeing him hit a snag.

Upon hearing the sound, Cayden turned his head and was instantly captivated by her profile. It was as gentle and radiant as a blooming rhododendron.

It felt as if something had suddenly rushed into his heart, illuminating everything within.

"What are you looking at?"

Suddenly, a chilling voice echoed beside him, laced with a biting cold, and exceptionally eerie.

Cayden felt a chill run from his head to his toes, causing the hairs all over his body to stand on end.

He turned around in a panic, only to meet the icy gaze of Darcel.

"I..." He hesitated and stuttered, "No, it's nothing."

After speaking, he glanced at Neera again, his expression somewhat peculiar.

Seeing this, Darcel was quite displeased.

He pulled Cayden aside, positioning himself between him and Neera. He warned him through his actions to keep his distance from Neera.

Cayden's eyes glanced at Neera, then at Darcel, seemingly deep in thought.

"Darcel, could it be that you are..." He seemed to realize something, suddenly leaned in close to Darcel, and asked in a hushed voice.

With a slight furrow in his brows, Darcel glanced at him impatiently. "What do you want to ask me?"

Cayden felt a chill down his neck and immediately backed down. "Ah, it's nothing. Let's just keep going!"

Beside them, Neera just shook her head, speechless.

This guy is really eccentric.

On the journey ahead, Cayden tried to strike up conversations in various ways.

He asked curiously, "By the way, Neera, how did you end up alone? Where are the people from the Gordon family? Why aren't they with you?"

Seeing his address change from "Ms. Garcia" to "Neera," Darcel's face darkened a bit.

Neera didn't feel anything unusual. People often called her that before, so she didn't notice anything wrong.

They both knew each other's identities now, so she felt there was no need to hide anything. Therefore, she told him about the attack she experienced in the valley last night.

Upon hearing that the mountain had been blown up, Cayden was so shocked that his eyes nearly popped out of their sockets.

"What? So the commotion last night was caused by the people attacking you!"

Neera asked curiously, "Did you also feel it?"

"Of course, we thought it was an earthquake hearing such a loud noise in the middle of the night. We were so scared that we quickly found a place to hide. Only when the shaking stopped did we dare to come out. We never expected that someone would actually dare to blast a mountain!"

His complexion looked somewhat off, as if he was deep in thought about something.

"Firearms are strictly prohibited in Phison. Who would be so audacious to break the law? This matter must be thoroughly investigated once we get out."

Neera felt the same way. "We were on the verge of a successful counterattack last night, but due to the mountain explosion, Darcel and I fell off the cliff. We had no choice but to separate from our companions. I have no idea how they are now, whether they got hurt last night..."

At this moment, Cayden rubbed the back of his head as if he was thinking about something.

"Speaking of which, we seemed to have seen people from the Gordon family at dawn, right?"

He turned his head to confirm with his companion, who nodded, "Yes, we have seen them before."

Upon hearing this, Neera immediately became anxious and started asking a barrage of questions, "Where did you see them? Are they okay? Which direction did they go?" [Search The website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.](#)

Cayden signaled her to stay calm.

"Don't worry, they're fine. I saw Shane leading the team. However, because we were outnumbered at that time, we were afraid of being pursued by the other families, so we didn't take the initiative to greet them. We only came out after they left."

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Chapter 1219

His companion added, "They seem fine, and there was quite a crowd. But some of the people following them don't appear to be from the Gordon family."

Neera's eyes lit up. "Yes, those are from the Medicina family, who have been traveling with us!"

Cayden nodded. "That's correct. There are many people, but I'm not sure how many exactly. But rest assured, they are all safe. They must have headed towards the mountain top. As long as we continue moving towards the top, we will definitely run into them."

Upon hearing these words, the heavy stone in Neera's heart finally lifted. [SEAR*ch the Find_Novel.net website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.](#)

Thank goodness, Shane and the others are safe!

Immediately after, Cayden began discussing another important piece of information.

"By the way, when we were hiding last night, we overheard a passing family mention that the Lordsworth Estate is gathering their power, planning to eliminate the Bartitsu Guild in one swift move."

Upon hearing this, a faint glimmer appeared in Darcel's eyes, though he was not surprised.

Neera was somewhat taken aback. "Is that even possible? Wouldn't this result in a confrontation between two major forces?"

Cayden pursed his lips. "These two forces have always been at odds, so it's quite surprising to see the Medicina family working together with the Gordon family. But then again, you once saved the leader of Lordsworth Estate, so it's not entirely impossible. That gentleman seems like the type to repay kindness. The Medicina family has always held a significant position in Lordsworth Estate, despite being a medical family. Their status should not be underestimated. This time, the estate must have ordered the Medicina family to follow and protect you."

Hearing this, Neera's doubts were finally dispelled.

"I was wondering why the Medicina family has been following us and offering help. So, this is the reason."

Cayden was filled with curiosity. "Ms. Neera, what kind of person is the gentleman from Lordsworth Estate? What does he look like? It's so mysterious, and I have never even seen him once. You're so lucky to have saved his life."

Neera gave an embarrassed "hmm" before replying, "You might not believe this, but I really don't know."

"Huh? You don't know?" Cayden's voice rose in surprise.

"Indeed, over the years of my medical practice, I've treated and saved countless people. There are so many that I can't even remember them. If he hadn't revealed his identity, I wouldn't have known. Honestly, I'm probably more curious than any of you about the true identity of this Lord of Phison. Since I arrived in Phison, he has shown me considerable kindness. I really should thank him in person...'

Cayden found it hard to believe. "This is incredible, absolutely incredible!"

Suddenly, his expression turned mischievously sly, and he began to indulge in wild and fanciful imagination.

"Ms. Neera, I advise you not to have too many expectations. In my opinion, this lofty lord of Lordsworth Estate might just be an unattractive man with a face full of pockmarks, or perhaps a disabled person with an indomitable spirit. Maybe he feels that his appearance doesn't match the status of Lord of Phison, so to avoid ridicule and gossip from the people of Phison, he has chosen to remain a mysterious figure."

Darcel's face turned pale, his lips pressed into a tight, sharp curve. Suddenly, his gaze became somewhat terrifying.

Neera didn't realize it, but she actually took Cayden's words to heart. She tilted her head in confusion. "Huh? Is that true?"

Cayden nodded seriously, speaking as if it were the truth.

"It must be true. Otherwise, why hasn't he shown his face even once? Even if he usually avoids meeting people, he should at least say something at such an important event like the district president election, right? But look, Lordsworth Estate only sent their branch leader. Although the status of those seven branch leaders is highly respected, it still seems a bit lacking. So, it's probably that the lord himself doesn't want to come..."

Neera was swayed by his twisted logic and surprisingly found some sense in his words. She thoughtfully tapped her chin, murmuring, "So that's how it is..."

The corners of Darcel's mouth twitched, his face instantly turning as dark as a storm cloud.

"That's not true," he couldn't bear it any longer, suddenly interjecting, directly refuting Cayden's words.

"Huh? Do you know something?" Cayden looked at him curiously. "Oh right, you're from the Medicina family, you might have met that gentleman. Can you tell me about him?"

Suppressing his urge to strike someone, Darcel gave him a cold glance.

"Stop making baseless speculations. One must have evidence before speaking. You could be charged with slander for fabricating stories."

Cayden waved his hand nonchalantly. "Oh come on, we're just chatting to pass the time, so don't take it so seriously..."

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Chapter 1220

Darcel smirked. "Oh? You think the Lord of Phison is a mere plaything for your entertainment? Don't forget, his influence extends far and wide, a fact known to all. Your words may reach his ears sooner than you think. Have you considered how he might retaliate when that happens? Perhaps you should ponder that while you still can?"

Cayden was left speechless.

Naturally, he was aware of the power held by the person in charge of Lordsworth Estate.

After being reminded by Darcel, he quickly backed down and anxiously looked around for a way to save face.

"Um, what I said earlier was just a spur-of-the-moment remark. It doesn't mean anything. Hah! We should get going!"

Neera found the situation amusing, but she held back her laughter.

Cayden's words had sparked her curiosity, so she redirected the conversation.

"But, only one family can emerge victorious in this election. Is it appropriate for Lordsworth Estate to amass such a force?"

"There's nothing wrong with it," Darcel calmly replied. "The only rule in this selection is to capture the white flag, but how it is accomplished is not specified. Since it's not defined, there are many loopholes, and this is one of them. You should know that loopholes are meant to be exploited. Gathering force is just a means, similar to allied families with good relations. There's no difference between the two."

Neera understood. "I see. In that case, wouldn't the Bartitsu Guild be in great danger?"

"It all depends on whether the families in the Bartitsu Guild are smart enough to unite and fight back using the same tactics."

Cayden joined the discussion at this point. "That's right. If the Bartitsu Guild continues with its current individualistic approach, they won't stand a chance against Lordsworth Estate. Without a doubt, Lordsworth Estate will crush them. However, I believe they can't possibly be that foolish."

Neera hesitated. "But isn't the infighting within the Bartitsu Guild quite severe? Are they willing to cooperate?"

Darcel smirked. "Cooperating shouldn't be a problem, but each family's ulterior motives are hard to discern. As the saying goes,

*!!

Neera couldn't help but worry when she thought about the situation at the Gordon residence.

"I believe that Shane won't allow the Gordon family to get involved. Besides, the Gordon family is currently working with the Medicina family, which puts them in a precarious position no matter how you look at it."

"As for the Medicina family, there's no need to worry. They follow the direct orders of Lordsworth Estate. Therefore, when they stand with the Gordon family, the other

families in Lordsworth Estate will not see the Medicina family as enemies. Furthermore, they will respect the Medicina family enough not to act against the Gordon family."

"But what about the Bartitsu Guild?"

"That's hard to say."

That was exactly what Neera was most concerned about. "The Gordon family's position within the Bartitsu Guild was already precarious. The two night raids were most likely targeted at the Gordon family by the Bartitsu Guild. With the power of Lordsworth Estate gathering now, the Gordon family is still aligned with Lordsworth Estate. I'm afraid they will be targeted by various factions within the Bartitsu Guild. I don't know if Shane and the others can withstand it..."

Seeing her worried expression, Darcel comforted her in a gentle voice, "Don't overthink it for now. Trust that Shane will handle everything properly. What we need to do now is join them as quickly as possible."

"Actually," Cayden interjected, "rallying together may not necessarily be a good thing. Everyone knows the rules: only one family can emerge victorious in the end. Therefore, each family is like a lone wolf fighting fiercely for survival. Even if two major forces were to confront each other, it wouldn't change this rule. So, rallying together means gathering too many wolves in one place. Once the external threats are dealt with, the internal conflicts will begin. Anyone who reaches the top of the mountain together, vying for the white flag, becomes an enemy. The ensuing battle will likely only intensify, not diminish."

Neera had also considered this, and it made her even more worried.

Regardless of whether it's the Bartitsu Guild or Lordsworth Estate, the Gordon family, caught in the middle, finds itself in a precarious and dangerous situation.

Darcel remained surprisingly calm. A sharp glint flashed in his eyes, exuding an inexplicable sense of confidence and assurance.

...

On the other side, Shane and his group were ascending the mountain, diligently searching for Neera and Darcel.

However, as the day wore on, their search yielded no results, no matter how thorough they were. [SEARCH THE website](#) to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Shane grew increasingly agitated, as did Charles and several others from the Cox family.

Caleb had initially remained composed, but gradually, he could no longer maintain his nonchalant demeanor, and his expression became increasingly solemn.

Though he had complete faith in Darcel's abilities, he couldn't help but worry.

Shane recalled the circumstances before parting with Neera, and his brows furrowed.

"Could we have been looking in the wrong direction? The hollow where Neera and I were is right behind a cliff. They could have easily fallen off. If we're going to search, we should start from the bottom of the mountain. There's no sign of them at all on this uphill path. What do you say we head down the mountain now?"

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Chapter 1221

Charles nodded, also agreeing that it was a better course of action.

Caleb firmly stopped them. "No. You cannot descend the mountain at this time."

Before Shane could say anything, the Cox family members became panicked.

"Why are you preventing us from going down the mountain? What exactly is the Medicina family planning? Surely you're not trying to hinder the Gordon family from competing for the white flag?"

Caleb glanced at them, his voice icy as he replied, "If I wanted to hinder your pursuit of the white flag, wouldn't it be easier for me to not stop you from seeking help and instead send you down the mountain?"

The members of the Cox family froze.

Shane looked grim. "Then why didn't you allow us to search for her?" he asked, suppressing his anger. "If something happens to Neera, what's the point of the Gordon family fighting for the white flag?"

"I know that cliff isn't very steep, and it's covered with a lot of vegetation," Caleb explained calmly and patiently as he pursed his lips. "Even if someone were to fall, they wouldn't get hurt. Besides, it's close to the rescue team at the foot of the mountain. If anything were to happen, they would definitely be found. Given Ms. Garcia's status as the head of the Gordon family, we would surely hear something. However, we haven't received any news, which means she's fine, and that she's likely heading toward the top of the mountain. If you descend the mountain now, you might miss her. Would that be acceptable to you?"

Those words immediately silenced everyone in the Gordon family's group.

Shane gritted his teeth but, ultimately, did not insist on descending the mountain.

"Very well. Let's continue to the top of the mountain!"

Then, he addressed Caleb honestly, "If the Medicina family wishes to compete for the white flag, you can part ways with us now. With Neera's whereabouts unknown at the moment, the Gordon family's main priority is to find her. Nothing else matters. We might slow down your progress. The Medicina family has been a great help to us along the way, and the Gordon family will always remember this. Even if we part ways now, it will be on good terms."

Caleb's lips curled upward as he returned to his nonchalant demeanor.

"What are you implying, Mr. Gordon? Are you still doubting me? Every word I've said is true. The Medicina family has no intention of competing for the white flag. As for the position of district president, I have no plans to vie for it either. So there's no question of any delay. We can continue our journey together. Speaking of which, Ms. Garcia has not been found yet, and neither has Darcel. Only when he is found can I be at peace."

Moved by his sincerity, Shane nodded solemnly. "Very well, then."

The group continued their ascent up the mountain, and it was only then that Caleb revealed the news to him.

"There's something I haven't told you yet. Last night, after we captured that group in the valley, we learned from them that all the forces of Lordsworth Estate have united. They are preparing to purge the families of the Bartitsu Guild. Since the Gordon family is part of the Bartitsu Guild, I wanted to ask about your stance. What is your view on this?"

Shane's eyes darkened. Suddenly, he let out a cold laugh. "What do you mean, what's my view? There's nothing to consider!"

He glanced at Caleb. "I understand. You're trying to gauge my intentions. Rest assured, I won't turn against the Medicina family because of this. On the contrary, I think Lordsworth Estate has done a good job this time."

Caleb raised an eyebrow. "Oh? Are you suggesting we join forces with Lordsworth Estate to deal with the Bartitsu Guild?"

Shane let out a light scoff. "Join forces? Absolutely unnecessary. Those two night raids, unsurprisingly, are almost certainly the actions of the ancient martial families targeting the Gordon family. In fact, ever since the rumors started circulating at the election conference, those families in the Bartitsu Guild have been watching us, the Gordon family, like a tiger watching its prey, intent on wearing us down from within. Well, since

they show no mercy, there's no need for us to take the moral high ground. It's always been a matter of life and death, so strike without hesitation, I say!"

Caleb did not expect him to say that. He couldn't help but laugh.

"No wonder they say the Gordon family is laid back. Those under Chad are indeed more unconventional than the previous generation. Interesting."

Then, he patted Shane on the shoulder.

"Rest assured, my friend. With how the Bartitsu Guild has treated you, we will respond in kind. We, the Medicina family, support you unconditionally."

Seeing that he did not seem to be lying, Shane thanked him gravely.

"Once this matter is resolved, the Gordon family will surely express its gratitude."

Caleb waved his hand dismissively. "No worries. It's a minor matter."

From then on, Shane led his entourage in search of Neera and Darcel, while simultaneously launching powerful attacks on the Bartitsu Guilds they encountered along the way, steadily advancing.

On the other hand, upon hearing that the various forces of Lordsworth Estate were uniting, the Bartitsu Guild realized the seriousness of the situation and gradually began to assemble. [Search The website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.](#)

The two major forces went from peaceful coexistence to being at odds with each other, stirring up public panic, with tensions running high and conflicts becoming imminent.

The entire Mount Cloud was enveloped in this atmosphere of hostility, becoming a place where even the wind and the cries of the cranes carried a sense of foreboding.

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Chapter 1222

Before long, Neera and her group were informed about the situation.

"So it has come to this," Cayden sighed. "The situation has become more complex. Violent conflicts will become more frequent, and the struggle is intensifying."

Neera was filled with worry about Shane and the others.

"I wonder how Shane and the others are doing. Have they also gotten themselves mixed up in this mess?"

Darcel's gaze darkened slightly. "It's possible. At this point, hardly any family can claim to be completely uninvolved."

Cayden comforted her. "Don't worry about all that now. The most pressing matter at hand is to fill our stomachs. We're exhausted from walking uphill all day, and it's already dark out. How about we rest for now? It's too dangerous to traverse through the mountains at night."

The day had turned to night, with the moon hanging in the sky, casting a cool afterglow.

Neera and Darcel exchanged a glance. Both nodded in agreement.

Having fallen off the cliff, they had no other belongings to make them feel secure apart from a bit of food and medicine. [SEARCH THE website](#) to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Fortunately, Cayden's people were carrying bags of every size imaginable, stocked with tents and food.

After setting up camp and starting a fire, Neera looked at the exquisite lunch box that was handed to her and couldn't help feeling surprised.

"You're overdoing it. How can you think of bringing all these things while running for your life? Don't you find them cumbersome?"

Cayden lifted his chin proudly. "As the saying goes, food is a basic necessity of life. No matter what we lose, we cannot lose our grub. So, how is it? Tasty, isn't it?"

Neera couldn't help laughing. She nodded. "Mmm, it's delicious. Thank you."

Instinctively, she thought of Caleb and realized with increasing certainty that these two families were very similar. Truly a breath of fresh air.

After dinner, everybody gathered for a chat. After the conversation wound down, they each returned to their tents for some rest, leaving two people on guard duty.

Despite her exhaustion from the day, Neera sat in the tent, never daring to relax, let alone sleep.

The experience of being attacked at night twice had instilled in her a certain fear of the mountainous nights. She was constantly on edge, terrified that someone might emerge from somewhere to harm them.

At that moment, a rustling came suddenly from outside the tent.

Instantly, she tensed up. Edging backward, she kept her gaze firmly fixed on the tent's zipper.

She saw a figure approaching, growing closer and closer until it finally stopped outside her tent. The silhouette seemed somewhat familiar.

"Is that you, Darcel?" she asked cautiously after taking a deep breath.

Darcel's voice responded from the outside. "Mmm. It's me."

Neera's heart settled down at the sound of his voice. She let out a deep sigh of relief. "Thank goodness, I thought it was..."

Darcel paused for a moment. "I'm sorry," he said softly. "I didn't mean to scare you."

Neera shook her head, then remembering he could not see, she said, "It's all right. It's rather late. Is there something you need?"

As she spoke, she leaned over to unzip the entrance.

No sooner had she reached out than she saw Darcel sitting outside her tent.

"It's all right. You go to sleep. There's no need to come out. I'll keep watch here, you just rest easy."

Neera was momentarily stunned. Gazing at his reflection projected onto her tent, she found her tightly wound nerves began to relax.

Her lips curled upward. She felt an inexplicable sense of peace. "Thank you, Darcel."

"No need to thank me," he responded gently. "You've had a long day, rest easy and sleep. I won't go anywhere."

Neera gave a soft hum in response.

Initially, she was fighting against her exhaustion, not daring to sleep. Now, however, with her mind at ease, drowsiness crept in. She lay down in her sleeping bag by the door, and as soon as she closed her eyes, she fell promptly asleep.

...

She was awakened by the chirping of birds the following day.

The vast forest, home to countless birds, was filled with the essence of nature everywhere one looked.

Neera stretched lazily, and when she turned her head, she saw that the figure outside the tent was still there.

He actually didn't leave all night...

A surge of indescribable gratitude welled up within her. She rose, tidied herself up, and exited.

At that moment, Darcel was leaning against the tent, resting with his eyes closed.

Upon hearing the noise, he immediately opened his eyes, his gaze alert. However, upon seeing that it was Neera, he quickly regained his composure.

"Are you awake? Did you sleep well last night?"

Neera nodded gently, deeply moved. "I slept very well, thanks to you, Darcel. I don't even know how to express my gratitude. You must have been tired from last night."

Darcel raised an eyebrow. "I'm fine. Thankfully, last night was peaceful. I even managed to get some sleep."

At this moment, Cayden walked over, yawning.

"Good morning, Ms. Neera, Darcel... Wait, what are you doing here?"

He was halfway through a yawn when he realized something was amiss, and his gaze darted between Darcel and Neera several times.

"You two..." His expression suddenly turned peculiar and, for some reason, a little nervous. "Are you sure you're not in that kind of relationship? You didn't possibly sleep in the same tent last night, did you?"

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Chapter 1223

Neera's face instantly turned red at his words, and she quickly denied, "Stop making things up. Can't you refrain from speaking nonsense!"

Cayden was still somewhat skeptical. "So, what is this?"

Neera suppressed her urge to hit someone, patiently explaining to him, "Last night, Darcel was just keeping watch here. That's all!"

Cayden drew out a long "Oh," his tone singsong. "So, that's how it is."

Then, he muttered under his breath, "That puts me at ease. Thank goodness."

Neera found him somewhat dimwitted. "What are you so assured about? Can you stop saying such bizarre things and act normal for once?"

Cayden ruffled his messy hair, chuckled, and said, "All right, all right. I'll behave a bit more."

Neera was rendered speechless. Why is this person so strange!

As a result, something even more astonishing happened.

Once everything was packed up, they continued their journey up the mountain. Somehow, Cayden had picked a handful of small white flowers and presented them to her with a playful dash. "Ms. Neera, the options here are limited, but these flowers are quite pretty. Consider them a small token of my affection. Here. They're for you. I hope you'll like them. If not, once we descend the mountain, I'll buy you some more." Search The website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Neera was confused, glancing at the flowers, then back at him. Hesitantly, she accepted them. "Thank you for your kindness, but there's no need to buy any."

Unexpectedly, Cayden waved his hand dismissively. "That won't do. These little white flowers can't possibly represent my feelings. They're just a temporary substitute. I must express my love for you with nine hundred and ninety- nine roses!"

Darcel was rendered speechless.

Neera was similarly stumped.

That statement was so full of issues that she didn't know where to begin. Nine hundred and ninety-nine roses? Isn't that a bit too cliché? And love? What the hell is that?

"Mr. Massey, I think there might be some misunderstanding," she gently reminded him. "We've only known each other for less than two days."

With an air of naturalness, Cayden solemnly expressed his intentions, "Ms. Neera, I am very clear about my feelings and am absolutely certain. Even though we've only known each other for two days, I've already fallen for you. This feeling is unprecedented for me, so I want to pursue you formally. I hope you can give me a chance. I promise I won't let you down!"

At first, Neera was utterly exasperated, but his antics left him somewhat nonplussed. What on earth is all this mess? Is he really not here to make a joke?

Looking at the flower in her hand, she gathered her thoughts, contemplating how to turn him down gently.

But before she could say anything, Darcel suddenly took the flower from her hand and threw it away right in front of Cayden.

Cayden was taken aback, then quickly became upset. "What are you doing? This is what I gave to Ms. Neera! What gives you the right to throw it away?"

Darcel had a sour expression. He said coldly, "She wouldn't want it, so there's no need to keep it."

Cayden disagreed, "How do you know Ms. Neera doesn't want it?"

With a solemn look in his eyes, Darcel uttered frankly, "That's because she has a fiancé, so she won't like you, won't accept your flowers, and certainly won't accept your feelings. You might as well save the effort."

Cayden immediately retorted, "What fiancé? Ms. Neera herself has said that she and Avery are not engaged, and there will be no marriage alliance!"

Darcel didn't give him the slightest chance. "Avery is not her fiancé. Her fiancé is someone else."

"Someone else?" Cayden seemed as if he had heard some unbelievable tale, his face filled with astonishment, yet he refused to believe it. "How is that possible? Don't spout nonsense! What do you know?"

Darcel laughed coldly. "I just know."

Cayden's eyes widened in disbelief. He simply turned his head and asked Neera, "Ms. Neera, is what he said true? Do you really have a fiancé?"

Neera never expected such an outrageous twist of events, but she had to admit, "Yes, I do have a fiancé. We've been engaged for quite some time now."

As she spoke, she took out the necklace that had been resting against her chest from inside her collar. "This is my engagement ring. It's a gift from my fiancé."

That necklace, in reality, was just a chain from which hung her most cherished engagement diamond ring.

Because she cherished it so much, she wore it close to her body, carefully protecting it. She was worried that she might accidentally knock it or lose it while climbing the mountain.

Upon seeing that diamond ring, Darcel's eyes gleamed. Threads of joy and tenderness danced in his gaze, instantly sweeping away his previous gloom.

Cayden was devastated. The moment he saw that ring, he was dumbstruck and stunned for quite a while.

"H-How can this be? Do I really stand no chance at all?" he asked Neera, his voice filled with a pitiful refusal to accept the truth.

Neera smiled and responded firmly, "No. I am wholeheartedly devoted to my fiancé. It's absolutely impossible for me to have a change of heart."

Upon hearing these words, Cayden felt his heart turn cold.

He stared at Neera with deep resentment in his eyes for a long while. Seeing her completely unmoved, he looked like a wounded fawn, drooping his head and sulking at one side in depression.

Darcel's mood visibly improved.

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Chapter 1224

Cayden grew noticeably quieter on the journey ahead, as if he was truly hurt.

However, he remained as enthusiastic as ever towards Neera, feeling a sense of no regrets and no complaints for some inexplicable reason.

He often left her bewildered with his antics.

After a chaotic half-day journey, they finally caught sight of the white flag in the distance.

"We're not far from the summit," said Darcel.

Neera was still worried about Shane and the others. "But we've been on the road for a while now, and we still haven't run into Shane and Mr. Medicina. Could they be behind us?" Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Even Darcel wasn't sure. "In any case, let's keep going upward. We're bound to encounter them at the top of the mountain."

"Ha! Dream on! You really think you can make it to the top of the mountain?" At that moment, a mocking voice suddenly rang out behind them, accompanied by the sound of erratic footsteps.

Neera's heart jumped into her throat, and she immediately turned around. She spotted Stella coming up from another mountain path!

Darcel was the first to react. He rushed in front of Neera with a swift stride, firmly shielding her behind him.

Seeing that, Stella sneered, "Oh? You're trying to be her knight in shining armor? Mister, you should prioritize yourself. Can you even keep your pathetic life and leave this place alive?"

Behind her, a steady stream of people appeared, looking like they were from at least seven or eight different families.

It seemed she had gathered quite a few closely-knit families along the way.

Howard was among them, cheerfully laughing as he walked out and stood next to Stella. "Ms. Jennings, just as you predicted, they really are isolated. It seems you truly have a talent for foresight."

Stella was brimming with pride. "Of course, but it is a bit more troublesome than I anticipated. I thought these two were already dead, but they unexpectedly escaped death. Still, it doesn't matter. In the end, they fell into my hands. It'll be up to me whether they live or die."

Neera furrowed her brows in concern after hearing that. She immediately questioned, "You knew what happened to us, so you were the one behind the night attack that day, weren't you? And the time before that! Even the destruction of the mountain hollow was your doing, right?"

Stella casually switched her hand to the front, lifting one arm leisurely to admire her beautifully manicured nails, appearing utterly nonchalant. "So what if it is, and what if it isn't? At this point, do these things still matter? Instead of wasting your time on this, why don't you kneel at my feet now and beg for mercy in a humble voice? Maybe I'll consider sparing you if I'm in a good mood. What do you say?"

As she spoke, she subtly signaled to the people behind her. The families of Bartitsu Guild immediately surrounded Neera and her group.

The atmosphere suddenly became tense, as if a fight would break out at any moment.

Stella gave Cayden and the others a once-over, then laughed casually. "I must admit I didn't expect you to run into the Massey family on your way. However, it's a pity. Even with them around, they can't help you. So, you better beg for mercy quickly. I'm not a fan of waiting. You only get one chance, so you better cherish it."

Because of the grudges formed previously at the Medicina family's medical hall and during meetings, Stella had always regarded Neera as a thorn in her side, wishing she could get rid of her for good.

Having failed twice in a row, she was extremely frustrated. Now that she had finally encountered this opportunity, she was determined not to let such a golden chance slip away.

With a cold expression, Neera retorted without a second thought, "Beg for mercy? In your dreams! Stella, you've attacked us repeatedly, and I haven't even settled the score with you yet. You have the audacity to swagger around. Your Jennings family really has no shame!"

"Shameless? I think you just don't understand the law of survival of the fittest!" Stella laughed boldly and confidently. "In Phison, those with power rule. A weakling like you deserves to be trampled under my feet! The Gordon family must have gone mad to let a piece of trash like you become the head of the family. Even the guild wants you to participate in the election. It's utterly ridiculous! You little wretch. You seduced Avery to back you up just because you're pretty. Now, you're even involved with Mr. Medicina and even trying to seduce the lord of Lordsworth Estate. You really have no shame! Besides using your seductive tricks, what else are you good at?"

Her words were becoming increasingly unpleasant to hear, simply foul.

Neera's face instantly darkened. Her sleeve loosened, and a small dagger fell into her hand.

However, before she could make a move, Darcel intervened. Somehow, he had a few stones in his hand, which he threw fiercely, hitting Stella right on the mouth and nose!

In the next moment, Stella cried out in pain. Her lips turned a deep shade of red and began to swell, while blood continuously flowed from her nose!

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Chapter 1225

She covered her nose and mouth, blood trickling from her nostrils through the gaps in her fingers. Her face was flushed with anger, and her nostrils flared. She was on the verge of exploding with rage. "How dare you harm me with a concealed weapon!"

Darcel grimaced, looking at her as if she were insignificant. His voice was chillingly terrifying, carrying a hint of malice. "What does it matter if you're injured? Even if you were to die here today, it would make no difference."

Stella was furious, pointing at him and cursing vehemently, "You sure talk big! I'd like to see who's going to die here today!"

As she spoke, she gave a command. "What are you all waiting for? Get him!"

As her words fell, the members of the Bartitsu Guild families and forces eagerly closed in, surrounding them.

Upon seeing that scene, Cayden and his group became serious.

At that moment, Neera said, "Mr. Massey, this matter has nothing to do with you. Please leave quickly to avoid getting involved."

However, Cayden had no intention of leaving. He put away his frivolous smile and said seriously, "How could I possibly leave you here? If we're going, we're going together. Let's fight our way out!"

The others also nodded in agreement. "That's right! If we go, we go together. If we stay, we stay together!"

Seeing their unwavering determination, Neera couldn't help but feel a surge of emotion.

Before long, both sides began to take action.

The opposing forces attacked them from all directions. Cayden and his group quickly adapted to the situation, forming a defensive circle around Neera, creating a protective barrier.

Previously, they appeared weak and unskilled. But now, they seemed like completely different people. Their attacks were powerful and relentless, and they surprisingly matched their enemies blow for blow.

As for Darcel, he always kept Neera firmly behind him, protecting her while launching a deadly assault.

He drew his dagger, skillfully evading the opponent's attacks while simultaneously exploiting their weaknesses. He dispatched them one by one, killing an enemy with every strike.

He seemed to be at a disadvantage, facing a group alone.

However, he exuded a chilling, terrifying aura of murderous intent, resembling a devil. His imposing presence was overwhelming. Every move he made was ruthless and ferocious, which terrified his opponents.

What particularly unnerved his enemies was his agility. It was simply terrifyingly formidable!

Even if they were Bartitsu experts, they were no match for him!

Neera tightly clutched the small dagger given to her by Finnley, originally intending to find an opportunity to help. However, seeing that scene, she was also utterly astonished.

At that moment, Darcel was like a Grim Reaper harvesting souls, instilling fear in those who fought against him.

Many were so intimidated by him that they didn't dare to approach, their spirits completely suppressed.

Seeing the situation, Stella was so furious that she felt her lungs were about to explode. She shrieked a warning, "What are you so afraid of? It's just a handful of people. Can't you handle them? Anyone who dares to back down, don't even think about making it back alive! And anyone who takes action will be rewarded a million!"

Hearing those words, those who were hesitant surged forward again with newfound courage.

Initially, Darcel was filled with murderous intent, using his overwhelming aura to slaughter the enemies around him.

Gradually, Neera's side found themselves at a disadvantage, ultimately unable to withstand the overwhelming numbers and power of the opposition...

Stella watched with a cool gaze, a sense of satisfaction rising within her. "Deal with them swiftly! Today, I want that wretch to die here!"

Upon hearing the command, everyone rushed toward Neera.

Cayden and the others fought desperately to protect her, but the enemy quickly entangled them, leaving them no room to spare.

Only Darcel, tightly holding onto Neera's wrist, was fending off the enemy's onslaught for her.

At this critical moment, Shane and his group rushed over!

They had been at a distance when they heard the sounds of a fight. They decided to come over and try their luck, not expecting to actually find Neera and the others.

Shane's eyes lit up at that moment, and he became excited. He quickly eliminated a few enemies, then strode over, pulling Neera to examine her. "Neera, I've found you. Are you okay? Are you hurt?"

Neera didn't expect to be reunited with him there. She was equally excited. She quickly shook her head. "I'm fine, Shane. We've been looking for you guys. Are you all okay?"

Shane had been wearing a stern expression for the past few days. Now, seeing her safe and sound, he finally felt at ease, and his hardened expression finally softened. "We're all fine, and we've been looking for you too. Thankfully, we found each other. What happened?"

Over there, Caleb and his men successfully repelled those who charged at them.

He immediately went over to Darcel, assessing him. "Are you okay?"

Darcel said indifferently, "Very well."

Caleb nodded slightly, then turned to look at Stella. "What's going on? Have you guys been bothered by these people?"

Darcel hummed indifferently and turned his gaze toward Neera. Only after ensuring she was unharmed did his expression relax slightly.

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Chapter 1226

As the situation took an unexpected turn, Stella's earlier confidence wavered, and her smile vanished.

"You... you're all still here?" she exclaimed, her frustration evident in her voice.

Caleb raised an eyebrow. "And why wouldn't we be?"

He then narrowed his eyes and added, "Beneath the mountain you detonated, perhaps?"

Stella's pupils constricted, but she chose to overlook that part and steer the conversation elsewhere.

"I just assumed that you should have been taken out along the way, but you're incredibly fortunate to appear here alive!"

Then, she looked at Neera resentfully, grinding her teeth in anger.

"But don't get too thrilled. Even with reinforcements, what difference does it make? You'll still meet your end!"

Having delivered her words, she turned to Howard, urging him impatiently, "What are you waiting for? Planning to let them take care of you?"

However, in that moment, Howard couldn't manage a smile.

After witnessing Darcel's impressive skills, Howard maintained a serious expression. With Caleb and his group's arrival, his expression turned even grimmer.

"Stella, I think it's wiser to let this go for now. The most critical task at this moment is to secure the white flag."

Stella, defensive, glared at him with a furrowed brow. "What do you mean? Are you getting scared?"

Howard appeared a touch impatient, speaking in a deep tone. "It's not about fear. The current situation doesn't favor us. Confronting them directly might not end well. It's better to conserve our strength and make a beeline for the mountaintop to secure the white flag. That's our top priority."

Stella was consumed by anger and not inclined to listen to reason.

"You keep saying it's not fear? Ha, Howard, you talk a big game, but when it's crunch time, you turn timid. I'm not like you even though I'm a woman! Let me make it clear, if you're afraid of them, I'm not! Whatever you say, I'm determined to ensure Neera meets her end here today!"

With that, she turned to the group of people standing behind her and shouted, "Why is everyone just standing around? Move quickly and eliminate that troublemaker for me!"

On the opposite side stood Shane, whose brows knitted together. He pulled Neera behind him and cast a cold glance at Stella.

"Such audacious words! Do you think we, the Gordon family, are easy targets? I'm eager to see who will meet their end today!"

He was on the verge of giving orders to his fellow Gordon family members when Darcel spoke up first, his tone laced with a chilling resolve.

"I've had enough of this endless chatter; let's put an end to them."

Caleb nodded and then snapped his fingers. In an instant, a substantial group of individuals appeared from all directions, closing in to encircle Stella and her group. Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Observing this scene, Neera was taken aback. "Who are all these people?"

Shane wasn't surprised, and he explained to her, "They're the forces from the Lordsworth Estate, probably more than ten squads."

Neera wasn't surprised to see the forces from the Lordsworth Estate gathering together, but she didn't expect that they had already joined forces with the Medicina family.

Stella, equally unprepared for this turn of events, was left dumbfounded, her whole demeanor in shock.

Howard, unable to contain his frustration, angrily scolded her, "Are you stupid? Didn't you think of the Medicina family when you saw them? Now, thanks to you, everyone is in danger!"

Stella still appeared disbelieving, muttering, "How could this happen?"

The situation had taken a complete turn from her expectations, and she was struggling to accept it.

But before she could react, Caleb gave the order, and the forces from the Lordsworth Estate, numbering over a hundred, charged forward.

There was a fierce battle, bloodshed, and the scene was chaotic and horrifying.

Shane pulled Neera toward him, shielding her from the sight. "Close your eyes; I'll tell you when it's over."

Neera couldn't handle the gruesome scene and nodded, obediently closing her eyes.

However, the cries of pain continued to penetrate her ears, sending shivers down her spine.

Before long, a sharp, agonized scream pierced the air-Stella's voice.

Neera hesitated but eventually opened her eyes and witnessed Stella's grim condition.

At that moment, her left arm had been severed by an unknown assailant, staining her clothes red and splattering blood across her face, creating a gruesome and horrifying sight.

"My arm... My arm!" She screamed in madness, gazing at her severed limb on the ground.

Seeing their leader in imminent danger, the Jennings family members were powerless to continue the fight. They gritted their teeth and took the opportunity to escape with Stella in the chaos.

Stella managed to flee in distress, but the Bartitsu Guild and other families involved suffered heavy casualties. Every family bore significant losses.

The remaining individuals, witnessing Stella's escape and the demoralization of their forces, lost their will to fight and surrendered, expressing their intention to withdraw from Stella's coalition.

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Chapter 1227

Caleb, observing the situation, turned to Darcel and inquired, "What are your thoughts? Should we pursue them? And should we release these individuals?"

Darcel, with a cold and calculating expression, appeared to contemplate for a moment. Then, he spoke without emotion. "We have accomplished our objective. Let them go."

He had no intention of annihilating the entire Bartitsu Guild, as doing so might lead to complications once they descended the mountain.

When it came to Lordsworth Estate, he was unconcerned.

However, this incident had consequences for the Gordon family, and he anticipated that they would face challenges in the future, so it was best not to go to extremes.

After the Bartitsu Guild members had departed, Caleb instructed his men to clean up the scene and attend to their injuries before regrouping.

Shane couldn't contain his curiosity and immediately asked, "Neera, what happened after we lost contact that day?"

Finnley also leaned in and inquired, "Yeah, Neera, you really had us worried. We searched everywhere for you, scaling the mountain and combing the area."

Neera took a few sips of the water Shane handed her and then recounted her fall from the cliff and the subsequent events in detail.

"When I fell off the cliff, it was thanks to Darcel protecting me that I escaped without injury. He also assisted me in making my way back up the mountain. Without his help, I wouldn't have been able to move an inch, and I probably would have encountered multiple life-threatening situations."

The Gordon family members, having listened to her harrowing story, felt a sense of relief as they saw her sitting safely with them.

"Thank goodness you're okay."

Shane and Charles stood up and expressed their gratitude to Darcel sincerely.

"Mr. Belma, we are immensely grateful for your continuous support and protection of Neera throughout this journey. Remember, no matter what challenges arise in the future, if you ever need the support of The Gordon family, don't hesitate to reach out. We are committed to going to great lengths to assist you, without hesitation."

Darcel remained composed and didn't dwell on the matter.

"Mr. Gordon, there's no need for such formality. Safeguarding her during our journey was only natural since we were traveling together."

Shane, touched by Darcel's words, struggled to express his gratitude.

He then turned to thank the members of the Massey family.

Cayden ran his hand through his hair, displaying a rare serious side.

"Mr. Gordon, there's no need for thanks. We traveled together, so looking out for each other is only right. To be honest, much of the credit goes to Mr. Belma. If it weren't for him, I fear we might have fallen into the hands of some unsavory characters."

With the mountain summit drawing closer, there was little time for rest. Soon, the group continued their journey towards the top of the mountain in a determined and orderly manner.

Half an hour later, they finally reached the endpoint of their journey through the dense forest.

As they gazed at the white flag fluttering in the wind, everyone fell into silence, reluctant to approach it.

The members of the Gordon family were on edge, realizing that they were still technically part of the Bartitsu Guild.

However, the teams gathered here all represented Lordsworth Estate.

It was unclear who held the white flag and the implications of the situation.

They had received help from Lordsworth Estate along their journey, and it didn't seem right to engage in a confrontation by taking the flag now.

As they hesitated, Caleb broke the silence, saying, "Mr. Gordon, Ms. Garcia, what are you waiting for? Go and retrieve the white flag."

Upon hearing Caleb's words, the Gordons and Shane were left bewildered.

Shane looked at him with a mix of disbelief and uncertainty, asking, "You mean you're not competing for it? With the white flag, you'll become the district president. Didn't Lordsworth Estate gather for this purpose?"

Caleb maintained a harmless smile and said in a nonchalant manner, "Lordsworth Estate has no interest in that. This entire trip was just a casual outing, a bit like team-building. Our initial assembly was solely because we found Bartitsu Guild's hypocritical members irritating and wanted to give them some trouble. We didn't expect them to be so feeble. It's really quite underwhelming."

His statement was met with agreement from the other Lordsworth Estate families.

"Exactly! We thought Bartitsu Guild was a formidable force, but it turns out they're far from it. They claimed to be on equal footing with Lordsworth Estate, but they're nowhere close!"

"Exactly, Bartitsu Guild only has a handful of tough individuals, and the rest are useless. They lose because they're all out for themselves. They're just a scattered mess..."

"District president, what a bore. Districts Twenty-One to Twenty-Five aren't any different."

"Lordsworth Estate is just fine. We don't need all this nonsense. It's all empty talk..."

As they casually dismissed the significance of the election, the Gordon family was left dumbfounded.

Even the Massey family members looked on in astonishment as if they were witnessing something bizarre.

Neera, too, was taken aback, thinking, "Are the people from Lordsworth Estate so idle that they engage in such a thrilling election just for leisure?" search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

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Chapter 1228

Darcel observed Neera's puzzled expression with a faint smile in his eyes.

Seeing that the Gordon family remained motionless, he took a step forward. In front of everyone, he pulled out the white flag and handed it to Neera.

"Take it, we're preparing to descend."

Neera glanced at the white flag, then back at him, and finally, at the others, her expression filled with hesitation, unsure whether to accept it.

Caleb encouraged her, "Ms. Garcia, it's meant for you. You've been through so much on this perilous journey, and you've shown remarkable resilience. You deserve it."

The rest of the group chimed in, "That's right, take it!"

Neera, biting her lip, turned to look at Shane, seeking his opinion.

Shane understood that this group of people had no intention of contesting, and he nodded slightly to signal his approval.

Seeing this, Neera made up her mind and finally took the white flag into her hands.

The rest of the Gordon family and the Massey family were left in shock, their jaws nearly hitting the ground.

It was almost too unbelievable. Was she now the district president with the white flag in her hand?

Neera looked at the white flag in her hand, relieved that she had finally accomplished this crucial task.

She turned to the group and suddenly gave a deep bow, saying with sincerity, "I want to thank everyone for their help and protection along the way. I also appreciate your generosity in entrusting this white flag to me. Without all of you, there would be no me, and I, along with the entire Gordon family, will always remember this debt of gratitude!"

Neera appeared resolute, her expression serious, and her eyes carried a weighty determination.

The group of people observed her with smiles in their eyes.

Darcel, too, had a subtle, amused curve to his lips, and he couldn't seem to take his gaze off her face.

This young woman, she was as earnest as ever...

Soon, the group began their descent.

Though coming up had been challenging, going down had a shortcut, so they reached the base of the mountain before nightfall.

At this moment, not far away in the brightly lit square, everyone had already returned.

Matthew, Colin, and Miguel were also there.

From a distance, Avery spotted Neera and quickly approached her.

"Neera, you've finally come down!" He examined her from head to toe, concern evident in his voice. "Are you okay? Did you get hurt?"

Darcel's expression darkened as soon as he saw Avery, his displeasure nearly glaring from his face.

Neera, unaware of the tension, responded to Avery's care, "I'm fine. Thanks for your concern."

While they were talking, people around them began to turn their gaze, with reactions ranging from shock to disbelief and confusion.

Everyone noticed the white flag in Neera's hands and started discussing it.

"It's actually the Gordon family! How is that even possible?"

"Weren't the Gordon family and the Lordsworth Estate's people descending together? Lordsworth Estate has so many factions, and they couldn't outmatch the Gordon family? Unbelievable."

"Who knows what's going on? I didn't expect the Gordon family to benefit in the end..."

At this moment, Miguel, the neutral party's representative, stood up and announced, "Now that everyone is here, let's prepare to announce the results. The white flag is currently in the hands of the head of the Gordon family, so..."

He hadn't finished his sentence when suddenly a sharp, piercing voice interrupted him.

"Mr. Carson, there is a problem with this election result, and we refuse to accept it!"

The voice was very familiar, and Neera followed it to see Stella's contorted face.

At this moment, the place where her left arm had been severed was already bandaged, and though she looked pale, she stood up, supporting herself, and loudly voiced her objection.

"Furthermore, we want to report that the Gordon family has betrayed!"

With these words, everyone present was taken aback.

"A betrayal? What's going on?" Miguel furrowed his brow and inquired.

Stella gritted her teeth and cast a malicious glance at Neera. In front of everyone, she accused her loudly.

"The Gordon family was clearly a part of Bartitsu Guild, but Neera, the head of the Gordon family, secretly conspired with all the factions from Lordsworth Estate to conduct a thorough sweep of Bartitsu Guild's families, even resorting to violence! This is a blatant act of betrayal!" [SEARCH THE website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.](#)

With her statement, families that had close ties with the Jennings family also stepped forward to condemn Neera.

"That's right! The Gordon family showed no regard for the lives of the other Bartitsu Guild families, repeatedly provoking and launching sneak attacks. It's simply disgraceful!"

"Bartitsu Guild has never had a traitor like this before. The Gordon family used ruthless means to achieve their goals, and their actions are reprehensible."

"Everyone knows that Lordsworth Estate and Bartitsu Guild have always been at odds. The Gordon family, in pursuit of their objectives, colluded with enemy forces, targeting their own people. They don't deserve to stay in Bartitsu Guild any longer! Mr. Lozano, as a representative of Bartitsu Guild, you should address this matter!"

"Yes! Today, you must have a resolution for all of us, and punishing the Gordon family is the right thing to do..."

Matthew didn't want to let this issue linger, so he furrowed his brows, turned to Neera, and asked, "Is what everyone is saying true, the head of the Gordon family? Did this really happen?"

Neera's expression turned grim slightly as she contemplated how to respond, but Shane spoke up first.

"Betrayal? The Jennings family, it seems, excels in stirring up trouble and turning the tables, with no other talents to speak of. Have you forgotten, on our way up the mountain, how you, the Jennings family, joined forces with other families to repeatedly ambush and attack the Gordon family?"

He smiled coldly and didn't show any fear as he fired back.

"Stella, have you forgotten all the attempts to harm us on our way up the mountain? The ambushes and sneak attacks by the Jennings family and their allies?"

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Chapter 1229

Stella clenched her teeth and exclaimed, "You're making baseless accusations! You're defaming me without any evidence!"

"Defaming me?" Shane sneered. "Don't jump to conclusions so quickly. Why don't you take a look at who these people are?"

With those words, his companions immediately brought a few individuals to the center of the square.

These people were battered and bruised, clearly having endured a great deal of hardship.

As soon as they saw Stella, they seemed to have found their lifeline and began pleading for her help.

"Ms. Jennings, please, you have to save us! We... We can't endure this any longer!" Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

"At this rate, we're afraid we'll be tortured to death!"

"Ms. Jennings, please, take us away..."

Stella's expression changed drastically upon seeing these people.

"You..." She opened her mouth but didn't know what to say.

She had thought that all of these people were dead, yet the Gordon family had kept them alive.

Shane observed her changing expression, and a sardonic smile crept onto his face.

"What's the matter? Do you doubt our ability to capture people, or do you doubt that we spared these lives? With witnesses right here, what else do you have to argue about?"

He then turned to Matthew and said firmly, "It was the Jennings family who, in alliance with other Bartitsu Guild families, initiated the ambush against the Gordon family. We only defended ourselves. Are we supposed to surrender and await our demise without a fight? I don't think that's a rule, is it? As for the accusation of colluding with the Lordsworth Estate, that's an entirely baseless claim. Mr. Lozano, I believe the news has already spread. Neera previously saved the life of the Lord of Phison from the Lordsworth Estate. Then, due to a series of coincidences, she met Mr. Caleb. Later, our two families crossed paths in the mountains, and they helped the Gordon family in various ways. That's the extent of it."

Matthew glanced at The Medicina family and asked, "Is this how it is?"

Caleb nonchalantly put his hands in his pockets and nodded.

"Yes. Our Medicina family ventured into the mountains just to go through the motions, not with any intent to compete for anything. I happened to get along with Ms. Garcia, so we decided to travel together for the sake of passing the time. We never expected the Jennings family to be so malicious, launching night attacks repeatedly, each time aiming to take our lives. They nearly cost our Medicina family dearly in Mount Cloud."

Stella's face flushed with anger, and she retorted defiantly, "That's not the truth! These people are lying! It must be the Gordon family members who used physical force and coercion to manipulate these individuals into making false accusations against us! I don't even know these people! The Gordon family orchestrated this deliberately; they want to shift the blame onto us!"

At this point, Neera stepped forward, looking at Stella with an icy demeanor.

"Who's lying is quite clear, and I believe everyone here has an idea. The Gordon family has always been known for our peaceful disposition, not involving ourselves in conflicts and never intentionally harming others. But sometimes, intentions can be misunderstood, and when one is threatened, one must defend themselves. If not for the assistance of the Medicina family, we might have lost our lives in Mount Cloud. Stella, you keep claiming that we're smearing your reputation. If that's the case, provide evidence. You say these individuals aren't affiliated with your group; then prove that they were coerced and falsely accused by us, the Gordon family."

"You" Stella's vision turned red upon seeing Neera, itching to retaliate. "You're just being unreasonable!"

Neera coldly chuckled. "Who's the one being unreasonable here, Stella? As the head of the Jennings family, don't you think you're tarnishing your reputation by acting like this? If the elders of the Jennings family were aware that you've turned the Jennings family into a laughingstock, they would likely regret their past decisions."

"Neera Garcia!" Stella was fuming, her anger radiating like a lit firecracker. "It's you who conspired with the Lordsworth Estate, you..."

Before she could finish her sentence, Colin calmly interjected. "Impressive, a mere Jennings family dares to slander Lordsworth Estate. Mr. Lozano, it seems like some of the families under your Bartitsu Guild don't hold Lordsworth Estate in high regard. Quite audacious."

Though a faint smile played on Colin's lips, his tone was chilling, sending shivers down one's spine.

Matthew's face soured, and he was momentarily at a loss for words.

Seizing the opportunity, Caleb added fuel to the fire. "Mr. Wiley, there's something I've been holding back. I thought we could resolve this amicably, maybe even admit some faults on both sides. However, it appears the Jennings family has no intention of repenting. Thus, I see no need to cover for them. The evidence of Stella conspiring with other factions to plot against us during our mountain expedition is irrefutable. Moreover, they violated Phison's laws by using firearms and setting explosives that led to a mountain collapse. This matter requires thorough investigation."

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Chapter 1230

Colin, with a hint of amusement, responded with a meaningful hum.

Meanwhile, he cast a dispassionate gaze towards Stella. His face remained placid, but his eyes exuded authority.

Stella was drenched in sweat and was not ready to accept the accusation. She bit back with determination.

"No, it's not true! This talk of ambushes and explosives, mountain collapses it's not our doing! The Gordon family is framing us! It's also possible... it's possible that the Gordon family set this all up to divert blame onto us, the Jennings family! Shane, Neera, do you

think your scheme to accuse us of this is foolproof? I'll tell you, we, the Jennings family, won't admit to something we haven't done, even if it means going to our graves!"

Shane remained composed, observing her screaming and shouting like a shrew. When she finally finished, he spoke leisurely.

"I never imagined that the Jennings family would choose a madwoman like you as their family head. In my view, the hundred-year legacy of the Jennings family has been ruined by you. It's a real shame." Stella's gaze was wary, her heart pounding, but she remained defiant.

"What do you mean by that? Don't think a few casual words can deceive me. I'm not afraid! The Jennings family has done nothing wrong, no matter what you say."

Shane chuckled sarcastically. "You claim the Jennings family has done nothing wrong? Whether the Jennings family did it or not, I don't know. I'm not sure if the Jennings family's elders were involved. What I am certain of, Stella, is that saying such things will surely bring down divine retribution upon you."

Caleb chimed in with a cheerful tone, "Who would have thought that the head of the Jennings family would turn out to be a liar and a coward, daring to deceive but not face the consequences?"

Following this incident, the people around them continued to discuss, many of them unsure about what was happening.

"Is this for real? The Jennings family dared to play such a big game?"

"Well, you know, the Jennings family's methods have never been honorable. They've resorted to underhanded tricks before."

"Is the Jennings family running out of competent people? Why would they let Stella become the family head? Besides being the sole legitimate heir, she doesn't seem to have much talent, does she?"

"That's true. Ever since the Jennings family fell into Stella's hands, they've been heavily criticized, and their reputation has plummeted. They only associate with the lower ranks. Look at those esteemed Bartitsu families; none of them want to associate with the Jennings family. She's just good at making a fuss."

"I think the Medicina family and the Gordon family sound so certain about it; they must have some evidence in their hands. This matter is ninety-nine percent the Jennings family's doing..."

Stella's face turned fiery red as she heard these hushed conversations.

She felt like a sitting duck, unable to shift the attention away. Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

"You... You're just making baseless accusations. Thinking you can accuse us however you like? The Jennings family isn't that easy to bully! Shane, do you have any evidence to prove that the mountain was destroyed by us, the Jennings family?"

The Jennings family was part of the Bartitsu Guild, and making such allegations tarnished the reputation of the entire guild. Therefore, Matthew couldn't simply stand by and do nothing.

Without delay, Matthew raised his voice to say, "Do you, the Gordon family, have any evidence?"

Shane was ready for this, and he immediately tossed a package.

"Inside this package are some soil samples from the blast site. It's certain to contain traces of explosives, and if you doubt it, you're welcome to have the soil analyzed. Check where the explosives originated from, and you'll find out whether it was the work of the Jennings family."

Because the use of firearms was strictly forbidden in Phison, anything related to explosives was well-documented, and private trading was not permitted.

Therefore, if such materials had found their way into private hands, it would be relatively easy to trace their source.

Stella turned pale as paper when she saw the soil, realizing there was no way out at this point.

On the side, Howard, upon witnessing the situation, furrowed his brow and suddenly spoke with a strong sense of righteousness.

"Mr. Lozano, this is indeed the doing of the Jennings family. Initially, Stella used sweet words and baseless claims to try and persuade me to cooperate. I had my doubts, but her words were so convincing. She said the Gordon family had betrayed the Bartitsu Guild, showed disrespect, and even conspired with Lordsworth Estate to eliminate the Bartitsu Guild entirely. I was angered, and that's why I agreed to work with her, thinking it was to stop the Gordon family."

"Howard! What are you saying?"

Stella was utterly dumbfounded, not expecting him to step forward and accuse her at this moment.

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Chapter 1231

Upon witnessing this turn of events, Neera felt somewhat surprised.

"Wasn't Howard on Stella's side? Why is he turning against her now?"

Upon hearing this, Darcel quietly explained, "The Logan family and the Jennings family may appear friendly, but they each have their own agendas. It's just a facade of harmony. When it comes to their own interests, they prioritize those. In times of trouble, they will each fend for themselves. Stella is now trapped in a situation she cannot escape from, and for Howard, this is the only way to prevent the Logan family from getting involved."

Charles chuckled. "Well, watching them turn on each other is quite satisfying. Howard is indeed a cunning person. Seeing that the situation was unfavorable, he turned against his own people without any mercy."

Meanwhile, Howard coldly glanced at Stella, completely ignoring her, and continued accusing her of her crimes.

"Who would have thought that Stella didn't want to stop the Gordon family at all, but intended to completely wipe them out? She harbored resentment against the Gordon family's leader. She used my people and exploited many of Bartitsu Guild's comrades to attack the Gordon family. During the night raid in the valley, we were acting under the orders of the Jennings family, deceived by them. Stella said we only needed to capture the Gordon family's people, but once our people charged in, we realized that the Jennings family intended to take the lives of the Gordon family's people. As for the mountain explosion, we were also caught off guard. We, the Logan family, were very angry about this matter, feeling that the Jennings family had gone too far."

Stella stared at him in disbelief. "Howard, how dare you betray me to clear your own name?"

Howard gave her an impatient side-glance. "I've told you before, don't be so reckless. You didn't listen, and now that the truth is out, do you want to drag over a dozen guild families down with you? You made the mistake, why should we bear the consequences with you?"

"You... You're just a lowlife!" Stella seethed with anger, hurling insults.

Neera observed all of this, not finding any satisfaction in it, just a sense of pity.

"Everybody kicks a man when he's down. It's been this way forever."

Avery gave her a reassuring glance. "Don't waste your energy on someone like her. Rest assured, I'll make sure you get justice." Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Darcel overheard and cast a disapproving look at him, his eyes full of disdain.

Avery seemed to sense something, following his gaze and locking eyes with him. He furrowed his brow, puzzled by the apparent animosity from this man he had never met before. They had no previous history or conflicts, so this felt odd.

Nevertheless, with the pressing matter at hand, he couldn't dwell on this. Turning his attention back to the urgent matter, Avery, with the authority befitting the third elder of the Bartitsu Guild, stepped forward and raised his voice to consult with Matthew.

"Mr. Lozano, it's an undeniable fact that the Jennings family has repeatedly harmed the Gordon family, attempting to plot their demise. This is supported by concrete evidence. Their actions not only disrespect the Gordon family but also show a lack of regard for our Cox family. Everyone knows that the Gordon family and the Cox family have been close allies, even with marital ties. The Jennings family's false accusations against the Gordon family, alleging betrayal of the Bartitsu Guild, are equivalent to slandering us, the Cox family, and turning against the Bartitsu Guild. We won't let this slide. Mr. Lozano, I hope you can hand over Stella to me for handling."

Matthew glanced at Avery, his expression grave, weighing the gravity of the situation.

The Jennings family held some respect within the Bartitsu Guild, but compared to the Cox family, they were significantly less influential.

Their survival or downfall wasn't a critical concern. Given the circumstances, Matthew decided to give the Cox family some face.

He nodded in agreement, saying, "Very well, Mr. Cox, the Jennings family is now under your jurisdiction. However, for the other families who were deceived by the Jennings family, they are innocent in this matter. Let's not pursue the grudges within the guild to maintain harmony."

Avery's primary focus was the Jennings family, and he wasn't too concerned about the other families that had followed them. Hence, he allowed Matthew to save face.

"Since Mr. Lozano has spoken in this manner, I will hold no grudges regarding the grievances between the other families and the Gordon family. As long as they refrain from causing trouble for the Gordon family in the future, we can coexist peacefully."

Upon hearing that their fate had been sealed with just a few words, Stella was filled with despair.

With her life on the line, she could no longer maintain her stubbornness and began to plead tearfully.

"I... I was wrong. I know I made a mistake. Mr. Lozano, please, considering the unwavering loyalty of the Jennings family to the Bartitsu Guild, spare me. Don't hand me over to the Cox family. They are close to the Gordon family and they will surely not show me mercy. I beg you, I beg you..."

Matthew furrowed his brow, showing impatience.

"Stella, if you knew this day would come, why did you act as you did before? If you've done something wrong, you must accept the consequences. There's no point in begging for mercy now."

Stella broke down in tears, collapsing to the ground, trembling, and continuously pleading. She was a far cry from her previous demeanor of arrogance and sharp-tongued.

"I confess my guilt. You can do anything you want with me, take me back to the guild, but I'm begging you, please don't hand me over to the Cox family!"

She was well aware of Avery's ruthless methods.

If she were to be dealt with by the guild later, there might be a glimmer of hope, but if she fell into Avery's hands, there would be only one way to go, and that was a dead end.

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Chapter 1232

Over there, Avery hesitated before taking action. He decided to consult Neera first. "Do you have any plans for Stella? If you do, I can hand her over to you."

After a moment of consideration, Neera declined, "No matter what happens, Stella's fate is not my concern. She has committed countless wrongdoings, and whatever consequences she faces, she deserves them."

She understood Avery's intention. He was checking if she wanted to spare Stella's life.

However, while Neera was kind, she was not a saint. Stella, always causing trouble, has repeatedly attempted to murder us, almost costing us our lives. Naturally, I won't suddenly become benevolent and forgive such a wicked person.

Seeing Neera's response, Avery didn't waste any more time. He signaled to an expert from the Cox family standing behind Neera.

The expert understood and swiftly appeared before Stella. He mercilessly grabbed her neck and twisted it abruptly.

Stella didn't even have time to react. Her pleas for mercy were cut short as her eyes widened, and she took her last breath.

Neera was taken aback by the scene, but she felt no sympathy. Stella had brought this upon herself. With her malicious intentions, she was practically asking for death. She had no one to blame but herself.

Everyone present was stunned by the sight.

Who would have thought that the head of a family would become lifeless so quickly?

In an instant, all the families that had previously collaborated with the Jennings family and had taken action against the Gordon family felt a sense of impending danger.

No one dared to speak or even take a breath, fearing that they would get involved and suffer the same fate as Stella.

Meanwhile, their fear of the Cox family grew deeper.

It was evident to everyone present how the situation had changed. Even Matthew, the vice president, had to show respect to the Cox family. This demonstrated the Cox family's unwavering status! Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Therefore, who would be foolish enough to provoke them?

A silence as profound as death hung in the air in the vast square.

Just then, Colin spoke in a gentle tone, but his words were cold and ruthless. "This woman from the Jennings family has no restraint. She deserves punishment. Not only has she offended the Gordon and Cox families, but also Lordsworth Estate. Keeping such a family in the Bartitsu Guild will only bring shame upon us. They might even put the entire Bartitsu Guild at a disadvantage one day. Keeping them will only cause trouble. It's better to erase their existence from today. Mr. Lozano, I'm doing this for the good of the Bartitsu Guild and for the peaceful coexistence of Lordsworth Estate and Bartitsu Guild in the future. You understand the bigger picture, so you wouldn't object, would you?"

As soon as those words were spoken, the scene erupted into uproar once again.

They thought that once Stella was dealt with, the matter would be resolved.

Who would have thought that Lordsworth Estate would take it so seriously? They not only wanted Stella's life, but also the complete eradication of the Jennings family!

That was no different from condemning the entire household to perish alongside her.

Matthew hadn't expected Colin to make such a request. His face darkened, and he furrowed his brows in concern as he tried to dissuade him.

Although the Jennings family's status in the Bartitsu Guild was not high, they were still a force to be reckoned with. Their disappearance would indeed be a loss for the guild.

Naturally, he was unwilling to comply.

"Mr. Wiley, don't you think this is going too far? Stella was the main culprit, and she has already paid the price with her life. Shouldn't this debt be considered settled? Why must Lordsworth Estate be so overbearing? Won't this harm the harmony between both parties?"

Colin stared at him, his previous gentleness fading away. He gave a cold laugh. "Mr. Lozano's considerations are somewhat inappropriate. If we want to avoid harming the harmony between us, the only solution is to erase the Jennings family. Don't forget that Stella represents the Jennings family, and the entire Jennings family was involved in this. Where is the logic in only punishing the main culprit and not the accomplices?"

As soon as those words were spoken, all the families who had once followed the Jennings family in their wrongdoings bowed their heads in unison, sweating profusely.

Colin continued, "If we delve into this matter, it's not just an issue concerning the Jennings family alone. All those families who rallied behind Stella should be punished. Mr. Lozano, I refrained from pursuing the responsibilities of the other families out of respect for you. However, the Jennings family cannot escape this. My demand is not excessive, is it?" Then, he changed the subject. "Mr. Lozano, I advise you to carefully consider the pros and cons. Offending Lordsworth Estate for the sake of an insignificant clan like the Jennings family is not a wise move. If you insist on protecting the Jennings family today, we might have a problem. I won't beat around the bush. Once I return, I will immediately mobilize all members of Ventus. If any unrest is triggered, it will be your responsibility, Mr. Lozano!"

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Chapter 1233

Those words were spoken with such conviction that all members of the forces within Lordsworth Estate were taken aback, nodding in agreement one after another.

"That's correct. The Lordsworth Estate is not to be trifled with!"

"The Jennings family wanted to belittle us and cause trouble. If we don't eliminate the Jennings family, the dignity of Lordsworth Estate will be tarnished!"

"Even an insignificant clan like the Jennings family dares to oppose Lordsworth Estate. Could it be that your Bartitsu Guild has some hidden motives?"

"We must execute the Jennings family! Otherwise, Lordsworth Estate will never find peace!"

The scene immediately erupted into chaos, and Matthew, watching that spectacle, wore a grimace.

On the other hand, none from the Bartitsu Guild dared to utter a word. The current argument was beyond their level. Since they were guilty, getting involved might lead to their complete annihilation.

In the end, Matthew still made a concession.

He knew that he couldn't afford not to compromise. If he openly fell out with Lordsworth Estate because of the Jennings family, it might lead to an uprising.

By then, not only would he have trouble explaining the situation to the president of the Bartitsu Guild, but it would also be a significant blow to the guild!

With that thought in mind, he gritted his teeth and gave himself a way out. "Ladies and gentlemen, please quiet down. I have no intention of protecting the Jennings family. The atrocities they've committed are undeniable facts. As the vice president of the Bartitsu Guild, I am naturally even more outraged than you are. Even if Mr. Wiley hadn't spoken up today, I would have certainly disciplined the entire Jennings family upon my return. However, since Mr. Wiley has made this request, I will certainly not refuse for the sake of maintaining harmony between the two powers. Here, I declare that from this day forward, the Jennings family is no longer a member of the Bartitsu Guild!"

As soon as those words were spoken, the faces of everyone in the Jennings family turned ashen, and they instantly became dejected.

They stood no chance to turn the tables now that the Bartitsu Guild and Lordsworth Estate had joined forces to condemn them.

Members of Lordsworth Estate were quite delighted. They clapped and applauded, some even whistled, all appearing immensely satisfied.

Matthew watched the scene somberly.

He never imagined that the election of a district president could cost the guild an entire family.

Fortunately, the most important goal of this election was achieved. The Gordon family surrendered.

From District Twenty-One to District Twenty-Five, the presidency of those five districts eventually fell into the hands of the Bartitsu Guild.

Once the formal handover was complete and the five districts were incorporated into the guild, the guild's power would greatly increase. Matthew would then have plenty of time to deal with Lordsworth Estate properly!

With that thought, he managed to find some semblance of balance in his heart.

However, his concession left the forces of the Bartitsu Guild silent, each feeling chills running down their spines.

Neera felt inexplicably frightened.

That was her first time truly experiencing the formidable and powerful nature of Lordsworth Estate.

Just a simple sentence from the branch leader could annihilate an entire family!

Such power was simply spine-chilling!

Before long, the entire Jennings family was detained and taken away.

Because of Colin's intervention, the downfall of the Jennings family was inevitable and could not be altered.

The election concluded in a solemn atmosphere.

After the meeting ended, Neera bid farewell to Caleb and his group. "Mr. Medicina, I am deeply grateful for your and your team's tremendous help during this trip to Mount Cloud. I am at a loss for words to express my gratitude. In any case... thank you. I truly appreciate all of you. And Mr. Massey, the same goes for you. Meeting people like you, who are both passionate and righteous, is my good fortune."

Upon hearing those words, Caleb responded with a charming smile, his gentle and refined demeanor tinged with a hint of unrestrained wildness. "Ms. Garcia, you've said 'thank you' many times already. I understand your gratitude, but as I've said before, this

small matter is not worth mentioning. You don't need to worry about it." Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

While rubbing the back of his head, Cayden laughed and said, "Yes, thank goodness, it's finally over. Don't overthink things. The most important thing after we get back is to rest well. When I'm free, I'll come to find you. There's not a single good place to eat, drink, and have fun in the whole Phison that I don't know about. I'll take you to have a good time when the time comes."

Neera and the others were amused by him.

Visibly irked, Darcel responded indifferently, "That won't be necessary. Ms. Garcia will soon assume her position as the district president. She will have a lot of matters to attend to. You should not add to her troubles."

Cayden curled his lips, hummed twice, and stopped talking.

After everyone said their goodbyes, Avery walked over to Neera and gently said, "Let's go. We need to meet the vice president."

"Ah, okay." Neera nodded.

Before she left, it seemed as if she remembered something. She paused slightly, turned her head to look at Darcel, and gave a faint smile. "Goodbye, Darcel."

Darcel arched his brow. The look in his eyes was gentle. He softly said, "Goodbye."

Neera nodded, then turned and walked away.

Unbeknownst to her, Avery was one step behind her, also looking at Darcel.

The gazes of the two men met, their eyes deep and inscrutable as if an invisible tension was rising around them, making the air inexplicably tense.

In the end, it was Darcel who first averted his gaze. Without uttering a word, he indifferently turned and walked away.

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Chapter 1234

"Mr. Cox... Aren't you coming?" Neera called out to Avery when she noticed he had fallen behind.

Snapping back to reality, Avery pushed aside the unsettling feeling in his heart and quickly caught up, saying, "All right. Let's go."

Matthew was still somewhat upset because of what had just happened.

Upon seeing Neera, he naturally displayed his displeasure. Wearing a sour expression, he spoke in an unfriendly tone. "I really didn't expect that in the end, it would be you who would surrender."

Neera was prepared for his reaction and calmly responded, "I never expected to end up with the white flag. It seems that even with all the scheming and plotting, a favorable outcome isn't guaranteed. The Jennings family is a prime example."

"Hmph! The Bartitsu Guild has always been like this. If you want something, you have to fight for it. This is a world where the strong prey on the weak. The weak can only be defeated, while the strong can do as they please. That's the rule. The Jennings family lost because they weren't strong or smart enough. Their current predicament is what they deserve. But for someone like you, who doesn't fight or scramble for power, to obtain the white flag and become the district president, it's truly unprecedented!"

Neera sensed his implication. She slightly lowered her eyes, remaining silent.

Matthew suddenly changed the subject and started questioning her, "Ms. Garcia, what exactly is your relationship with Lordsworth Estate?"

Neera looked down and calmly answered, "We have no connection whatsoever."

With a cold snort, Matthew flatly refused to believe it.

"Do you even believe what you're saying? I've been in Phison for many years and seen all sorts of things, but I've never seen Lordsworth Estate protect someone like this! You've never been to Phison before, so how come you're an exception as soon as you arrive?"

Neera fell silent for a moment, then said, "I don't know why, but it seems I am an exception. I truly have no connection with Lordsworth Estate. Before I came here, I didn't even know anyone from Lordsworth Estate. As for why Lordsworth Estate is willing to support me, I've explained it before. According to the deputy lord, Mr. McClure, I once saved the lord's life. I am a doctor, and saving lives is my duty. I have saved countless people, and it's possible that I inadvertently saved this important person in the past. However, I have no idea what he looks like, so I can't say for sure." She paused, carefully framing her question. "Mr. Lozano, could you perhaps describe what the lord looks like? I might be able to recall something."

Matthew stared at her, trying to discern whether her words were true or false.

Seeing her calm and sincere demeanor, his gaze finally softened. "It's pointless. The one from Lordsworth Estate is always elusive, never showing his face publicly. Even if he has appeared, it's not his true face. He might be in disguise. Even if you happened to save him, you wouldn't recognize him."

Neera nodded in resignation. "Well, there's nothing I can do then. Every word I've said is true, Mr. Lozano. If you don't believe me, I really don't have any other evidence to prove myself. But the decision is ultimately yours to make."

Matthew's expression was somber, but he didn't give her a hard time anymore.

After a moment, he propped himself up and stood, letting out a deep sigh. "Forget it. The Jennings family has been annihilated today, and Stella's words no longer hold any weight. Although your association with the Gordon family will be discussed, there is no concrete evidence, so no one can blame you for anything. However, in the future, I hope you remember your position and not get too close to Lordsworth Estate. Always remember, the Gordon family is always a force within the Bartitsu Guild. Also, as the district president, you should focus your attention on the fifth district, manage it well, and avoid causing any trouble."

Neera nodded, indicating that she understood.

Afterward, Matthew waved his hand, signaling her to leave. "You go ahead. I still have things to discuss with Mr. Cox."

Neera glanced at Avery, and he nodded in acknowledgment, so she left.

Shane and his group were waiting not far away. Seeing her return, they quickly asked, "How did it go? What did Mr. Lozano say to you?"

Neera chose not to hide anything and told the truth.

After hearing that, Shane slightly furrowed his brows. "It seems he still doubts your relationship with Lordsworth Estate, suspecting you might be one of their people."

Neera seemed lost in thought. "It's not that bad. My relationship with Lordsworth Estate is now inseparable, but it's merely a positive relationship. The Gordon family hasn't pledged allegiance to Lordsworth Estate, nor have we harmed the guild's interests. Even if he's unhappy, he can't really say anything. I think what he cares more about is my loyalty. Those last words served as a warning to me."

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Chapter 1235

Shane immediately understood. "It's about standing your ground instead of betraying the Bartitsu Guild."

"Absolutely," Neera nodded. "He wants me to oversee those five districts and reminds me that those districts are now under the influence of the Bartitsu Guild."

Shane furrowed his brow. "I never expected things to turn out like this. The Gordon family never planned to take the position of the district president, but it somehow fell into our lap. It's quite unexpected."

Neera sighed in resignation. "Who would have thought it would come to this? I just wanted to go through the motions. When you think about it, it all started with Tiago showing up. If it weren't for what he said, asking me to become the district president, the Gordon family wouldn't have been caught in the middle of all this."

"That's true, but I suspect the owner of Lordsworth Estate had plans in place from the beginning."

"Hmm?" Neera was confused.

"Do you really think that the factions in the Lordsworth Estate went on vacation?"

Clearly, Gordon had a clear understanding of what had happened.

After careful consideration, Neera came to understand.

"So, you mean that the forces from the Lordsworth Estate entered the dense forest to protect and clear the way for the Gordon family?"

Shane nodded and then shook his head, pointing at her.

"To be precise, it's to clear the way for you. I believe the entire Lordsworth Estate is coming together for this election assembly with one goal in mind - to help you remove all obstacles and securely place you in the position of the district president. The Medicina family didn't encounter us by chance; they must have been following us all along, waiting for the right moment to appear and inviting us to join them. As for all the forces of the Lordsworth Estate gathering..."

He paused, and Neera immediately picked up the thread. [Search the website](#) to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

"On the surface, it's about clearing the influence of the Bartitsu Guild. In reality, it's about helping the Gordon family eliminate any obstacles, ensuring that only the Gordon family remains when it's all said and done."

"That's correct," Shane nodded.

It seemed like some things were becoming clearer, but there were still many mysteries in Neera's mind.

"When I went to the Medicina family's pharmacy, Caleb was ready to help me. It wasn't a coincidence. They probably heard about me from that lord. But when did I meet this prominent figure? I have no recollection whatsoever. Also, he seems to be making a big deal out of it. Treating illnesses and helping people is my duty. How did it end up being such a grand affair? The position of a district president is so important, and it fell into my lap so easily. I've just taken over the Gordon family, and I know next to nothing about Phison. He's taking a big risk..."

Neera had been racking her brain, trying to figure out who the lord might be, but she couldn't make any headway.

Shane watched her troubled expression, and a faint smile appeared on his lips.

"All right, don't strain yourself trying to remember. It's said that an act of kindness should be repaid generously. I believe this prominent figure is a grateful person. His actions are probably intended to help you establish a firm footing within the Gordon family. He likely knows the internal situation of the Gordon family as well. Since they care so much about the position of the district president, let's have you take that seat. This way, not only the Gordon family but also the entire Bartitsu Guild won't have any grounds to object. Silencing all gossips will secure your position."

At this point, Finnley also approached, stroking his beard while muttering.

"I've lived in Phison all my life, and I've witnessed the rule of several lords. Honestly, no previous lords can match the current one in terms of leadership. Although the Lordsworth Estate and the Bartitsu Guild have their differences, most of the major decisions are made by the lord. In recent years, with the lord's guidance, Phison has reached unprecedented heights in all aspects. So, I think his insistence on having you take the position of district president is not just a whim; it must have been carefully considered. Perhaps some of your qualities make you suitable for the responsibilities."

"My qualities?" Neera pointed at herself.

Shane chuckled and tousled her hair. "Of course, all those wonderful qualities you possess, which most men don't, make you stand out. So, that lord has a good eye for talent. As for you, don't overthink it. Now that you're in this position, thinking about other things is meaningless. Let's cross that bridge when we come to it."

Neera thought it over and sighed softly. "All right, let's go back."

Contentedly stretching, Finnley said, "Phew, it's finally over. I just want to take a shower and get a good night's sleep. I must be stinking. Oh, Neera, get some rest when we return, but don't forget to come and continue your training..."

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Chapter 1236

Neera was at a loss for words. "Mr. Weaver, can't you give me a few days to rest? I've just come out of retirement..."

Finnley hummed twice, swaying in a manner reminiscent of an old trickster. He looked adorable.

"If you rest for a few days, your hard-earned muscle memory will fade away. Keep practicing, Neera. You have a long journey ahead, so keep striving!"

Neera chuckled, shaking her head helplessly.

At this moment, the square had emptied.

Matthew pointed to a nearby Lincoln limousine. "Let's go. We'll talk in the car."

Avery raised an eyebrow and followed. Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Once inside the car, Matthew fixed Avery with a meaningful gaze and asked, "Is it true that there's absolutely no connection between Ms. Garcia and the Lordsworth Estate?"

Avery wasn't surprised that he was still fixated on this matter.

"Mr. Lozano, at this point, whether there was a connection or not, how much difference does it make? Regardless, the Lordsworth Estate did help Neera obtain the White Flag. The Medicina family, along with other forces from the Lordsworth Estate, have provided assistance. Such a situation is not as simple as having a connection or not."

Matthew's eyebrows immediately furrowed, his expression darkening.

"You should know what I'm worried about."

Avery nodded. "I understand, but I think you're worrying too much."

"How can you be so sure?"

"Because I trust Neera. From what I know about her, she would never do anything to betray the Bartitsu Guild."

Matthew snorted. "That's not certain. Don't forget, she has no roots here. Phison means nothing to her, let alone the Bartitsu Guild."

"But the Gordon family means something to her, doesn't it?"

"The Gordon family? Ha!" Matthew chuckled dismissively. "What could it mean? Chad isn't even related to her by blood; he just became her uncle. How deep of a connection can there be?"

Avery's lips curled as he gazed at the distant hills through the window. Something flickered in his gaze.

"You don't understand her. So, even if the Bartitsu Guild isn't important to her, the Gordon family is a part of the Bartitsu Guild's influence. She wouldn't do anything against the Gordon family's interests, and she wouldn't let them fall into an unjust situation."

Matthew truly didn't know about this. "Oh? There's that too?"

"Yes, so don't worry. Even if the Bartitsu Guild isn't important to her, the Gordon family is a part of the Bartitsu Guild's forces. She would never do anything against the Gordon family's interests or lead them down an unjust path."

Matthew fell into silence, his forehead still creased.

"Even if she doesn't have such intentions, the Lordsworth Estate, on the other hand, might."

Avery suddenly laughed softly.

Matthew was a bit annoyed. "What are you laughing at? Do you think I'm needlessly troubling myself? When you're in this position, you must think about the big picture at all times. Once you have the chance to reach the heights I'm at, you'll understand why I have to be so meticulous."

Avery raised an eyebrow, his manner casual.

"Mr. Lozano, don't misunderstand me. I'm not laughing at you. I understand that you've worked hard for the Bartitsu Guild. However..."

"However, what?"

"However, you really don't need to be so cautious. I know what you're most concerned about is the Gordon family betraying the Bartitsu Guild and siding with the Lordsworth Estate, and the five districts falling into the hands of the Lordsworth Estate. But you might want to consider whether this approach is neglecting what is close at hand in favor of distant possibilities."

Matthew furrowed his brow, contemplating in silence.

Avery didn't pay attention to him and continued, "If the Lordsworth Estate is genuinely eyeing the five districts and aims to expand its influence there, then why hand the white flag over to the Gordon family in the dense forest? They have already eliminated all obstacles from the Bartitsu Guild. The only remaining force, the Gordon family, poses no real threat to them. If they want to take control of the five districts, they could simply crush the Gordon family and have their own people raise the flag, right? So, handing the white flag to the Gordon family is clearly meant to support the Bartitsu Guild, and they have no interest in the five districts. Furthermore, I believe the individual from the Lordsworth Estate isn't that foolish. It's absurd to go through all this trouble and make a public declaration about using the Gordon family to control the five districts. If they genuinely had such intentions, they would be incredibly naive."

Listening to these words, Matthew gradually became convinced, but he still felt upset.

"That person from the Lordsworth Estate is as slippery as an eel. Now they've made this move, giving an opportunity to the Bartitsu Guild for free. It's sheer arrogance! Making way? As if our Guild couldn't handle it!"

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Chapter 1237

Avery fell silent and sighed softly after a few seconds.

"But didn't they make way in the end? Setting aside the Gordon family, the Bartitsu Guild suffered a tremendous defeat. Not a single family reached the mountaintop, and internal strife was rampant. We have to admit that the Lordsworth Estate is superior to our Guild. Both sides may claim to be evenly matched, but is that really the case now?"

Matthew's expression grew even more unsightly. He wanted to refute but didn't know how.

After a while, he spoke in a deep voice. "Fine. We haven't reached the end yet, so how can we determine the winner and loser so soon? Now that the five districts are under

our influence, it's hugely beneficial to us. If managed well it will undoubtedly be a significant boost."

At this point, he entrusted a significant task.

"I called you here for an important matter. Although the likelihood of the Gordon family betraying us is minuscule, the new head of the Gordon family is a young girl who lacks worldly experience. I'm concerned that the five districts, under her control, might become chaotic. Since you are her fiancé, you should assist her and maintain control over the five districts."

"Understood, Mr. Lozano. Don't worry."

"There's one more thing. The president promised that whoever obtains the white flag this time could become an elder. Now it's time to fulfill that promise. The Guild will add an elder seat for the Gordon family, and their head will be honored as the Ninth Elder. This is a significant matter for our Guild and will require a grand ceremony. After you return, inform the young lady and have her prepare accordingly. The Guild will handle the specific arrangements."

Upon hearing this, Avery nodded. "Understood."

The recent jungle election had exhausted Neera.

When she returned to the Gordon residence, she was utterly exhausted. After taking a relaxing hot bath, she didn't even have the energy to dry her hair. She lay down on the soft, large bed and quickly fell asleep.

She slept deeply.

When she woke up, she stretched lazily, looking at the sunlight outside the window with a somewhat dazed expression.

What time is it now?

She grabbed her phone and was wide-eyed when she saw the time.

It was already late afternoon of the next day! She had slept for a full day and more.

This was quite an impressive feat.

Knock, knock!

The knock on the door startled Neera, who hurriedly ran her hand through her hair and sat up. "Come in."

A maid entered, holding some clothes. "Ms. Garcia, Mr. Gordon asked me to check if you were awake. If you're up, please come downstairs for some refreshments. It's tea time."

Neera said, "Oh, okay. I'll go down now."

After getting herself ready, she went downstairs. Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Shane was sitting in the living room, holding a tablet in one hand and a cup of coffee in the other.

When he saw her coming down, he waved the coffee cup at her and smiled, "You've finally woken up. I thought you were going to sleep forever. It seems like you were really exhausted. Have some dessert to fill your stomach. We'll be having dinner in a while."

Neera walked over and sat down, looking somewhat embarrassed.

"Shane, why didn't you wake me up?"

Shane smiled, "Why would I wake you up? You've been working hard for several days and finally get to relax. How do you feel now? And your shoulder injury, is it better now?"

Neera nodded, cradling her teacup and taking small sips. She also took a bite of cake, enjoying the sweet taste that filled her mouth.

"Yes, it's mostly healed."

"That's good. After dinner, you can contact Uncle Chad and the rest. They've been quite worried about you."

"Yes, I will."

She had been thinking about them for days but couldn't contact them while in the mountains, as there was no signal.

Even if there was a signal, given her condition at the time, she didn't dare to contact them, fearing that they might discover something and worry about her.

After dinner, she returned to her room, sprawled on the bed, and chatted on the phone with her aunt.

They hadn't been in touch for several days, so Adriana was extremely concerned, bombarding her with questions and showing great care.

Adriana was surprised to learn that she was now the district president.

Even Chad found it quite unbelievable.

"I thought you were just going through the motions, but you ended up taking the lead. You're impressive, Neera. It looks like I made the right choice for my successor."

Adriana had some lingering fear. "I heard that the election was very dangerous. You must have experienced a lot of dangers in the mountains. You only report good news and not your troubles. I asked you earlier, and you said everything was fine."

Neera chuckled, "I really am fine. It's not that I'm extraordinary. The main thing is that I had someone protecting me, so I didn't have to exert much effort."

After bidding farewell to Adriana and Chad, she called the three little ones to inform them that she was safe. After a long conversation filled with words, she finally called the person she had been thinking about.

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Chapter 1238

The phone only rang for a few seconds before it was answered.

Neera was quite surprised. "Hey, isn't it five in the morning back in the country? Why are you awake so early?"

Jean stood on the balcony, gazing at the night sky of Phison. He grunted in response. "You know it's five in the morning, so why are you calling me at this hour?"

Neera hesitated as she played with her finger on the bedsheet. She whispered, "I just wanted to see if you were awake."

Jean's eyes held a profound tenderness. He pretended not to understand and asked, "You haven't contacted me for some time. Why are you suddenly calling so early?"

Neera was aware that she was in the wrong and felt somewhat guilty.

"Hey, why are you so distant? Are you upset? Is it because I didn't call you in these past few days?"

On the other end, Jean listened to her cautious inquiry. Holding back a smile, he asked indifferently, "What do you think?"

Neera pouted. "I've been busy these days. I was dead tired when I got back, so I took a nap. I only woke up this afternoon, and I called you as soon as I could. Don't be mad..."

At this point, she had completely forgotten about the previous arguments between them.

Jean's heart nearly melted when he heard her soft voice. He was utterly captivated, and he couldn't help but smile.

This little fool is quite easy to fool.

As he remained silent, Neera assumed he was still upset, so she continued to whine.

"Don't be angry, okay? Even though I couldn't contact you, I've been thinking about you every day. Didn't you feel it? Hmm?"

Jean couldn't resist her coaxing and quickly gave in. "I'm not mad. I was just teasing you. Neera, I miss you a lot."

His tender voice was laced with laughter.

Neera's heart raced wildly as though something had struck her.

"Hmm..." Her cheeks flushed as she smiled happily. "I miss you too. I really, really miss you..."

The two poured out their hearts to each other, exchanging sweet nothings for a while. Suddenly, Jean asked, "What have you been busy with these days? You didn't even have time to call. Don't tell me you've locked yourself in the lab again?"

Neera hesitated and didn't know how to respond.

She chose to hide the truth to avoid making him worry.

"It's nothing much, just an election activity in Phison. As the head of the Gordon family, I got involved."

Jean asked again, "Was it dangerous? Did you get hurt?"

Neera immediately denied, "Not really, it's not that dangerous. I had someone protecting me. I didn't get hurt, so don't worry."

"Really?"

"Of course!"

Afraid that he would dig deeper, Neera quickly changed the topic.

"Right! Speaking of which, I almost made a mistake."

Jean sighed inwardly. He was defeated by her strong and mature demeanor. He decided not to press further, simply going along with her.

"What mistake? Tell me about it."

Neera chuckled, a little embarrassed. "This time, I received protection from the Gordon family, and I also encountered a very kind family. They were all good people and provided us with a lot of help. They protected us no matter what happened. Among them, there was a man named Darcel Belma. At first, I thought he was you!"

Upon hearing this, Jean raised an eyebrow. "Oh? Does that person look a lot like me?"

"Not really. Your appearances are completely different, but your auras are somewhat similar. I think he must be following their family head's orders, which was why he took special care of me. During the election, if it weren't for his help, I don't know what would have happened. At first, I even thought he was you. But it turned out I was mistaken. Fortunately, I didn't ask directly. Otherwise, it would have been embarrassing..."

Listening to her chatter, Jean couldn't help but smile.

This little fool has sharp intuition. She almost caught me.

"You need to thank him later. But how were you so sure he wasn't me?"

"Um..."

Neera pondered her response carefully. "Well, he got hurt while protecting me. When I was tending to his injuries, I noticed a lot of old scars on his body. That was how I realized I had made a mistake."

Jean narrowed his gaze and teased her. [SEARCH THE website](#) to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

"Oh? So, you're saying you undressed him?"

Neera blushed and felt a bit awkward.

"Where is your mind wandering off to? It's just a shirt, and I only took it off to treat his injuries. A doctor doesn't pay much attention to such things when treating patients, right? Besides, back when we first met, I also did acupuncture for you."

Jean let out a soft hum.

Neera asked, "Hey, you're not getting jealous, are you?"

Jean drawled, "What if I am? How do you plan to make it up to me?"

Neera couldn't help but laugh. "Why are you being jealous over something like this? A grown man like you acting so childish..."

Jean was unbothered. "What's wrong with being a little childish when it comes to matters related to you?"

The words spoken were incredibly sweet. Neera felt as if she had fallen into a honey jar, her entire being bubbling with happiness.

"Okay. Be good and don't get jealous. I'll bring you a gift when I get back."

As she was comforting him as though he were a child, Jean smiled tenderly.

"The gift isn't important. You returning to my side is the best gift of all."

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Chapter 1239

Meanwhile, back in Phison, Avery took some time to rest after returning from Mount Cloud before addressing urgent matters.

Late at night, he was still busy in his study.

Irwin knocked on the door and entered after receiving permission.

"Mr. Cox, there's news from the Gordon family. Ms. Garcia has awakened."

Avery paused momentarily while signing a document before continuing with his work.

"Okay, got it."

Then he remembered something and summoned a skilled operative who had been assigned to protect Neera.

"During the past few days in the dense forest, what activities have been observed from Lordsworth Estate?"

The operative, with his head slightly lowered, respectfully replied, "Ever since the Gordon family entered the forest, I had a feeling that someone was following them from a distance. Later, I discovered it was someone from the Medicina family."

Avery furrowed his brow. "Wasn't it stated that the Medicina family and the Gordon family encountered each other by chance?"

"That's what they claimed, but the Medicina family clearly came prepared. Although their routes weren't exactly the same, it seemed like they were well aware of the Gordon family's actions. They appeared to help at crucial moments and then continued to travel with us. I don't believe it was a simple coincidence. What's more, it's not just the Medicina family; all the factions from Lordsworth Estate were protecting Ms. Garcia."

Avery had already been informed of this situation, but hearing it again, he couldn't help but feel confused.

"I heard that all the factions from Lordsworth Estate cleared out the other families of the Bartitsu Guild, but they didn't attack the Gordon family. Afterward, they handed the white flag to Ms. Garcia. What's going on?"

The operative was just as puzzled.

"I don't know. When Ms. Garcia and the others were surrounded by the Bartitsu Guild members led by the Jennings family, it was Medicine River from the Medicina family who arrived with people from Lordsworth Estate and drove them away. It seemed like everything was done to protect Ms. Garcia. When they reached the mountaintop, I thought there might be a dispute, but all the people from Lordsworth Estate claimed they were there for sightseeing and had no interest in the white flag. That Darcel even pulled out the white flag and handed it to Ms. Garcia."

"Darcel?" Avery took note of this individual. "Is he the man with a scar on his face?"

"Yes, him. Speaking of which, there's another strange thing. He came with the Medicina family, but I don't understand why. When we encountered an ambush at night, I had a chance to see his martial skills. I had the feeling that he wasn't following the Medicina family's traditional style. Even though his skills seemed less fierce and less powerful, every move was deadly. I believe that not only us, but even the top experts in the entire Phison, may not be able to match him."

Avery's expression turned serious when he heard about this highly skilled individual.

"He doesn't seem to belong to the Medicina family, then. Do you have any other impressions? Does he resemble anyone else?"

The operative thought for a moment and then shook his head, completely clueless.

"I have never seen such skills in Phison."

Upon hearing this, Avery rose to his feet. He walked to the window and gazed out at the dark sky. His expression was solemn, a frown etched between his brows.

"You've never seen such skills, huh? I have never heard of the Medicina family secretly training individuals like him. It seems that Darcel is not an official member of the Medicina family. This is getting interesting."

In fact, Avery found it quite unbelievable that Neera managed to obtain the white flag. What puzzled him even more was the attitude of Lordsworth Estate.

Although he had previously discussed it with Matthew, that was mainly to stop Matthew from suspecting Neera.

Avery himself was filled with doubt and felt that Lordsworth Estate's actions were beyond normal reasoning.

However, if it wasn't for the purpose of protecting Neera, there was no other plausible explanation.

Could it be that Neera's rescue of the young master of Lordsworth Estate earned her the favor of everyone in the estate? Also, who exactly is Darcel?

Although they had only crossed paths once, Avery couldn't shake the feeling of an inexplicable hostility in the man's eyes.

He couldn't figure out both the lord of Lordsworth Estate and that man.

Avery's eyes were deep and contemplative as he pondered the true intentions of these individuals.

At this moment, in the Continent Master's Mansion.

After putting Neera to sleep, Jean reluctantly hung up the phone.

He recalled her mentioning Darcel over the phone and smiled. Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

If the little fool finds out I'm Darcel one day, she will throw a tantrum, won't she?

Just then, there was a knock at the door of his study.

"Come in," he said, and the warmth in his eyes disappeared instantly. He turned and walked back to his desk, his expression once again cold.

Luna entered the room. "My Lord, you called for me."

"Yes," Jean replied in a calm tone. "There's something I need you to take care of. Gather our men and ensure that the Jennings family is completely eliminated. Remember, don't let a single one of them escape."

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Chapter 1240

In the Jennings family, Sophia, the mother, was devastated upon learning of her daughter Stella's tragic death. Overwhelmed with grief, she cried so much that she almost fainted.

"My daughter...my daughter! How could the Cox family be so heartless! We must seek justice for this. How could my daughter die in vain like this?"

The key members of the Jennings family were gathered in the main lobby at that moment.

Seeing Sophia crying and causing a scene, everyone was quite annoyed.

Unable to bear it any longer, the senior elder suddenly slammed the table and stood up, glaring at her furiously.

"Demand justice? How can you demand justice? The Jennings family is no longer a member of the Bartitsu Guild. You have no power to rely on! What right do you have to demand justice? Besides, it's the Cox family! Do you dare to challenge the Cox family? I think you've lost your mind!"

Sophia's eyes were swollen and red from crying, resembling two walnuts. She gritted her teeth, giving the impression that she was ready to bite someone's head off.

"Have I lost my mind? Don't forget, my daughter is the head of the Jennings family! You should be serving her, standing up for her! Now that she's in trouble, all you think about is yourselves! Have you forgotten my late husband's last wish?"

The previous head of the Jennings family was Stella's father.

Two years ago, due to a severe illness, he passed away prematurely.

Before his death, he was determined to position his daughter as the head of the family in order to prevent the power from falling into the wrong hands. He secretly gained the support of many influential people within the family.

But now, since Stella had passed away, naturally, no one would show respect to this widow anymore.

Owain was particularly annoyed. Initially, he had intended for his own son, who was also Stella's cousin, Maxwell, to ascend to the position.

After Stella became the head, he became discontented and even harbored resentment in his heart.

At this moment, seeing Sophia's unruly behavior, he naturally wouldn't indulge her. He publicly rebuked her without regard for her dignity.

"Entrustment? You have the nerve to mention entrustment? Everyone knows how your daughter became the head of the family. Do you think we're all fools? Under her leadership, the Jennings family has been declining for the past two years. The family wealth has significantly decreased due to her mismanagement. Has anything she's done been beneficial to the Jennings family? And you still dare to call her the head of the family? Ha, you have the audacity to claim she's the head of the family!"

He raised his head, and the others could no longer hold back. They launched into a barrage of sarcastic and scathing criticisms.

"Exactly! With her as the head of the Jennings family, we've had a streak of bad luck! That wretched girl has brought our family to this state, and now she's just fine. With a swipe at her neck, she's out of breath, leaving us here to worry. Who's going to clean up this mess? Isn't it us?"

"These past two years, she's been causing trouble everywhere, taking advantage of her position as the head of the Jennings family to act recklessly. She's been harsh to our family members, causing discord at home and attracting criticism from outsiders towards the Jennings family! Every time she stirs up trouble, we have to clean up after her. Such a family head is simply unheard of!"

"Again, she insists on meddling with the Gordon family. Is she out of her mind to oppose them? Everyone knows the relationship between the Gordon and Cox families. The heads of both families are in-laws, naturally, they support each other. But she, she's eager to confront the head of the Gordon family. Isn't that a slap in the face to the Cox family? The Cox family was merciful enough to only break her neck. If they truly become ruthless, who knows, they might even grind her to dust!"

"You all—" Sophia, seeing herself and her daughter become the target of everyone's criticism, was so angry she felt like her lungs were about to explode.

"You're just kicking her while she's down! But she's still the head of the Jennings family, are you really planning to just stand by and do nothing?"

"Hah, she is dead, how can she still be our family head?"

"What a joke! Do something? How are we supposed to do something? With what? What does the Jennings family amount to now? Without the protection of the Bartitsu Guild, anyone can step on our family!"

At that moment, Owain looked at her with a cold smirk.

"Do you really think the Jennings family will have good days ahead? We're on the brink of disaster! Now, the entire Jennings family is going to be buried with your precious daughter! Do you still have time to think about your useless dead daughter? You better start thinking about what you're going to do!"

Sophia was taken aback upon hearing this, not quite understanding. "What kind of disaster are you talking about? My daughter has already been killed by them, what more do they want?"

Seeing her behave so recklessly, all the members of the Jennings family revealed expressions of disdain and annoyance. [Search The website](#) to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

"Do you think that by executing Stella, everything can be easily resolved? Dream on! Let me tell you, Stella represents the Jennings family. Thanks to her, those brought by the Jennings family have acted against the Gordon family. Now, our entire family has been expelled by the Bartitsu Guild, which means we have been expelled from Phison! Do you know what expulsion means? It means annihilation! There's no longer any reason for our family to exist!"

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Chapter 1241

Upon hearing these words, Sophia was stunned.

"What? Does it mean we all have to die?"

Owain's face was gloomy, seething with hatred.

"What do you think? Did you actually believe we could live in peace? This is Phison! Without power or allegiance, there's only doom!"

Sophia took a few seconds to react, completely unable to accept it.

"How can this be! They treat human life as if it were worthless, and now they plan to target our family? I'm going to find Mr. Grey. I need to seek justice from him!" [SEAR*ch the website](#) to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Having said that, she turned around to leave.

Owain raised his voice and commanded, "Detain her and lock her up! No one is allowed to let her out!"

As soon as he finished speaking, his subordinates rushed forward. Without uttering a word, they seized Sophia, twisted her arm, and led her away.

Sophia gritted her teeth in pain, being dragged along, all the while continuing to shout and rant.

"Have you lost your minds? I am the birth mother of the Jennings family's head. How dare you treat me this way, this is a grave disrespect..."

Her shrill, piercing voice gradually faded away, leaving everyone present with a look of disgust and contempt.

"Pah! What head of the family, what biological mother, these two are simply two peas in a pod! I bet Stella was led astray by her!"

"This Stella, flaunting the Jennings family name, acting arrogantly and recklessly, doing whatever she pleases. Now she's caused a huge disaster, putting our entire family in jeopardy!"

"The bright future of the Jennings family has been ruined by her!"

Listening to the cacophony of complaints from the crowd, Owain's face turned grim, clearly displeased.

"Enough! What's the point of saying all this now?"

With a stern shout, he cut through the meaningless cacophony.

"The situation is now set in stone, our family is bound to face a catastrophe. We should hurry and find a way to send out the younger generation and those who are capable. This way, we can still preserve some lineage for our family."

Upon hearing these words, everyone present was stunned.

Someone asked, "Mr. Owain, do we really have to go to such lengths?"

Clearly, although these people knew the situation was serious, they hadn't fully grasped just how terrifying the consequences could be.

"Mr. Owain, although the guild has expelled our family, they didn't take our lives after all. They only dealt with Stella. Even though we've lost our status, we shouldn't be sending people away..."

"Indeed, the days ahead will be challenging. My greatest concern is our enemies seeking revenge. However, as long as we stay vigilant and fortified, we should not face too much danger."

"The road ahead for us seems to be quite challenging. The Jennings family has worked hard for so many years, only for Stella to set it all aflame, destroying everything. From now on, we can only survive in the cracks." "How about this... Once this storm blows over, let's think of a plan and plead our case to Mr. Grey..."

Upon hearing these words, Owain's face darkened.

"Foolish! I thought at least you could see the situation clearly. Now it seems, you are as hopelessly naive as Sophia!"

Suddenly, he roared loudly, the veins and arteries in his neck bulging, a picture of uncontainable rage.

"Do you really think that if you put this aside for now and plead later, the guild will show leniency, change their minds, and allow the Jennings family to rejoin the guild? Ridiculous! Do you really think the guild would be sentimental toward us? Our family has offended the Cox family and even Lordsworth Estate! Even if the storm has passed, the facts won't change. How could the guild tolerate the Jennings family any longer? Moreover, do you think the Jennings family has a lot of prestige within the guild? We're nothing more than a middle-class family. Now that we've lost our value, wouldn't they discard us just like that?"

The faces of those present instantly turned ashen, falling into silence.

"What do you think I mean by 'catastrophe'? Both the guild and Lordsworth Estate have spoken. They want to erase the existence of the Jennings family! Do you think that by killing one head of the Jennings family and expelling the family from the guild, they have erased our existence? Every single one of us in the Jennings family, none can escape!"

As soon as these words were spoken, everyone revealed expressions of shock and fear.

"Mr. Owain, could they really be planning to wipe them all out?"

Owain wore a solemn expression, his aged face shrouded in gloom.

"I reckon the guild won't take action. After all, our family is a force within the guild. Even if we've been expelled, the worst the guild would do is ignore us, not order a complete extermination. However, it won't be that simple with Lordsworth Estate. Don't forget, they've been protecting the Gordon family's girl at all costs. Given that Stella has repeatedly tried to take the girl's life, how could they possibly let it go?"

"Lordsworth Estate? Are they really planning to invade our territory? This is the territory of Bartitsu Guild! How dare they? Even if the guild doesn't care about the Jennings family, would they just stand by and watch as the people from Lordsworth Estate do as they please on the guild's territory? Isn't this a direct challenge to the guild?"

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Chapter 1242

Owain sneered, "Have you all forgotten? That day, Colin openly challenged Matthew, demanding that he expel the Jennings family from the guild. Although Matthew argued a bit, what was the outcome? He still obediently followed Colin's words!"

The leader of Lordsworth Estate can make the vice president of Bartitsu Guild compromise. Who can't see which way the balance of power is tilting between the two forces? Judging from this election, Bartitsu Guild, except for the Gordon family, was completely defeated. They should know that Lordsworth Estate has clearly risen above Bartitsu Guild! Even if Lordsworth Estate really sends people to our guild's territory to deal with us, the guild will either be unaware or choose to ignore it. After all, they would never go to great lengths to confront Lordsworth Estate just because of a mere Jennings family!" search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Upon hearing these words, the faces of everyone present turned pale. A sense of shock and fear filled every corner of the hall.

"So what should we do... Can we still escape now?"

"Run, run quickly, get out of here, I don't want to die here!"

"That despicable girl, Stella, if it weren't for her, how could we have fallen so low? Even if I die, I won't let her off as a ghost!"

Owain remained unmoved. "Run? Where could you possibly run to? With so many people in the Jennings family, if you were to flee, wouldn't such a commotion be noticed by others?"

"So what do we do? We can't just sit here and wait to die!"

Upon hearing this, Owain fell into a thoughtful silence, followed by a burst of cold laughter.

"Death? Do you really think death comes that easily? Do you think Lord will let us off the hook just like that?"

"What else do they want?"

"Judgment Island, have you heard of it?"

Upon hearing these words, the room instantly fell silent.

Judgement Island-a place known to all in Phison.

It was a solitary island on the outskirts of Phison, governed by the neutral faction.

All the serious offenders were confined there, most of whom were individuals guilty of the most heinous crimes.

Even though the neutral faction was in control, it was not difficult for Lordsworth Estate to plant some people inside.

And there, it was a place you could only enter but never leave, a veritable earthly purgatory. Once inside, every day was filled with unbearable torment, a place of extreme terror.

In the hall, everyone now fully understood their future fate, and a deathly silence permeated the surroundings.

Seeing that no one was making a fuss anymore, Owain solemnly said, "Now you understand why I had to send all the younger members of our family away, don't you? We can't escape, we can't choose to die, and we can't live well From now on, our lives will be spent on Judgement Island."

"The Jennings family cannot just end like this. How can we face our ancestors otherwise? We must carry on the legacy of our family! I've already sent people to make arrangements. The children of the elders have all been sent away, the further from Phison, the better!"

Someone began to sob quietly, another's face turned ashen, while yet another seemed to have lost their soul, their mind in disarray.

Owain glanced over, heaved a deep sigh, and chose not to engage any further. He turned his attention to handling the matter at hand.

But he had calculated everything yet miscalculated the initiative of Lordsworth Estate.

Just as he was about to put his son in the car, suddenly, countless people in black swarmed from all directions. Numerous black sedans also appeared, completely surrounding the entire Jennings family mansion, leaving no room for escape.

The following day, at the crack of dawn, news that the Jennings family had been completely wiped out sent shockwaves throughout the entire Phison.

"I heard that the Jennings family wanted to send their younger generation away to avoid trouble. But they weren't as quick as Lordsworth Estate. They all ended up being escorted to Judgment Island!"

"My goodness, being sent to the Judgement Island is worse than death itself. It's even more ruthless than wiping out the entire Jennings family. The way Lordsworth Estate operates is both swift and ruthless."

"Such a big incident happened last night, but why hasn't the guild made any move? Lordsworth Estate even brought a large group of people to arrest someone on our guild's territory!"

"D*mn, what's the fuss about? Just pretend we don't know anything. The guild isn't foolish enough to risk a real fight with Lordsworth Estate over the insignificant Jennings family."

"Speaking of which, why is Lordsworth Estate so nitpicky? They've already taken the life of the Jennings family's head, yet they're still relentless. Is it all because of the new head of the Gordon family?"

"Who knows..."

As people were engrossed in heated discussions, another piece of blockbuster news came out.

It turns out that not only the Jennings family but also the families who allied with them, participated in the use of firearms, and acted against the Gordon family were severely punished by the neutral faction, weakening their families' power.

This incident indeed sparked a huge uproar.

These past few days, those families who once allied with the Jennings family had been extremely cautious, not even daring to step out of their doors for fear of being implicated.

But now, they were still implicated.

Suddenly, these families regretted their actions.

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Chapter 1243

The Logan family, in particular, caused quite a stir.

Several elders in the clan were extremely dissatisfied with Howard. They verbally reprimanded him during the family assembly, even proposing to punish him.

Howard sat in the main seat, his face as unpleasant as if he had swallowed a fly. "Respected elders of our clan, are you trying to seize power? Punishing the head of the family is unheard of in all of Phison!"

Someone snorted coldly, showing no respect whatsoever. "Sir, don't think you can brush this off with a show of authority! The Logan family has been rooted in Phison for many years, and we've never had such a scandal!"

"Exactly! You've brought nothing but shame to our Logan family by being punished by the neutral party! Yet, you still have the audacity to call yourself the head of the family!"

Those who had long harbored ill intentions toward him seized the opportunity to worsen the situation, collectively pointing their fingers at him.

"For years, the Logan family has painstakingly built up their empire, advancing cautiously step by step, to finally achieve this prosperous situation. Although we haven't secured a seat on the Bartitsu Guild's council of elders, we're second only to that, and the competition for an elder seat is within our reach. But what about now? Everything is ruined! Our wealth and influence have both greatly diminished! As it stands now, the Logan family is no different from those insignificant forces!"

"Howard, you keep claiming to be the head of the family, acting like you're the boss, but what have you contributed to the Logan family? All you do is cause trouble! Even someone as foolish as Stella can manipulate you! Where is your intelligence? The entire Logan family has to pay for your mistakes! Why should we?"

"Insolence!" Howard slammed the table as he stood up, veins throbbing on his forehead. "Don't forget your place! I am still the head of the Logan family!"

An elder of the clan sneered, "Head of the family, huh? Well, why don't you take on the responsibilities of the family head now? Our Logan family's reputation is in ruins. The losses are severe. How do you plan to make up for these damages?"

Someone immediately chimed in, "Yeah, how are you going to make up for it? You have to come up with a solution! All your empty talk is useless. You're going to destroy the Logan family!"

"As a two-term elder of the Logan family, my words carry weight. I believe, if we cannot overcome this crisis, it might be time to consider a change in family leadership."

Howard's pupils instantly constricted, his face turning pale.

Anger welled up within him, yet when he opened his mouth, he couldn't utter a single word.

The Logan family was already in such a state. Meanwhile, the internal chaos within the other involved families was even worse.

People were whispering and discussing all sorts of things. Some took pleasure in others' misfortune, some were grateful that their own families were behaving properly, and there were even those who envied Neera.

"The Gordon family sure is lucky. With the full support of Lordsworth Estate, they acquired the white flag, underwent a complete transformation, and seized control of the fifth district. This is unprecedented in Phison."

"Who exactly is the head of the Gordon family? How come everything in the Gordon family underwent tremendous changes the moment she appeared?" Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

"Indeed, she had no foundation in Phison nor any impressive skills to speak of. I heard she's only equipped with some medicinal skills. I initially thought she wouldn't be able to hold her own, but in just a short period of time, she has managed to elevate the Gordon family's status so high!"

"Those who jeered at her have now been proven wrong. Tsk, tsk, they must feel thoroughly embarrassed. Who would have thought that Neera actually had connections with the lord of Lordsworth Estate? Her act of saving people really paid off..."

Meanwhile, Bartitsu Guild released a piece of news.

Neera, serving as the head of the Gordon family, would soon be promoted to the ninth elder of Bartitsu Guild. The inauguration ceremony would be held in the near future!

Upon hearing that news, Howard grimaced. He was so angry that he gnashed his teeth in frustration.

Members of other families also harbored both resentment and envy.

"Bartitsu Guild really did set up a ninth seat for the Gordon family, huh? But is the Gordon family even worthy?"

"Who would have thought the head of the Gordon family, who has only been here for a few days, hasn't done anything extraordinary, yet she easily became an elder of Bartitsu Guild. She really hit the jackpot. I bet she's secretly thrilled right now!"

"Is she, a mere girl, really up to the task? I highly doubt it..."

Upon hearing the news, Neera was not the least bit pleased. Instead, it gave her quite a headache. "I had completely forgotten about this matter, the ninth elder... This is outrageous. I'm still so young. How could I possibly take on the role of an elder..."

Shane chuckled. "Why can't you take on the role? Age doesn't define everything. Look at Avery. He's only a few years older than you, yet he's already an elder. Moreover, he's the third elder."

Neera rubbed her temples, clearly troubled. "Is there any difference between one elder and another?"

"Of course, there are differences in strength among the elders. The position of the first elder is second only to the vice president, making him the most influential among the elders. Now, Bartitsu Guild has set a precedent by adding one more, that is, the ninth, who is in the last position. However, being able to rank among the elders is already a very commendable achievement."

After some thought, Neera said, "Well... Shane, why don't you assume the role? If you're unwilling, you can also choose someone experienced from the Gordon family, right?"

Shane put down his coffee cup and waved his hand. "That won't work. The guild's announcement this time is to have you take the seat of the ninth elder. They've named you specifically, and the candidate cannot be changed. You should know not everyone from the Gordon family can occupy that position."

At that point, he let out a soft chuckle. "I'm afraid some of the Gordon family members are so upset that they are losing sleep."

Neera reluctantly pursed her lips, sighing helplessly.

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Chapter 1244

Out of all the members of the Gordon family, Baxter and his two sons were the most restless.

"Who does Neera think she is? Why does she deserve to suddenly become the district president and even secure a position as an elder in the guild? It's absolutely ridiculous!"

"Dad, we need to come up with a plan quickly. Are we just going to stand by and watch her become increasingly arrogant? She's just an outsider. What right does she have to dominate us? If this continues, she'll have complete control over the Gordon family and can do whatever she wants!"

Baxter's supporters also expressed their anger on his behalf.

Someone spoke up, "Exactly! You've worked tirelessly over the years and given your all to the Gordon family. It wouldn't be impossible for you to become the head of the family. Yet Chad handed such an important position to an outsider, and a naive girl at that. The family has become a laughingstock!"

"That woman is gaining more and more power these days, and the situation is becoming increasingly unfavorable for us. If we don't do something soon, she'll have full control over the Gordon family," said another.

"That's right. This time, we must stop her no matter what. We can't let her become an elder! If anyone should take that position, it should be you, Mr. Baxter! She isn't qualified yet!"

Those present started talking over each other in the living room, creating a chaotic atmosphere.

Baxter sat at the front of the room, pinching the bridge of his nose and looking grim. Annoyed by the noise, he huffed impatiently. "Enough! Stop arguing! What's the use of making such a fuss? Do you think all this chatter can change reality? You're all prominent and respected individuals, so why do you get so agitated when something happens?"

One by one, the others fell silent at his reprimand. [Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.](#)

After a brief pause, Baxter continued earnestly, "I understand your concerns. I really do. We all have the best interests of the Gordon family at heart. None of us want to see the family become a laughingstock, nor do we want to witness its decline. I get it. Don't you think I feel the same? I haven't been able to sleep or eat these past few days. The thought of a young girl being in control of the family is driving me crazy. However, even the vice president of the guild has spoken, declaring that they're going to create the position of a ninth elder for Neera. So, no matter how angry we are, it's useless."

Troy and Ollie exchanged glances, their brows furrowed.

"What do you mean by that, Dad? Are you just going to let this slide? This is the position of a guild elder we're talking about! It's the highest honor. Are you really going to let her take it?"

"Moreover, we don't know what the situation is like between her and Lordsworth Estate. What if her loyalties shift? Wouldn't that put our family in danger? It's already risky to have someone like her as the head of the family, so how can we let her have more power? After all, she represents the entire Gordon family!"

"Do you think I don't know that? But as I said before, does panicking help?" Baxter retorted, shooting them a sidelong glance.

"Are we just going to stand by helplessly and do nothing, then?"

A solemn atmosphere filled the living room. Everyone looked upset, with resentment and jealousy evident on their faces.

When Baxter finally spoke again after a long silence, his tone was meaningful and laced with a hint of cold mockery. "Hah... If she thinks she can become a guild elder without any obstacles, she can dream on! Don't forget, it's not just us but the other families as well who are closely watching. Many are dissatisfied with her. When the time comes, we won't need to intervene as there'll be plenty of people to stop her. We'll just have to sit back and enjoy the show. And if the guild wavers in their decision, we'll speak up at the right time, ensuring that the position of the ninth elder remains firmly within the Gordon family. Then, choosing the candidate will be an easy decision."

At Lordsworth Estate, Tiago leisurely climbed the stairs with a cup of coffee in his hand and knocked on the door to the study.

Jean's cold voice came from inside the room. "Come in."

Tiago pushed the door open but didn't enter. With one hand casually tucked into his pants pocket and the other holding a delicate coffee cup, he leaned lazily against the doorframe. "Still working? Tsk, tsk. It seems like you've really recovered. You went to Mount Cloud with your fiancée and have been working non-stop since you returned, yet you're holding up well. It seems the treatment worked wonders. I've been having stomach pains again recently. Maybe next time your precious fiancée could take a look at me too?"

Jean glanced at him, his expression indifferent. "Instead of wasting time chatting, why don't you do some work? If you weren't so unproductive every day, I wouldn't have to work so hard. Also, aren't the doctors from the Medicina family enough for you? You want my fiancée to step in? Not in a million years."

"You're being a little too possessive, don't you think? It's just a consultation. Does it really warrant such a reaction?" Tiago responded with a chuckle while shaking his head.

Jean couldn't be bothered to respond and didn't even lift his head as he signed his name at the bottom of the document.

Accustomed to such behavior, Tiago straightened up and walked over. He sat down across from Jean and casually crossed one leg over the other, exuding a relaxed and dignified air. "However, I'm quite curious. With that intense possessiveness of yours, why would you send her into the enemy's lair? I noticed that Avery is quite affectionate toward her, always protecting her. As for others, they all desire her. Aren't you worried?"

Upon hearing this, Jean casually placed his pen on the table and crossed his arms in front of him. He maintained his usual calm expression on his handsome and stern face, appearing as a man who had complete control and was prepared for any situation. "Since I dared to push her to such heights, naturally, I am confident that I can protect her well. As for Avery... Ha! He cannot take what is mine, nor does he possess the ability to do so!"

Tiago took a sip of his coffee and then inquired, "However, you should be aware that for her to have control over the five districts is both a blessing and a curse. Aren't you afraid she won't be able to handle it?"

A faint smile appeared at the corners of Jean's lips. "You underestimate her. Just because she does not desire to fight or compete does not mean she lacks the capability to do so. Even though she is currently unaware of the guild's situation and unsure of where to begin, as long as she sets her mind to it, there is nothing she cannot achieve. As for becoming the district president, only by assuming that position can she avoid being underestimated. Even if some individuals are dissatisfied with her, they will still fear the power she possesses."

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Chapter 1245

Tiago raised an eyebrow. "So, you've planned all this for her?"

Jean gazed at him, his eyes carrying a profound and enigmatic expression. "Absolutely, as long as it brings her happiness and allows her to fulfill her desires. Even if she aspires to be the ruler of Phison, I would claim the throne for her."

At that point, Tiago could see how Jean cherished that woman. He couldn't help but marvel at it while giving him a big thumbs up. "I doubt anyone has the courage for that. I have to hand it to you!"

Neera found herself in a challenging situation, not because she had any aspirations to assume the role of the ninth elder in the Bartitsu Guild.

Her initial hope had been that after the election, she could finally return home and reunite with her family.

However, becoming the district president had unexpectedly brought forth a multitude of issues that demanded her attention, leaving her more tied up than ever.

That was the reason she felt somewhat downcast.

Shane could only sigh. "You don't have a choice, Neera. You've just assumed your position, so there are a lot of things for you to handle. I'll assist you and help you get through this as quickly as possible. Once everything is settled, I'll take you home."

Neera could only accept the situation as it was, sighing as she nodded in resignation.

Once back in her room, she made a video call to the triplets.

The children were thrilled to see her on the screen. They started bumping their heads against each other as they scrambled to get closer to the screen. "Mommy! Are you coming back soon? When will that be? We miss you terribly!"

Neera's smile faded upon hearing those words, guilt gnawing at her conscience. Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Her gaze swept over the children's faces, and she apologized, "I'm sorry, my babies. Mommy can't come home just yet."

Upon hearing the bad news, the triplets instantly raised their voices, exclaiming, "Why not? Didn't you call yesterday saying that everything had been sorted out and you'd be home with us soon?"

"Did something happen again? Mommy, you've been so busy lately, and we're really worried about you..."

Observing the disappointment on the children's faces, Neera was overcome with a sense of guilt for letting them down. "I'm really sorry, but it turns out I can't keep my promise just yet. At first, I thought I had everything under control here, but there's another important matter that's come up, and I need to give it my attention. I wish I could hop on a plane and be back with you right now, but the situation here won't allow it. I miss all of you so much, and I appreciate your patience. As soon as I wrap things up here, I'll be on my way back to spend some quality time with you."

The previous excitement of the three little ones has now evaporated, each of them looking as gloomy as a rainy day.

However, they couldn't bear to see Mommy upset, so they mustered up their spirits and replied, "It's all right, Mommy. We're here with Great-granddad, Great-granny, Grandaunt Nadine, and great-uncle. You don't need to worry about us, we're having a great time every day."

"That's right. We miss you a lot, but we're doing okay. We'll just patiently wait for your return!" After comforting Neera, Penny anxiously asked, "Mommy, what's the issue all about? Is it serious? Nothing bad will happen, right?"

Sammy, too, expressed his concern. "Please take good care of yourself over there. Otherwise, we'll be worried!"

Neera's heart was warmed by their sensibility, yet it also deepened her sense of guilt.

After humming in response, she replied, "It's something important but not risky, so don't worry. I'll take good care of myself, I promise."

The four of them kept up their chattering and casual conversation, and at that very moment, Nadine and Mariah joined in.

Mariah had been yearning for Neera's presence for quite some time. Now, as she saw Neera on the screen, she became agitated. "Oh, my baby girl. It's been days, and I can't help but wonder why you haven't come back yet. I miss you so much."

Neera comforted her with a warm smile. "Just a little while longer, and I'll be back soon. When I return, I'll prepare your favorite dish, those creamy garlic prawns you love so much."

Her response brought a smile to Mariah's face. She replied in excitement, "Alright! I'll eagerly await your return. Just so you know, I've been staying at home and behaving myself lately."

Neera flashed a faint grin. "That's good to know. You're the best."

After a while, Nadine took the phone and showered her with a series of heartfelt questions about her well-being.

Neera was concerned about Mariah's health, so she inquired, "How has Granny been feeling lately?"

Nadine smiled and replied, "She's much better now—even better than before, thanks to your medicine. Her condition is stable now, and it seems she's gradually recovering."

Suddenly, Nadine paused, her expression revealing a hint of helplessness. "However, she keeps confusing you with Stacy."

Neera nodded. "It'll take some time since the trauma wasn't developed overnight. She will recover gradually, so don't worry about it. Granny is so strong, and she'll definitely pull through."

"All right, got it. I'll take care of things here, so you don't need to worry about us. Take care of yourself over there, and come back safely. We'll wait for you to come home," Nadine said.

Neera's heart brimmed with warmth when she heard that.

For the longest time, the only thing Neera had in life was Adriana.

Now, she not only had Adriana and her triplets but also this wonderful and dear family, all of them caring for her and eagerly waiting for her return home.

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Chapter 1246

After ending the call, the triplets gathered together, each lost in their thoughts. "I wonder when Mommy can come home."

"And it's hard to tell if she's in danger over there," Penny voiced her concern. "Mom's complexion seems to have improved slightly, but she still doesn't appear as healthy as she used to. She must be exhausted, and there's a chance she's injured. It's like Mom; she'll always share the good news with us but keeps the bad ones to herself, just because she doesn't want us to worry."

Sammy also chimed in, saying, "Yesterday, I managed to breach the firewall, access Phison's network system, and found a forum post that mentioned Mommy taking over the district president title and becoming the ninth elder of the Bartitsu Guild. It seems like many people are unhappy about it. I'm not sure if Mommy will encounter any challenges in her new role."

The more they thought about it, the more worried they became, to the point where they felt they could not sit idly and do nothing about it.

Penny immediately suggested, "Sammy, Harvey, shall we go find Mommy?"

Sammy's eyes sparkled as he enthusiastically clapped his hands in agreement, "That's a fantastic idea! If Mommy can't come back, we can go to her!"

However, Harvey, who was more cautious than the rest, promptly highlighted the challenges they faced. "The security in Phison is stringent, and they have strict controls on who enters and exits. Since we're outsiders to them, they probably won't allow us in."

Upon hearing this, both Sammy and Penny furrowed their brows. "What should we do then? Isn't there any way to get in?"

After contemplating for a moment, Harvey quickly came up with another idea. "We'll need someone from Phison to take us in. How about Granduncle? We could ask him to take us in."

"You're right! That's a great idea!" The triplets swiftly reached a consensus. They were eager to get in touch with Adriana.

Meanwhile, over at Phison, Neera could not help but think of Jean after ending the call with the children.

Her yearning for him swelled like an uncontrollable tide, stirring a maelstrom of emotions within her.

She could not even remember how much time had passed since their last meeting.

The ongoing delays due to the matters at hand seemed to make her return and their reunion increasingly elusive. Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

After much hesitation, she decided to call him.

Before long, a man picked up the call. His tender voice came through. "What's up? Missing me already?"

Under usual circumstances, Neera might have huffed with a touch of arrogance and given a deliberate comeback, but her profound longing softened her response to a gentle tone.

Without a second thought, she softly hummed in agreement, murmuring, "I miss you. I miss you so much."

Noticing her low spirits, Jean was taken aback for a moment. He coaxed her, asking, "You're being exceptionally nice today. Has something happened? Tell me more."

Neera paused for a moment before saying softly, "Promise me you won't get angry at what I'm about to say."

With a slight lift of his eyebrows, Jean asked, "Do you think I'm that petty?"

Neera pouted playfully, her voice soft and sweet as she said, "Oh, come on. Just promise me first!"

Jean's heart immediately softened, and he yielded, agreeing to do everything as she wished. "Okay, I promise I won't get upset. You can tell me now."

Neera hesitated for a moment before finally saying, "I-I can't return to the country for now. I'll have to postpone our meeting."

Jean initially thought it was something serious. Upon hearing this, he suddenly felt like letting out a chuckle. "And here I was thinking it was something serious. So, is that what it was about? Why would I be upset when you have important things to deal with over there? Don't worry, just focus on your work."

Neera heaved a sigh of relief, but she remained moody.

"I've been thinking, it's been quite a while since we last saw each other, hasn't it? My original plan was to come back as soon as I completed my work, but another issue has cropped up involving the Gordon family, and I can't leave just yet. I really want to return, to be with the kids, to visit my Granddad, Granny, Aunt Adriana, and Uncle Chad. And I want to see you. But it looks like I have to put our meeting on hold."

Then, she pouted with a hint of discontent and responded, "We've been separated for such a long time. Don't you feel anything? It's as though you don't care that we're so far apart."

With love in the air, she was unwittingly revealing more of her feminine side.

Jean was delighted to hear her speak in such an intimate manner, knowing that these words were reserved solely for him.

At that moment, he chuckled softly, his voice resonating like the low hum of a cello, quite captivating. "How could I possibly not care? Do I need to express how much I miss you? Besides, I've told you before that all you need to do is take care of yourself. Don't worry about anything else. I'll come to see you."

Neera expressed her concern. "I'm currently in Phison, where they have strict entry regulations. It won't be easy for you to come here. Besides, the journey would be quite long and tiring, and given your recovery, it's not advisable to exert yourself. You should just stay at home and await my return."

Jean smiled faintly. "I have my ways. Besides, my health has improved significantly. All you need to do is wait patiently for me to come see you."

Neera recognized his considerable influence and resourcefulness, but the regulations in Phison were distinct from those in the outside world. She had doubts about whether his usual methods would be effective in this context.

Nevertheless, with his reassurance, she opted not to deflate his enthusiasm. Her heart brimmed with anticipation.

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Chapter 1247

The surprise came faster than expected, but it was completely different from what was anticipated.

Two days later, Neera woke up early in the morning, feeling the warmth of the sunlight on her face. She rolled over and slowly opened her eyes.

When she saw the three little heads lined up next to the bed, she was completely astonished.

She stared at the three adorable faces for a long moment. Then, she rubbed her eyes, finally confirming that it wasn't a dream.

Her heart was overwhelmed with intense emotions, and with a sudden rush, she sat up.

"How did you all get here?"

The three little ones, their eyes sparkling, climbed onto the bed giggling and gave her a big bear hug.

"Mommy! We finally get to see you. We've missed you so much!"

Hugged by the three little children, she was so overjoyed she could cry. She lifted them up, one by one, planting several kisses on their foreheads and tender cheeks.

"I missed all of you very much too."

At that moment, a gentle voice filled with laughter echoed from the doorway.

"What about me? Did you miss me?"

Neera, guided by the sound, looked over and almost screamed in delight. She didn't even bother to put on her slippers as she rolled out of bed and dashed over.

"Aunt Adriana! You're here too. I've missed you so much!!"

As Adriana was embraced by Neera, she grinned from ear to ear as she gently stroked the latter's back. [SEARCH the website](#) to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

"Silly girl, you're all grown up now. Why are you still acting like a child? We've been apart before, so why are you so worked up this time?"

Neera couldn't quite put into words the feeling she had, but she felt that this parting was unlike any before.

Perhaps it was the unfamiliarity of the place that left her heart feeling empty, without a sense of belonging.

Perhaps the journey to Mount Cloud was so perilous that every time she thought about how she nearly lost her life there, the sense of relief from surviving such a catastrophe made a deep impression on her.

Nestled within her aunt's embrace, Neera breathed in the familiar and comforting scent that warmed her heart.

"This time it's different. I missed all of you so much, to the point of being unbearable."

At that moment, the three little ones came over to join in the fray, hugging the legs of the two adorably.

"We feel the same way, Mommy. We dream about you all the time. This time, we've come to keep you company..."

The family had been happily chatting for quite a while before Neera suddenly remembered something and asked them, "How did you manage to get here? Aren't outsiders not allowed to come and go freely?"

The three little ones chuckled. "We missed you so much that we contacted Grandaunt. She and Granduncle picked us up and brought us straight here."

Adriana gently stroked Neera's hair. "Since Chad and I didn't have much to do and you were always on our minds, we thought we'd bring them along.'

"Where is Uncle Chad now?"

"Downstairs. Talking to Avery and Shane."

As she spoke, she gently tapped Neera's forehead. "You always say you're fine over the phone. Do you know how scary the wound on your shoulder looks? And yet, you still say it's nothing."

At that moment, the three little ones also saw it, each of them heartbroken beyond words.

Penny pouted with tears immediately welling up in her eyes.

"Mommy, does it hurt? Would you like me to blow on it to make it feel better?"

Neera couldn't bear to see her beloved children shed tears, so she quickly cradled Penny's face and gave her a kiss.

"My wound may look scary, but it has healed a lot. It doesn't hurt at all, sweetheart, so don't cry."

Upon seeing their skepticism, she unwrapped the gauze in front of them, applied more medicine, and rebandaged it. Only then did they feel at ease.

Once she had finished freshening up, the group headed downstairs.

Upon seeing them descend, Avery immediately stood up.

"How's your recovery, Neera? I came to see how you're doing."

Neera politely nodded. "I'm much better now. Thank you for taking the trouble to come here. I appreciate it."

She remained as polite and distant as ever. Avery noticed it but had nothing to say about it.

Then, he turned to Adriana and apologized sincerely, "I'm sorry, Mrs. Gordon. I failed to protect Neera and allowed her to get hurt. I hope you're not angry."

Adriana waved her hand with a smile. "Don't worry about it. It's thanks to you that Neera is standing before me, safe and sound. I know you've done your best. There's no need to blame yourself. Injuries are always inevitable."

Chad came over and patted his shoulder. "Yeah, don't take it to heart. All that matters is that Neera is alright."

Neera smiled at the sight of him. "Uncle Chad, you're here. Thank you for bringing Aunt Adriana and the children to see me."

Chad gently tousled her hair. "Your aunt talks about you every day. She's always thinking about you, even when she's eating or sleeping. I was afraid she'd worry herself sick if I didn't bring her to see you. Besides, I was also worried about you and had planned to come and check on you anyway."

Neera chuckled. "Aunt Adriana always treats me like a child..."

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Chapter 1248

The family chatted happily for a while, and then Avery and Chad retired to the study.

Once inside, Chad asked, "What exactly happened on Mount Cloud?"

The idea that Neera could secure the white flag and become the district president was completely inconceivable to him.

It wasn't because he doubted Neera's abilities. Instead, it was because Bartitsu Guild was extremely powerful, and Lordsworth Estate was also watching the situation like a predator.

As a result, it was inevitable that they would scheme against each other. Chad was always curious about how a young girl like Neera could navigate such dangerous circumstances.

Avery had been thinking about discussing the matter with Chad. Sitting across from him, he quickly told him everything. Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

The more Chad listened, the more astonished he became.

"Are you saying that she is being protected by Lordsworth Estate and they even gave her the white flag? How is that possible? Lordsworth Estate and Bartitsu Guild have always been at odds, and the Gordon family has no ties with Lordsworth Estate. Just because she once saved someone from Lordsworth Estate, they are favoring her now?"

Avery nodded. "Without a doubt. I found it hard to believe at first too. However, if it's an order from Lordsworth Estate, everything makes sense. Besides, I can't find any other reasonable explanation."

Chad frowned. "Could it be that Lordsworth Estate has other motives and they're using Neera to achieve their schemes?"

"At first, I felt the same way, wondering what Lordsworth Estate was really planning to do. But the more I thought about it, the less likely it seemed."

Avery pursed his lips and repeated what he had previously told Matthew.

"Lordsworth Estate wants the white flag and to take over the five districts to expand their sphere of influence. They could have easily done it themselves. They've already eliminated the other families aligned with Bartitsu Guild, so the Gordon family means nothing to them. They could have easily obtained it, but they insisted on giving the white flag to Neera. They even loudly proclaimed that Lordsworth Estate was just visiting for leisure, showing no interest in the position of district president. If it were just for show, then there would be no need for such a fuss. They would only be creating trouble for themselves."

After hearing his words, Chad found them quite sensible and nodded thoughtfully.

"You're right. Lordsworth Estate doesn't need to do this. From what I know about them, they tend to be transparent in their actions. Even if they have an agenda, they wouldn't resort to despicable methods. It seems they genuinely don't care about the district president, but... everyone siding with Neera is truly unheard of. I'm just afraid Bartitsu Guild would grow suspicious of the Gordon family. Avery, has the Cox family been involved in this?"

"The Cox family is fine, but the Gordon family has indeed been caught in the middle of the storm. However, Neera is now the district president, so no one dares to protest any further. The only uncertain factor is the guild... It's hard to predict. Mr. Lozano was barely convinced by my words and still wants me to assist the Gordon family. I guess on one hand, he's worried that Neera might not be able to handle it, and on the other hand, he's still concerned that the Gordon family might align themselves with Lordsworth Estate."

Chad sniggered. "The Gordon family has always been peaceful, never causing trouble or fighting for power in the guild over the years. What does he have to worry about? Even if we had the intention to side with Lordsworth Estate, we wouldn't use such obvious tricks that anyone could see through."

As he spoke, he let out another sigh.

"No matter what, this chaotic district president election has finally come to an end. I had intended to go myself, but Neera insisted that I stay away. Unexpectedly, this young lady has pleasantly surprised me. This is indeed a good thing. Now, no one in the Gordon family dares to question her position as the head of the family. She is the first one to elevate the Gordon family to such heights."

Avery nodded. "Indeed, no matter how Neera obtained the title of district president, what matters is that there are no disputes."

"I heard the entire Jennings family has been sent to Judgement Island? The head of the Jennings family has also lost his life?"

"Yes, Stella has repeatedly tried to harm Neera. Naturally, I couldn't let her live. She deserves to die!"

The topic sparked a cold glint in Avery's eyes.

"Just snapping her neck and letting her die quickly would be letting her off too easily!"

Chad nodded gently. "I appreciate the care and effort you have shown Neera during this time."

"Mr. Gordon, please don't say that. I am willing to take care of her and protect her. All that matters is that she's safe."

Avery pursed his lips and then returned to the main topic.

"As for the Jennings family, Lordsworth Estate took action against them that very night. The Jennings family must have sensed the impending disaster and tried to secretly send the younger generation away. However, they couldn't make it in time and ended up being taken away."

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Chapter 1249

"The other families who had used firearms against the Gordon family were also punished by a neutral party, and their influence is no longer as strong as before."

Upon hearing that, Chad's eyes narrowed slightly. "Did the neutral party make the judgment, or was it a request from Lordsworth Estate?"

Avery shook his head. "I'm not quite sure about that. Although the Jennings family was at fault, Stella has already lost her life, and the Jennings family has been expelled from the Bartitsu Guild. Actually, it didn't have to come to this. It must have been requested by Lordsworth Estate. After all, Judgement Island is a neutral territory, and those imprisoned there are wicked and evil. The Jennings family hasn't gone that far."

Chad chuckled lightly. "To have persuaded even the neutral faction, Lordsworth Estate really surprises me. Could it be that the lord is clearing all obstacles for Neera out of gratitude toward her?"

Avery thought the same, but nothing was certain at the moment, so it was hard to say.

"Mr. Gordon, all of these matters have already been settled, so there's really nothing to worry about. It's just...'

Chad knew what he wanted to say and immediately nodded in agreement.

"I understand. Bartitsu Guild has specially created the ninth elder seat for the Gordon family. This is an unprecedented event. If Neera wishes to take that position smoothly, I'm afraid it won't be that easy. Who knows what kind of trouble might arise."

Avery hummed in agreement, his expression serious.

"The competition for a seat among the Eight Elders has always been fierce. Everyone wants to climb higher to improve their position. Now, there's suddenly an extra seat, and it's taken by the Gordon family, whose power is much weaker than theirs. They will definitely be dissatisfied and might even raise objections."

Chad understood the point. "Their opposition is not without reason. Although Matthew has spread the word that Neera would take the ninth elder's seat, things might change after the ceremony is held. The guild might consider her control over the five districts and her status as the district president before elevating her position. When the time comes, the positions of the other eight elders might also undergo changes." [SEARCH THE WEBSITE TO ACCESS CHAPTERS OF NOVELS EARLY AND IN THE HIGHEST QUALITY.](#)

"Yes, and it's not just the eight elders, but also other families who are probably watching us closely. Being an outsider who has become district president after making her first appearance, Neera has attracted the jealousy of many families. Now, aiming for a seat as an elder in the Bartitsu Guild will attract even more attention. They definitely won't want to see this happen, and who knows what they might do to bring down the Gordon family. That said, you should rest assured that I'll keep an eye on this matter."

Chad nodded. "Mmm-hmm. Thank you for your hard work."

Once the important matters had been discussed, he remembered the scene when Neera and Avery met earlier. Clearing his throat, he couldn't help but probe, "How are things between you and Neera now?"

The mention of the topic elicited a subtle change in Avery's expression, while a myriad of emotions flickered in his eyes. After a few seconds, he finally responded, "She still treats me like a stranger, polite yet distant."

Chad had anticipated it and wasn't surprised.

"She's like that. Once she's made up her mind, it's hard to change it. Even though she's had a falling out with Jean, she won't easily let anyone else into her heart."

Avery said, "No matter what, I won't give up."

Chad looked at him, silent for a moment, then advised, "I understand that you like Neera and want to marry her. But I'll repeat what I've said before. You should respect Neera's feelings. No matter what, don't put her in a difficult position. Whether or not this marriage happens, I hope it won't cause a rift between you and the Gordon family. You're like a child I've watched grow up, not blood-related but just as close. If you can't be husband and wife, you can still be like siblings."

The meaning of his words was very clear; he was offering his unconditional support to Neera.

Avery's eyes were half-lowered as he nodded slightly. "I know."

"As for your engagement, it's the talk of the town right now. If it doesn't work out in the future, you should consider how you'll deal with the aftermath. You... should plan for it."

Avery didn't respond immediately. After a long pause, he repeated, "I know."

Downstairs, Neera and Adriana were strolling around the manor with the three little ones.

Their eyes sparkled brightly as they were particularly curious about the place.

"Wow, this place is even more luxurious than the manor in Essley! It's really beautiful!"

"It's beautiful indeed, but I still prefer our manor in Essley. That's our home. It's truly one of a kind."

"Right! I prefer our home over this place..."

Listening to their incessant chatter, Neera found it both comforting and relaxing.

She linked arms with Adriana, baring her soul.

"Aunt Adriana, it's so nice that you could come to keep me company. Ever since I arrived here, I haven't had a single day where I could relax. My heart is always on edge, fearing that I might make a mistake and give the Gordon family something to hold against me, or that something might go wrong..."

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Read Chapter 1250

Chapter 1250

Adriana examined the small wounds on her palm and reflected on her shoulder injury, which made her sigh in frustration.

"I had hoped to provide you with a peaceful life as a girl, but your uncle insisted on passing the family's leadership to you, exposing you to numerous dangers and repeated attacks. I can't believe he... If you weren't safe and sound now, I would have definitely argued with your uncle."

Neera's heart was warmed by these words, but she also found them amusing.

"Don't worry about that. You've come a long way to be able to live happily with your love. I don't want to be the one to ruin your relationship."

Adriana snorted. "Regardless, this position was forced upon you by him. If anything happens to you, I will definitely confront him!"

Neera smiled faintly. "Look, I'm fine. Besides, I want to help both of you. You and Uncle Chad have missed so many years together. Now that you finally have the chance to be together, it would be a shame if he's still entangled with the Gordon family's affairs and can't break free. I can see that he wants to spend all his remaining time with you. I also want you two to live happily and undisturbed. So, this is my own choice, not something he forced upon me."

Adriana looked at her, her eyes soft and gentle. "My dear girl... you're always so sensible."

As the conversation continued, the topic naturally shifted to Neera's love life.

"Enough about me, let's talk about you."

Neera blinked. "Me? What is there to talk about?"

Adriana chuckled lightly, playfully poking Neera on the forehead. "Don't think you can avoid the question. How are things between you and Avery now? I can tell that he really likes you. He has gone above and beyond to protect you this time. What do you think of him?"

Upon hearing the name Avery, the three little ones who were skipping ahead suddenly slowed down, their ears perked up to listen carefully to the conversation behind them.

"About Mr. Cox..." Neera murmured thoughtfully, "He's a good man. I'm grateful for all the kindness he has shown me and I'm always thinking about how I can repay him."

"Is it just gratitude? I think he doesn't care about you repaying your debt, nor does he want you to always keep your distance."

"He might not care, but I do."

Neera took a moment to gather her thoughts, then expressed her stance in a gentle voice.

"He and I are neither relatives nor particularly close friends. It's only because of Uncle Chad's relationship with him that I have received so much help from him. Naturally, I owe him a debt of gratitude."

With just one sentence, the distance between Neera and Avery seemed to have grown even further.

Adriana wasn't surprised. Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

"I understand that you don't have feelings for him. No matter what he does, he can't win your heart. In fact, your uncle and I have thought about this too. Even with what happened between you and Jean, you still wouldn't accept Avery. So, we have no intention of forcing this marriage on you. Do as you please, but what is all this commotion I'm hearing about in Phison?"

The topic reminded Neera of her predicament.

"When I first arrived at the Gordon residence, Mr. Cox used our engagement as a guarantee to secure my position and dispel the doubts of the Bartitsu Guild. I never expected that this matter would attract so much attention in Phison, and I'm still figuring out how to resolve it..."

Adriana smiled slightly. "You don't need to worry about cleaning up the mess. Avery is a responsible man. He will naturally handle the matter satisfactorily. As for being the talk of the town, it's only natural. After all, Avery is an outstanding bachelor. Whether it's his looks, family background, or abilities, he excels in every aspect. He's the cream of the crop, naturally attracting a lot of attention. He might even be the dream lover of countless girls. It's just that you didn't fall for him."

As she spoke, she paused for a moment, then smiled suggestively.

"Well, it isn't surprising. After being with a man as outstanding as Jean, it's hard for anyone else to catch your eye. After all, there's no one quite like him."

Whenever Neera thought of Jean, her heart would flutter uncontrollably, and a smile would subconsciously appear on her lips.

Upon noticing this, Adriana had an epiphany and asked, "Have you two... made up?"

Neera bit her lip lightly, nodded, and felt inexplicably shy.

Seeing this, Adriana was genuinely happy for her.

"It seems you have resolved the conflicts in your heart, which puts me at ease. I can tell that Jean loves you deeply, valuing you above all else. What happened in the past wasn't intentional on his part. It was a series of unfortunate misunderstandings. On the bright side, it might have been destiny's way of bringing you two together. Even though it started out as a mistake, it blossomed into something beautiful. It wasn't in vain after all. You two are truly meant to be."

Neera nodded gently, her eyes glistening with tender joy.

"I have been thinking these past few days. Fate has brought him to me and blessed me with the most adorable children. As the past cannot be changed, I shouldn't dwell on it. Instead, I should look forward and focus more on the present and the future. Moreover, after everything that has happened, I have come to understand my own heart. I don't want to lose him."

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