+5 BONUS

Elder Chad Bozeman

That was it.

The final spark.

Chad slammed his palm onto the obsidian table.

BOOM.

The massive slab cracked instantly, fractures racing like lightning through the polished surface before it shattered into pieces.

A violent purple aura erupted around him, swirling like a storm.

The temperature in the room dropped. The very air itself distorted.

Several weaker attendants near the walls staggered back, gasping.

Zia's heart pounded.

She was only at Sovereign level.

If a Dragon Lord fully unleashed himself? She wouldn't last a second trying to intervene.

Almost no one in this room could stop Chad if he truly went berserk. Except the other elders.

Otherwise...Kade might actually die here.

"That's it!" Chad roared, stepping forward. "You're going to die today!"

He clenched his fist.

The purple aura condensed around it, compressing into a dense vortex of destructive force.

This wasn't a warning strike. It was lethal intent.

Yet...Kade was smiling.

That expression only enraged Chad further.

Just as he was about to move—

"STOP!"

Zia's voice cut sharply through the chaos.

The chamber shook as all eyes turned toward her.

Chad glared. "Who do you think you are to stop me?"

Zia steadied her breathing. She couldn't overpower him. But she could invoke the law.

"According to the Code of Azure," she said clearly, projecting her voice, "if two members have a dispute involving honor or authority, they must resolve it through a sanctioned duel."

Her eyes flicked briefly toward Kade.

This was the only way.

If Chad attacked now, it would be an execution.

But a duel required preparation. Time. Formal witnesses. Maybe... Just maybe

Chad would cool off by then.

Or at least avoid killing Kade outright.

Chad hesitated. He wanted blood now.

"She's right," another elder spoke calmly.

George Hale.

White-haired, composed, and sharped eyes. "Challenge the boy properly, Chad. Let the duel decide."

everal elders nodded subtly. Not out of sympathy for Kade. But to preserve order.

Chad exhaled harshly. The purple aura flickered. Then gradually extinguished.

The shattered table pieces settled across the floor.

"Fine," Chad growled.

His eyes burned into Kade.

"Tomorrow morning. Ten o'clock." His voice was ice.

"Be prepared."

A cruel smile stretched across his face.

"I'll crush you into ribbons."

Kade chuckled softly.

"You really do have a death wish."

The room stiffened again.

Chad's fists tightened, but he restrained himself.

Zia moved quickly.

"We shall be leaving," she announced firmly.

Before Chad could respond again, she stepped beside Kade and subtly urged him toward the exit.

The massive doors closed behind them.

Only when they were well down the corridor did Zia finally release the breath she'd been holding.

She led him into a private suite within the inner residential wing.

The doors opened to reveal a massive room—marble floors, a panoramic glass wall overlooking the ocean, a king-sized bed, a study area, and minimalist luxury throughout.

"This will be your temporary quarters," she said.

The door sealed behind them.

Zia turned to him, her composure finally slipping slightly.

"Young Master… you didn't have to enrage Elder Chad."

Her tone was respectful, but urgent.

"Although you are the heir, your coronation is in three days. Until

then, by law, you are not officially King of Azure."

She continued carefully.

"Your title cannot protect you from internal challenges. Especially not from someone like Chad."

She met his gaze.

"You must show restraint. At least for now."

Kade walked calmly toward the glass wall, looking out at the dark ocean.

"Why should I show respect," he said flatly, "to those who disrespect me?"

He turned slightly.

"Especially when they are significantly weaker than me."

Zia froze.

Her mind stalled for a second.

"Weaker?" she repeated carefully.

"I'm afraid you misunderstand the situation."

Her voice became serious again.

"Every single one of the elders is at Dragon Lord level. Peak Dragon Lord, in some cases."

She hesitated.

+5 BONUS

"The only person above them was Master Zucker."

Kade didn't look impressed.

"Who cares if they're Dragon Lords," he said lazily.

He turned fully now, his eyes calm.

"Even if they were at the Celestial Realm."

He shrugged slightly.

"No one can beat me."

The words lingered in the air. Celestial Realm.

Zia's heart skipped. He spoke the term naturally, without confusion. He knew the ranking system.

Which meant he understood what he was implying.

If he knew the hierarchy...

Why would he challenge a Dragon Lord so confidently?

Unless— 1

Her breath grew faintly uneven.

Could he be—

At the Celestial Realm?