

Last System 66

Chapter 66 - Baseless Accusations

"Huh?" Catius took a moment to process what Vaner just said in his face. Then, his eyes darkened. "Are you trying to imply something?" he asked, his tone turning guttural.

"You see... after I talked about yesterday's events with my disciples, I realized a few things," Vaner replied with a relaxed smile, moving away from the balustrade and sitting down on the sofa.

This piece of comfort was present only in the VIP lodges, accessible only for the elders. And Vaner was more than happy to make the best use of it for his theatrics.

"It appears that outside of my disciple, who as you could all see is pretty damn weak," Vaner made a small pause to reinforce his finisher, "you were the only one who touched that guy." Vaner finished his sentence by pointing his hand at Igrit, still whritting on the ground.

In an instant, the atmosphere in the booth changed. If earlier, everyone was curious just what sort of new shenanigan Vaner was about to create, now everyone turned their eyes towards Catius.

The sect was full of shrewd and scheming people, sure, but the ultimate rule of all the scheming was pretty damn simple.

Do not get caught.

It was a rule secretly endorsed by the patriarch himself, who couldn't stand to watch the morals of his ancestors, of the founders of the sect, getting tarnished. That's why, in a true spirit of conformism, he decided that everything was okay... as long as he wouldn't see it.

And Vaner, while in a roundabout way, just threw a massive accusation at Catius' face!

"Do you have any proof of that, or are you just throwing baseless accusations?" Catius asked, his voice so low that it cracked a little.

Catius belonged to the group that couldn't really stomach Vaner and his actions. But if he disliked him before, then now he could feel nothing but hatred for that shrewd elder.

"Accusations?" Vaner asked, pretending to be baffled. "Where did you hear me accusing you of something?" he laughed openly before throwing another grape into his mouth. Intentionally or not, the fruit's juices colored his lips in deep red, as if he just took a bloody bite of his fellow elder.

"On the other hand, would you care to sate my curiosity?" Vaner asked, leaning his head over his shoulder.

"What?!" Catius barked, knowing very well that just dropping the discussion and leaving the place would be no different than admitting his guilt... Even if he actually did nothing!

'How the fuck I was supposed to do anything about that disciple of yours if I didn't even know who he fucking was back then?!' he whined in his soul, agonizing over the situation.

The golden coins that Jenne passed to him just an hour ago started to burn his leg through the cloth of his robe.

"If everything that I said has nothing to do with reality," Vaner snacked on another grape, using this opportunity to make another theatrical pause, "then why did you turn so defensive the moment I pointed those coincidences out?"

The VIP lodge turned silent. Right now, everyone appeared to think over what Vaner said. Soon, all eyes moved on Catius again, proving that he was quickly losing his footing.

'What are you doing, you bastardly sort?' Catius cried out in his mind. 'I'm pretty damn sure I wasn't the only one paid off by that bastard!' Unwilling to take responsibility for his own actions, Catius directed his anger at the only other person directly involved in the matter.

"Because you are trying to imply that I'm guilty of something?" Catius answered Vaner's inquiry with a question on his own. Despite the storm raging in his soul, he did his absolute best to keep his face straight.

It came as no surprise that his efforts were all but wasted. In the den of snakes that the upper echelon of the Skyladder sect was, he happened to be only because of the backing he bought in the past. He never had any qualms about the price he came to pay for that back then, but now he finally understood one simple truth.

That he was never truly qualified to reach his current standing.

'Maybe I would be truly better just advancing to that cultivation sect or something,' he thought, feeling the regret take over his soul.

But right now, it was too late. As the elder of the sect, he would never be given another chance to advance.

This was the truest and harshest prize of his past choice, one that he came to understand only now.

"I'm not implying anything," Vaner smiled, putting away the rest of his grapes at a tray held by a high-class servant. In a sense, this middle-aged man was more suited for the role of an elder than Vaner's current opponent. "I'm just pointing out coincidences," Vaner added, standing up from his seat and dusting off his hands. "Coincidences that I will be sure to report during the audit," he added, a vicious smile appearing on his face.

"And what does that have to do with me?" Catius spat out, holding his calm on a thin thread. "Why do you bother telling me that?"

Catius breathed an internal sigh of relief. No matter what, he could feel from the tone of Vaner's voice that this talk was coming to an end.

'Since he failed to prove anything, there is a huge chance I will get away with it, scoot-free,' Catius thought with glee, only for his expression to sour a second later. 'Wait, but I really didn't do anything to Igrit... How can this guy make me feel like I'm actually guilty of something?' he asked himself as he grit his teeth in silent fury.

"No real reason at all," Vaner smiled, turning around and waving his hand. "After all," he turned his head back only to grace Catius with a lovely smile, "it's not like you were bought by a certain disciple that would find it highly disturbing to have his actions screened by my clan!"