

Last System 154

Chapter 154 - Commotion At The Brothel

"My wrath?" I echoed Madam's words. My expression turned into a snicker that I quickly hid by turning my head away and shielding it with one of my hands.

But I obviously wasn't fast enough.

"Madam is amounting me to way too much," I added after taking my time to calm down my amusement.

"I just followed up on your words. It's you who brought your job of a contractor to the discussion," Madam said. This time, it was her turn to chuckle.

"But it was one of your girls that thought it would be a wise idea to threaten me," I replied after giving the middle-aged woman a moment to enjoy her fake victory.

"Oh, you can't tell me you took it seriously!" Madam protested, releasing another chuckle. Then, her gaze turned cold. "And if that wasn't the case... Why did you bring out your job as a contractor into the discussion?" she asked.

What a clever woman. Or rather, what a manipulative piece of filth.

I never claimed nor admitted to taking the threat from before seriously or as a joke. It was an open discussion what was my take on it. Yet, this woman assumed what was convenient for her and then pressed on without verifying it.

Luckily for her, it was convenient for me as well.

"A very simple reason," I said with a smile as a quote from one of the movies I liked a lot came to my head. "It was my attempt to show you that I am a person of focus, commitment, and sheer... cough, will," I claimed.

'Damn,' I cursed inwardly before anyone could reply. 'It sounds way better when it's someone else telling that about you,' I realized... a bit too late.

"It's hard to take someone claiming all of that about themselves seriously," Madam was quick to counter, completely unfazed by my words.

'Yeah, I know,' I thought. I then fought off the urge to agree with the woman openly. Rather than that, I put a wide smile on my face, one of a child that just received the gift they always dreamed of.

"You are free to dismiss my words, then," I said, refusing to let go of my bright smile.

Finally, I managed to catch the woman off-guard.

'I guess you didn't expect me to be so slick.' My thoughts only reinforced my joyful expression. This was the exact moment I was waiting for.

For a second, Madam looked at me as if I was some kind of brain-dead idiot. Then her expression changed, making me feel like an insignificant worm that just happened to stand in her path.

"I think I heard something about your plans of putting me out of business," she claimed, trying to regain her footing in the discussion.

The simple act of not trying to stand my ground threw her off completely.

"Would you bother to elaborate on how do you plan to do so?" she asked, forcing a smile on her lips.

'Should I do it?' I thought.

We finally reached the point where I could inject my business into the discussion... But was it really a good moment to do so?

'Well, the victory belongs to those who dare,' I thought, raising my eyes at the Madam's face.

"Normally, you wouldn't expect a general to tell his plans to his enemy, would you?" I asked, only to shake my head the next moment. "But I'm not a general while you are not my enemy," I added, watching the changes going on the Madam's face with curiosity.

Sadly, they were too small for me to read anything out of them. Once again, I could read the others only if they were either unable to keep their emotions in check or if they allowed me to read them. I wasn't some kind of magician capable of penetrating the mental defenses of someone who knew how to keep their negotiating face.

And that's what this entire situation right now was. Just a roundabout negotiation.

"My idea is simple," I coughed before explaining. "I believe you guys are not the only brothel in this area. As such, I won't lift a finger to harm you," I said, spreading my arms open to show just how confident I was in my words. "But in a month, you won't find a corner in this city where you will be welcomed," I claimed.

This was a stretch. Everything that I did and said so far... was speaking. And speaking a lot.

Not a single action backed my words until that point, and I just made a massive claim. A claim that would only take a month for life to verify.

'I guess I'm turning into a gambler,' I thought, worried about the prospect of falling into the dangerous waters of speculation.

"Assuming that you are capable of backing your words with actions," the Madam squinted her eyes as she muttered, "you are going to do all of that because of a simple trouble that your friend found himself in?"

And there it was. The proof that this woman knew what actually happened.

All along, ever since she appeared, I assumed that she simply came here to solve the commotion. But for her to know what happened meant that she was either coached by someone on her way here or more likely...

She was aware of this kind of practice in her establishment!

"My friend?" I echoed Madam's words. "Please, don't make me cringe," I requested, only to realize that I used a word that they didn't understand. "Don't make me laugh," I changed my wording, once again raising my hand to calm Lucius before he could flare-up.

"This man is my Overseer, someone to whom I owe my life. If I just wanted to save the problem, I would buy enough people to bury this place below a thick blanket of ash," I said calmly. "No, what enrages me about this place, is business malpractice," I explained.

"And what does anything that we do here have anything to do with you?" Madam asked, clearly at the end of her wits.

"I can't accept such an approach to doing business with people I initially wanted to... well... do business with," I revealed with a plain smile.

"Huh?" Madam moaned in surprise, elongating the sound of her words to show just how surprised she was. "Do business with my brothel? What makes you think you have the ability to do so?" she asked while crossing her arms on her chest.

'There it is,' I thought. 'The locked, defensive position,' I noticed.

This woman was now sufficiently primed for me to execute my last attack.

"To be honest, I have no idea how much this place makes in a week or a month..." I muttered before raising my eyes at the woman's face. "But over the last month, just the royalties for the ideas I brought to another brothel amounted to nearly fifteen thousand Imperial Golden Coins," I said while putting a look of a transcendent scion on my face.

"Bollocks," Madam scoffed only to break out in laughter a moment later. "Fine, you amused me enough. Now, get off my property!" she shouted, but there was no hint of hostility in her voice.

From the joyful look on her face, I guessed she really treated the entire thing as nothing more but an amusing encounter.

An idea popped up in my head. Since we were talking about how much we earned, maybe this was the right moment to check something out?

"If such is your desire, fine," I smiled, completely unfazed by the laughter that now spread from the Madam to her staff and then the majority of guests who keenly spectated the entire encounter. "Just one more thing, a simple question that I believe you should have the answer for," I requested.

"What the fuck do you want?" the look on the Madam's face turned colder.

In her opinion, she just magnanimously let me and Lucius go... and I still dared to make trouble?

While that might be a surprising revelation for her, I didn't want to cause trouble anymore. What I wanted was genuinely just to ask a simple question that I believed she might have an answer to!

"It's really just a simple question," I brought my hand towards my pocket before drilling a hole in it and reaching to my pants. With a single touch of the bigger ring, I pulled out the weird token that I found in my account back at the Auction hall.

The only reason why I retrieved it right away was the receptionist's kindness of waiving off the costs of doing so. And since there was only a single place I conducted business with back at the Zero Zone, there was a chance that another brothel could explain just what this token was!

I pulled out that strange, black token and flashed it into Madam's face.

"Are you perhaps aware of what this thing is?"

Then, something strange happened. Madam's face, torn between the leftover amusement and the coldness caused by my obstinacy... All disappeared.

They all gave way to a shock in an instant.

"Is this..." she muttered before sharply moving her eyes from the small token to my face.

"This is my question," I said with a troubled smile. "It laid alongside the thousands I made, but as I can't even read the note attached, I have no clue what it is!" I exclaimed with a pained voice. I then smiled and looked deeply into the woman's eyes.

"Are you perhaps aware of what this token means?"