

Read Novel I Am the Ruler of All chapter 96

I Am the Ruler of All chapter 96-Everyone at the table burst into laughter.

Serena glowered at Nancy icily as a murderous look registered on her features.

Meanwhile, Kingsley reached for her hand under the table and regarded Nancy impassively as he pointed out, "With a face like yours, it's no wonder you try to put Serena down."

"Excuse me?" Nancy shrieked. She grimaced menacingly at him and demanded, "Who the hell are you to speak to me that way?"

"He came as Serena's plus-one, didn't he? Maybe he's her boyfriend."

The guests had all brought along their own plus-ones, so they naturally overlooked Kingsley's presence at first, especially while he was plainly-dressed.

Emory assessed Kingsley contemptuously and drawled, "Of course he's her boyfriend. Will you look at the cheap counterfeits he's wearing? He and Serena-the-orphan are a perfect match, if you ask me!"

Once again, everyone laughed in disdain. Nancy, in particular, was on a vicarious thrill when she saw that Serena was being made fun of. The crow's feet near the ends of her eyes crinkled as she beamed. This was finally her chance to trounce Serena.

"Who would've thought you'd find yourself a boyfriend, Serena? I ought to go out and see if pigs are flying," she mocked, clutching onto Tyler's arm. "But I must say you have horrible taste in men. Why would you go out with someone dirt poor like him? I mean, there's nothing wrong with being poor, but what's with all that fake-nouveau riche get-up? I'm embarrassed for you!"

Serena stared at her witheringly. "I can date whoever I want, so keep your nose out of my business."

"Now that you mention it," Nancy began, smirking triumphantly as she lay her head on Tyler's shoulder. "I'm perfectly happy with this man right here."

She had only just said this when everyone else started to shower her with shameless flattery. "Nancy and Tyler are the real deal here. Look at how perfect they look together!"

"Yeah, and then there's Serena who is way out of her boyfriend's league. She's just dragging her self-worth through the mud by settling for less."

Tyler was practically glowing from all the praises, but he was secretly appraising Serena, his gaze flickering from one part of her body to the next as if deciding which he liked best. He had been drawn to her beauty since she walked through the door earlier, and Nancy, for all she was worth, suddenly felt like a sack of potatoes in his arms.

He was still eyeing Serena predatorily as he said with implication, "Nancy's right. It's crucial for women to choose men that complement their worth. Surely you wouldn't want to be saddled with some pathetic deadbeat guy forever, knowing that he would never be able to make something of himself." He had as good as told her that she ought to be with someone like him. Then, he glanced at Kingsley with a demoralizing air and asked, "What line of work are you in, anyway? Bet you can't even afford to buy Serena her favorite cosmetics, can you?"

Kingsley leaned into his seat casually and replied, "I just retired from the army, so I'm still looking for a job."

"Oh, you're unemployed," Nancy concluded snidely, sputtering.

"I don't know why Serena has to stoop so low. Must be some serious self-esteem issues there."

"Who would've thought that the ice princess herself is just a bargain bin-lover?"

At this point, Tyler's ego was so inflated that it was a wonder at all he did not burst at the seams. "Hey, kid, if you need a job, our company's still hiring security. Sure, the pay isn't much, but at least you wouldn't have to get an allowance from your girlfriend."

"Hah!" Nancy squealed in amusement. "Being a guard dog is better than starving, right, guys?"

She was beyond happy to know that she could finally walk all over Serena, and satisfaction swelled up in her. The crowd, on the other hand, were picking on Kingsley for his lack of accomplishments while kissing up to Tyler for his caliber.

Just then, Noah sauntered into the private dining room and asked in a voice that cut above the others' rambunctious laughter. "What's so funny, guys? Did I miss anything? I could hear the lot of you laughing from down the hall."

Nancy wiped the tears at the corners of her eyes as she caught her breath and said, "We were talking about how Serena's boyfriend should become a security guard at my fiancé's company!" She had only managed to get these out before she started cackling again.

Upon noticing that one side of Noah's face was swollen, Emory asked, "What's up with your face? Did you get beaten up or something?"

Noah shot a glare in Kingsley's direction. "Some rabid dog attacked me on the way here, but I'm fine." He would rather bury himself alive than have anyone here find out he was roughed up by Kingsley, which was humiliating.

Presently, Nancy beckoned for him to take a seat as she asked enthusiastically, "You used to like Serena, didn't you, Noah?"

"Yeah, I must have been blind or something," he bit out glumly while massaging his sore cheek. "If I had known what a sl*t she was, I'd never have bothered pursuing her!"

The other guests exchanged astonished looks when they heard this. What's going on between them? They wondered at his brutal use of language.

Kingsley was staring daggers at him as he warned grimly, "Say that again, Noah."

Noah drew in a sharp breath. He parted his lips, then closed them again when he realized words had deserted him.

However, Nancy had no qualms with stirring up drama, and she wanted nothing more than to see Serena become the butt of the joke.

"Come on, Noah," she encouraged viciously. "Just say that again. I highly doubt someone like him could do anything to hurt you!"

“That’s right,” Tyler chimed in, nodding. “Go ahead and say whatever is on your mind, Noah. He can’t do anything to you while I’m here.”

Now that Tyler had spoken up in his favor, Noah regained all his bravado and pointed an accusing finger at Kingsley as he snapped, “Fine, I’ll say it again! You are a lowlife philanderer, and only wh*res like Serena would ever—”

He had barely gotten his words out when Kingsley picked up the heavy porcelain teapot in front of him and hurled it toward Noah’s face.

There was a loud and crisp crack that resounded in the room. Everyone held their breaths, and in the deathly silence, they saw Noah’s front teeth fall onto the ground alongside the teapot.

He let out a groan as he clapped a hand over the lower half of his face. He doubled over in excruciating pain, and blood started to seep out from between his fingers, then dripped onto the floor.

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I Am the Ruler of All chapter 97-“Heavens!”

“Noah, are you okay?”

The guests all rose to their feet to check on Noah when they saw the blood seeping through his fingers.

At once, Emory slammed a fist against the table as he snapped at Kingsley, “What the hell? Who gave you the right to beat one of us up? Don’t you know we’re all trained in close-quarters combat?!”

He rolled up his sleeves and made to lunge at Kingsley, but at that moment, Serena stood up angrily to shield the latter, then warned murderously, “You’ll have to go through me, Emory.” She eyed the others icily. “Come on, then, let’s see which ones of you will walk out of here alive after I’m done!”

The Two Muses of the dōjō were not just known for their stunning beauty back in the day; they were also the two strongest martial artists among everyone. While Emory was by no means weak, it had been years since he last practiced martial arts, and on top of the fact that his joints were stiff, he had more body fat than muscle.

As things were, he wasn't sure if he could beat Serena in a fight.

Upon sensing his hesitation, Serena challenged in a sing-song voice, "Is somebody chicken?"

The others in their well-pressed suits and their so-called successful careers started to wince in embarrassment when they heard the taunting edge to her tone.

Just as the tension between both parties was escalating, the door to the private dining room was pushed open, and in strolled a woman clad in a pink dress that perfectly accentuated her curves, her stiletto heels clacking against the floor to announce her arrival.

"The other Muse is here!"

"Well, if it isn't the princess herself! Let's give her a warm round of applause!"

Everyone behaved as though they were looking at their savior as they clapped their hands to welcome the woman.

It was only then that Emory let out a small breath of relief and slowly resumed his seat. He would be lying if he said he hadn't broken into cold sweat when he saw the mutinous gleam in Serena's eyes earlier.

"Rena!" The young woman who had just arrived immediately brightened up when she saw Serena. She hurried up to the table and exclaimed in delight, "I haven't seen you in ages! I've missed you!"

Following this, she was pleasantly surprised to see Kingsley present as well. "Hey, I know you! What are you doing here?"

Kingsley chuckled as he greeted, "Hey, there, Miss Tanner." The young woman in pink was none other than Paige herself. He patted the empty seat next to his and said, "You can sit here with us, Miss Tanner."

Confused, Paige sat down on the chair and asked curiously, "So, what are you doing here? Did you come as somebody's plus-one?" She paused as astonishment colored her face. "Wait, are you here with Rena?"

Kingsley nodded. "Yeah, she's my sister." Then, he leaned close to her and whispered teasingly, "And for the record, you look much better in this pink dress than you do in leather."

Paige flushed as she gave him a playful nudge. "Don't be a rascal. I know I look good in both," she said with twinkling eyes.

She had seen Kingsley in a different light ever since she learned that her grandfather had passed the Order of the Northern Draken to him.

Everyone was stunned by the sight of this. They had always viewed Paige as a princess-like figure who sat on an untouchable throne, and the only other person she had ever been so friendly with was Serena.

Emory, in particular, was in such disbelief that he could combust. The only reason he had agreed to take on the spy mission and come all the way to Cleapolis from the Empire of the Setting Sun was because of Paige!

Back in the day, he could never hope to impress a girl like her, who came from the powerful Tanner Family. He could only secretly pine after her, and he had plans to woo her only after he had made something of himself.

However, right now, she was getting all chummy with Kingsley, and seeing this made Emory so angry that he could explode. The intimacy between them was only something he could dream of; he never even got to touch her hand!

Nancy was bewildered, too. "Paige, do you actually know him?"

In stark contrast to the way she behaved around Serena, Nancy knew it was futile to be jealous of Paige. After all, the girl came from the most prominent family of the Northern Circle of Qustia; the power and respect they had was far superior than those of the Jovovich Family.

Presently, Paige shrugged as she said, "I guess you could say I know him. I mean, he did sleep in my room for a night."

Nancy's words died in her throat as her eyes widened to the size of saucers, and everyone else froze in their seats. For a moment, the whole dining room was so quiet that one could hear a pin drop, and the silence was punctured when Emory sputtered incredulously as anger filled him, squeezing the air out of his lungs.

“W-What?” Nancy was astounded. “But isn’t he Serena’s boyfriend? Why would he have slept in your room?”

Noah clambered off the floor with blood staining his chin, then spat out ferociously, “What boyfriend? He’s her brother from the orphanage!”

Everyone became even more confused after they heard this. No one could have expected an orphan to win over someone like the young lady of the Tanner Family. The idea of this even happening was unfathomable!

Next to Nancy, all the color drained from Tyler’s face. The haughty expression that he had been wearing all this time now crumbled and gave way to unbridled shock. He wanted to slap himself in the face for offering the future son-in-law of the Tanner Family security work at Spearhead Group. I could have died!

Meanwhile, Kingsley caught the embarrassed look on Tyler’s face and drawled in amusement, “Don’t worry about it, Mr. Jovovich. There’s nothing special going on between me and Miss Tanner over here; I was merely a guest in her home that night.”

This set everyone at ease.

“Oh, thank goodness. I thought the world went mad! I mean, an orphan and Miss Tanner getting together? Please!”

“My heart stopped beating for a second there. I actually believed he married into the Tanner Family!”

They patted their chests in relief, but only Tyler looked stormy. That was beyond humiliating! I was so scared of offending this nobody that I’m shaking! Granted, nobody was picking on him for that, but he still wished a hole would open up in the ground and swallow him.

Unable to live down the shame, he stood up and announced grimly, “I’m afraid I have to get going now. Excuse me.”

Nancy was flustered as well as she clutched Tyler’s arm and whispered, “Where are you going? What about me?”

"I'll have Ernie pick you up later." He forced out a smile as he said to the others, "The meal's on me today, so order anything you want and put it on my tab."

It was only then that Nancy perked up slightly. "Well, in that case, we won't hold you back. Be safe."

Tyler made no response to this as he went to open the door. He was just about to leave when he stopped and turned, then glared at Kingsley balefully, hissing, "I'll remember this day, you punk. Don't get on my nerves if you know what's good for you!"

With that, he left and slammed the door behind him.

The others in the room shifted uncomfortably at the tension that hung in the air until someone finally chuckled and said awkwardly, "Nancy, do thank Mr. Jovovich for being so generous today."

"Yeah, it's so gracious of him to buy us a meal."

There were over twenty of them gathered here at the Bayou today, and it would be a surprise if the bill was below twenty thousand.

As such, the guests began to praise Tyler for his generous gesture, which boosted Nancy's ego to no end as she beamed and said, "Well, of course, my Tyler wants only the best for me, including having a good time with my friends." Having said that, she shot Serena a pointed look. "It's only too bad that Serena's kid brother pissed him off, otherwise he would have brought us over to Chanteuse International for a karaoke blast."

Chanteuse International? What?! That's the most exclusive karaoke bar in the city!

Everyone turned to look at Kingsley and Serena resentfully.

"See what you did, Serena? You completely ruined our chance of living the high life!"

"Exactly! You need at least half a million in deposit just to get a room there. We won't be able to get in without Mr. Jovovich footing the bill!"

Everyone was ganging up on the siblings like they wanted to flog them alive.

Serena and Paige merely responded to their hostility with grim, deadly looks. Both women were about to speak up for Kingsley when they heard the thuds of someone knocking on the door.

The crowd lashed out angrily, “Who the hell is that? We haven’t ordered anything, have we?!”

The next second, the door to the dining room opened slowly, and Frank from the boutique earlier stood there with three good-looking male assistants in tow. “Pardon the intrusion, ladies and gentlemen. We’re here to make a delivery,” he announced respectfully.

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I Am the Ruler of All chapter 98-“A delivery?”

Everyone at the table froze. They had seen the nametag and the badge with the brand monogram pinned to Frank’s shirt. He was the manager of Gustav Atelier!

They gasped and exclaimed, “Wait, isn’t Gustav Atelier one of the top designer brands in the world? All their clothes come with five-figure price tags!”

In the midst of their astonishment, Frank merely waved his hand to beckon the assistants, saying, “Bring the goods in.”

The three assistants immediately brought the ornate boxes forward and rested them carefully on the long banquet table. They carried ten each, which meant there were thirty of these boxes altogether.

“I-Is this...” Emory gaped at the boxes with wide eyes, then said in disbelief, “This is the most popular design in one of Gustav’s seasonal collections! It retails for eighty-eight thousand!”

“Holy crap!”

“Are you serious? Then all these together cost more than an arm and a leg!”

Eighty-eight thousand did not mean much to the guests at the table, but what astonished them the most was that someone had ordered thirty of these belts.

They were staring at the boxes hungrily, and one of them turned to ask Frank, "A-Are these all for us?"

"Yes," Frank began. "The gentleman over there—"

However, he was cut off mid-sentence by Emory, who stood up excitedly as he said to Nancy, "Wow, Mr. Jovovich was already generous enough to have offered to buy us a meal, but to splurge on these lucrative gifts for us? Nancy, he's way too gracious!"

Enlightenment descended upon the room at that moment as everyone leaped to compliment and thank Nancy.

"I guess bigshots like Mr. Jovovich are just different, huh? He really does not hold back."

"Thanks for the gift, Nancy! I could never bring myself to splurge like this. This sure is a special way to commemorate a reunion, am I right?"

Nancy was bewildered by everyone's praises and gratitude. Tyler never mentioned any of this to me, she thought in a daze, but when she saw how impressed her friends were, she felt certain that Tyler was the only person who had the money to pull this gesture off.

As such, she giggled and said indulgently, "What can I say? Tyler loves me so much that he's always coming up with ways to make me happy." She raised a brow as she glanced over at Serena and Kingsley, then drawled haughtily, "I bet the both of you have never dreamed about owning something as luxurious as this. You can each take a belt home. Think of it as charity on my part."

Paige interjected angrily before Kingsley could even say anything, "He doesn't need your charity, you filthy hag. I'll get one for him as a gift!"

"Hah! So at the end of the day, the only way for him to own a designer belt is through a woman's altruism." Emory was so jealous that the only way he could feel better was to put Kingsley down, and he went on to tease viciously, "If you're so great, why don't you make your own money and buy it for yourself?"

Frank heard this and pointed out incredulously, "What are you talking about? Mr. Nicholson was the one who bought these belts in the first place!"

Everyone gaped at him as the news sunk in. They exchanged questioning looks and asked among themselves, "Who's Mr. Nicholson? Do we know anyone with that name?"

In the midst of the confusion, Kingsley put his hand up and addressed Frank, "Thank you for coming all this way to deliver the belts, Mr. Lowell."

Bowing his head respectfully, Frank replied, "It's no trouble at all, Mr. Nicholson. We hope to serve you again." With that, he backed out of the private dining room and closed the door.

For a while, a deathly silence filled the air, and everyone was staring at Kingsley with such utter shock that it was a wonder their eyes did not bug out of their heads.

They could not believe that he was the one who had bought these expensive belts.

Some of them were so astonished that their jaws dropped, and it was as if they could not wrap their heads around this plot twist.

No one said a word at first, then Nancy snapped out of her reverie and cried belligerently, "No! That's impossible! There's no way a bumpkin like him could afford these!"

She had taken all the credit earlier, and it was too late for her to get off her high horse now. Even though Frank had clearly said that Kingsley was the one who bought the belts, she refused to believe that that was the truth.

"Nancy's right. Where would an orphan get the money to buy all these anyway? These belts cost over two million altogether!" Emory seethed with rage. "I bet he hired that man earlier as part of his act. These belts must be counterfeits!"

The crowd nodded when they heard this. They were more than willing to accept the probability that this was the truth.

The only person who remained wordless was Noah, who knew for a fact that Frank was the manager of Gustav Atelier, and that there was no way these belts could be counterfeits.

On the other end of the table, all the color drained from Serena's face as she began to look distinctly uneasy. She recalled Kingsley telling her that these belts were high-quality counterfeits, and if her old friends were to figure this out, then she could never show her face in front of them ever again!

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I Am the Ruler of All chapter 99-At that moment, Paige rose from her seat and declared, "My butler wears Gustav all the time. One look is all it takes for me to tell if these belts are fakes."

Having said that, she opened one of the boxes and took out the belt coiled inside, then examined it carefully. A minute later, she put the belt back into the box and swept her gaze over the others at the table, then enunciated, "I'm sure it's the real thing."

Nancy grimaced as she bit out through gritted teeth, "You're best friends with Serena, so who's to say you aren't covering for her lies?"

"Are you questioning me right now?" Paige countered icily, her expression turning grim. She was the second young lady of the Tanner Family and a major in the Seavale Military District; a deathly hush fell upon the room the moment she zoned in murderously on Nancy, and no one dared breathe.

"I... I'm not," Nancy said shakily, so terrified that she nearly wet her pants.

Everyone else turned rigid in their seats as though bracing for an oncoming storm.

"Okay, that's enough. Throwing tantrums is quite unbecoming for a young lady," Kingsley cajoled.

At once, the tension in the room seemed to shatter and fall away, and Paige replied obligingly, "Fine." The last thing she wanted was to go against her grandfather and the man who held the Order of the Northern Draken.

Upon seeing this, the others at the table blanched. They wondered frantically who Kingsley was and why Paige, a young lady of nobility, was so obedient toward him. Swallowing convulsively, they started to think about the way they had treated him with contempt and hurled snide remarks at him for the entire evening. No ordinary fella would be invited to stay with the Tanners' for a

night. He must be someone important! If he took any offense to how we treated him tonight, then we're all as good as dead!

Presently, Kingsley turned his dark brown eyes on Nancy and ordered coolly, "You, come over here and get down on your knees. I want to hear you personally apologize to Serena for what you said to her tonight."

"I..." Nancy was trembling like a chihuahua at this point. Out of desperation, she turned to Emory for help as she urged, "Emory, say something! You have to help me."

Emory's mouth was dry as he countered sullenly, "How am I supposed to help you when I'm in need of divine saving myself?"

He was sorely regretting his behavior earlier, and he shuddered at the consequences that would befall him if his cover as a spy was blown.

"Divine saving is right. The three of you aren't getting out of this," Kingsley said with a devious smirk tugging on his lips. "Come on, get down on your knees in front of Serena before my patience runs out."

Nancy turned to look at the others in mute despair, but those who had been flattering her enthusiastically just moments ago dared not even meet her gaze now. Someone even whispered meekly, "Just get down on your knees, Nancy, or we'll all be done for."

"I..." She swallowed nervously. "I'll do it." She had everything to lose if she didn't compromise, and without another word, she walked up to Kingsley and Serena, then got down on her knees in front of them.

The next second, Noah joined her and knelt down next to her as well.

"Kingsley, I'm sorry for the way I acted just now. I shouldn't have picked on you or Serena," Nancy sobbed, her breath hitching in her throat. "C-Can you ever forgive me?"

Noah bowed his head and muttered trepidatiously, "I'm sorry. We both truly are sorry for what we did."

Gazing down at them imperiously, Serena pointed out apathetically, "No need to apologize; forgiving the both of you was not what I had in mind anyway."

Upon hearing this, Kingsley gestured toward her and said to the two humbled figures at his feet. "I'm afraid Serena finds your apology displeasing. Now, how should we go about rectifying this?" He slowly rose to grab one of the belts off the table, then uncoiled the leather in his hand, feeling its weight nestled in his palms. He appraised the length and sturdiness of it, then smiled as he drawled, "You know, Miss Tanner, I happen to be a huge fan of the Serpent Whip you use, so I'm thinking of paying homage to it today. Let's see if I can maneuver a whip as well as you do."

"W-What are you going to do?" Noah asked frightfully when he heard this, though he could already imagine how miserable he would be by the end of the night.

Kingsley ignored him and pointed at the other twenty-nine belts on the table, then said to the other guests who were holding their breaths, "Each one of you gets a belt as a gift from me, so come here and take it."

None of them could bring themselves to disobey him. Moving stiffly toward that end of the table, each of the guests took a belt and uncoiled it in their hands.

"Ten whips from each one of you," Kingsley ordered icily. "When you're done with these two ignorant fools here, then you may leave. If you refuse to strike them, then you'll have to get on your knees and receive the same treatment."

There was a pregnant silence in the room as everyone dwelled on the shocking suggestion. About half a minute later, the sound of a cracking whip filled the air. A burly man in a suit had made the first move and mercilessly whipped Noah's back.

Noah winced in pain as cold beads of sweat rolled down his temples.

Now that someone had gotten the ball rolling, the rest of the dinner guests joined in as well.

Soon, the private dining room was rife with the sound of cracking whips. None of them spared Noah or Nancy any mercy. They stood red-eyed behind the two figures kneeling on the ground, taking turns with the corporal punishment. In truth, they couldn't care less about their long-time friendship or their shared memories from their martial arts days; they just wanted to get out of here alive.

It didn't take long for the back of Nancy's dress to be whipped to shreds, revealing a whole lot of bloody, bare skin.

While the whipping went on, Kingsley got up from his seat and walked up to where Emory was, then asked, "You're Emory, aren't you?"

Emory's eyes flashed warily as he demanded, "What do you want?"

"Something you have," Kingsley answered in clipped tones. "Hand the carrier over right now."

Astonishment seized Emory and a chill ran down his spine. He sputtered, "What carrier? I don't know what you're talking about!" Then, he hurtled toward the door to make a run for it.

Alas, he couldn't outrun Kingsley, who deftly grabbed him by the back of his collar and chuckled darkly. "My, my, where are you rushing off to, Emory? Or should I say, Silas Windham?"

The syllables of his real name made Emory's blood run cold.

Not wanting to waste his breath on the guy, Kingsley grabbed a belt and tied Emory up, then threw him on the floor. Having done so, he sauntered over to Serena and asked, "Feeling better, Serena?"

She got to her feet and announced, "I've seen enough. Shall we leave, Kingsley?"

"Alright." He glanced at the crowd and bit out, "Ten whips from each of you, and nothing less. Got it?" With that, he turned his attention to Paige and asked, "You coming with us, Miss Tanner?"

"Nah, I think I'm going to stay and make sure these people here carry out their work." A sadistic giggle escaped her as she said this. "I'll be heading for the Solaris Military District after this, so you guys go ahead without me."

He frowned. "Aren't you the Major of the Seavale Military District?"

She blushed as a dreamy look popped into her sparkling eyes. "I am, but I heard that a certain heartthrob might be at Solaris Province, and he came all the way from Coliree, too. Hopefully, I'll be able to see him in person this time."

A smirk played on Kingsley's lips as he teased, "Heartthrob, huh?"

She slapped his arm exasperatedly. "Also known as Ares! Oh, forget it. It's not as if you would know who that is even if I told you."

"Uh, well..." Kingsley was somewhat embarrassed, but he quickly said, "Anyway, if you're going to Solaris Province, you might as well bring Emory with you and hand him to General Ignatov. He'll know what to do with him."

"Why?" Paige asked curiously. "I highly doubt the military will have any interest in someone like him."

Kingsley did not explain any further. "Just do as I say."

She felt her heart flutter at the commanding tone of his voice. Nodding, she said, "Alright, then. Leave him to me. He'd be a fool to think he could run away."

After leaving the Bayou, Serena returned to the company while Kingsley made his way to a cafe near the entrance of Paradise Mall where he had agreed to meet Cecilia. He wanted to know why she had called him crying just now.

He saw Cecilia at the corner booth the moment he walked into the cafe. She had make-up on, but it was such a light layer that it only accentuated her natural beauty, making her look like the girl-next-door. She was wearing a strappy tank top with a seriously plunging neckline which showed off an ample amount of her cleavage.

Her sultry and fresh-faced beauty had every man in the cafe ogling her with their jaws wide open. Presently, they were all craning their necks to get a better look at her, and it didn't take a mind-reader to figure out the lewd thoughts flying through their heads.

Under everyone's watchful gaze, Kingsley walked over to the booth nonchalantly and sat down next to her, a move that alarmed, not to mention enraged, all the men in the vicinity.

"Who the hell does that punk think he is? How dare he just take a seat next to her like that?"

"Even I wouldn't be so bold, and I'm so much better-looking than him. Where did he get the audacity and the confidence?"

“Hah! Let’s just wait and see. That bombshell over there is way out of his league, and once she decides to break his heart, she’ll shoo him away!”

Everyone was starting to whisper among themselves as they waited for Kingsley’s downfall, thinking that he was some pathetic loser who was biting off more than he could chew.

However, the next second, their eyes widened in disbelief when they saw what happened next!

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I Am the Ruler of All chapter 100-Much to the men’s surprise, Cecilia’s eyes turned red the moment she saw Kingsley, and the next second, she burrowed into his arms.

There was no distance whatsoever between them as she pressed her soft curves against his torso. The men in the cafe were so shell-shocked by this scene that their eyes nearly bugged out of their heads.

“What the—”

“The world’s gone mad! I thought girls like her would be into good-looking men with money!”

“Shit! If I’d known that she needed a shoulder to cry on, I would have gone up to her first!”

Everyone was incensed as they cursed Kingsley’s good fortune under their breaths.

Ignoring the jealous stares and pointed looks thrown his way, Kingsley asked quietly as he held Cecilia in his arms. “Hey, what’s wrong? Did Shane pick on you again?” As soon as he said this, he shook his head to dismiss the possibility. “No, that can’t be it. Shane wouldn’t dare to make trouble for you now that Harry’s watching him.”

“It’s not Shane...” Cecilia straightened up slowly and pulled the delicate straps of her top up to keep them from falling and revealing more of her skin. The miniscule gesture affected the men’s testosterone so much that they were having a hard time remaining composed in their seats.

She sniffed and dried her tears, then said feebly, "He came by the house today and called off the engagement."

"What happened there?" Kingsley asked, frowning. "Are you crying because your family gave you a hard time after that?"

He could pretty much guess what had happened at the Larsons' place. Much like the Wynns, the Larsons were merely a second-rate family amongst the elite, and it was a miracle that one of them had been engaged to the b*stard of the Carter Family. It was not a stretch for one to say that the future of the entire Larson Family hinged on Cecilia getting married to Shane.

It went without saying that Shane had dealt a devastating blow on the Larsons by calling off the engagement out of the blue. Kingsley could already imagine how they had treated Cecilia after she supposedly failed to hold onto Shane, who was the key to their having a glorious future in the most exclusive echelons of upper-class society.

Cecilia nodded miserably now as she said, "My parents told me I was good for nothing, that I couldn't even manage to keep a man even with my pretty face..." She trailed off tearfully, her voice breaking with the beginnings of a sob. "My dad didn't start out with much money, either, and he knew he was marrying out of his league when he settled down with the young lady of the Fox Family. He's always been looking for ways to prove himself to my mom's family. The Foxes are throwing a family banquet tomorrow, and he wants me to make it look like I'm doing well in front of my uncles, so... I have to do everything I must to change Shane's mind, or at least bring home a man who is much better than him."

She took a deep breath and stared at Kingsley with glistening eyes, then went on to say, "So I told him that I already found myself a boyfriend, and that he's far more excellent than Shane could ever hope to be!"

Upon hearing this, Kingsley froze, and he suddenly understood what kind of favor she was asking of him. "You... want me to pretend to be your boyfriend?"

Now that he had put it into words, she blushed and explained hurriedly, "It'll only be for show, and it's just until my parents shut up about it."

"I..." He let out a derisive laugh as he asked, "Are you sure I'm the guy for the job? You did tell your dad that your new boyfriend is more excellent than Shane, you know."

She nodded solemnly. "I'm sure, and for the record, I know you're a million times stronger and better than Shane!" Her fingers intertwined as she asked cautiously, "You're not going to say no to being my pretend-boyfriend, are you?"

Scratching the back of his head, Kingsley replied hesitantly, "I'm not against it. If this is really what you want, then of course I'll help you out."

He had been wanting to meet Matt in person anyway. This was the man who had killed his parents, and he would be remiss to turn down Cecilia's suggestion that they enter a ruse.

"That's great!" Cecilia beamed at once. She clutched his arm and said earnestly, "I owe you one."

"And how do you propose you repay me? Are you going to offer yourself up to me or something?"

He was only joking, but she unexpectedly nodded without even stopping to consider this and said, "I can do that."

She looked at him so seriously that he knew he had to put an end to the joke. He cleared his throat awkwardly and reminded himself that this was no time for him to be playing footsie with a girl, even if the girl was a temptress like Cecilia. He had his parents' murder to avenge, and he couldn't afford to be distracted while he had a real chip on his shoulder.

Perhaps there might come a day when he had finally avenged his parents, and only then would he be able to settle down with a nice girl and start a family with her.

When Cecilia saw the embarrassed look on Kingsley's face, her expression stiffened. "I-I'm kidding! Haha! Hahaha!" Her laughter sounded forced, and there was no hiding the disappointment in her pretty eyes.

After a long pause, she drew in a breath and said hesitantly, "So... we should probably go back to my family's place. My dad wants to meet you."

“What? Right now?” Kingsley was dumbfounded by how quickly things were escalating. “It’s a little too soon for us to meet, don’t you think?”

This whole thing might be an act, but the idea of meeting his ‘father-in-law’ still made him uneasy.

However, Cecilia was insistent. “The Foxes’ banquet is tomorrow, and my dad’s worried that I would bring back any man just to fill Shane’s shoes. He can’t risk being humiliated in front of his in-laws tomorrow, so he wants me to bring my boyfriend home so that he could give him the once-over.”

Kingsley couldn’t bring himself to say no when he saw the pleading look she was giving him. Sighing, he said in resignation, “Alright, whatever. It’s not as if I have anything better to do for the rest of the afternoon, anyway. Come on, let’s go get me interrogated.”

...

The Larsons’ family villa was in an above-average residential community in Cleapolis. There wasn’t much difference between the area and property prices here and those where the Wynns stayed.

Cecilia and Kingsley had only just walked into the front yard when they were greeted by the sight of a flamboyantly-dressed man.

He sauntered up to them and appraised Kingsley with a raised brow, then asked Cecilia skeptically, “Cecy, is this the boyfriend you were telling us about?”

Cecilia said curtly, “Kingsley, this is my brother, Asher.” Then, she turned to her brother and snapped, “And yes, he’s my boyfriend. Is Dad in the study? If he is, then we’ll go in right now and make formal introductions.”

“Mom and Dad are both in the living room. Come on, we’ll go in together,” Asher said as he gave Kingsley a contemptuous look, as though the latter was something that crawled out of the garbage.

In the living room, Michael and Megan were joined by a man who was dressed head to toe in designer clothing. The man was none other than Asher’s friend, Zachary Dugray.

While Zachary's family was by no means superior to Shane's, they were on considerably higher rungs of the social ladder than the Larsons. He had been enamored with Cecilia's beauty for a really long time, but her family had had their hearts set on letting her marry Shane that they completely disregarded his existence. The moment Shane called off the engagement, however, Asher immediately rang Zachary up and told him of the news.

Following that, Zachary made haste to show up at the Larsons' house bearing gifts, and Michael, who previously couldn't be bothered to give him a second glance, had welcomed him with newfound enthusiasm.

Granted, Zachary's background was not nearly as impressive as Shane's, but he was still an heir to old money. That ought to be enough to stuff the Foxes' mouth, Michael had thought.

Presently, the Larsons were happily making conversation with Zachary when Cecilia and Kingsley entered the living room.

Asher shot Zachary a meaningful look before saying snidely, "Mom, Dad, Cecy has brought her little boyfriend home."

Zachary stiffened when he heard this. He had been sure that he would be the one to marry Cecilia after her engagement to Shane was called off, but now, it seemed as if some roadkill of a guy had shown up to hijack his plans!

Meanwhile, Megan was more than satisfied with Zachary's tall and broad-shouldered frame, not to mention his handsome looks. As such, she treated Kingsley with indifference. She had never heard of this man before, and she frowned as she pointed out arrogantly, "My daughter is one of the Five Beauties of Cleapolis. I wouldn't just let her marry anyone!"

Michael, on the other hand, was just as stoic as his wife, but he kept his tone neutral as he gestured at the seat across from Zachary, then said, "Take a seat, young man."

Kingsley did not bother with formalities as he accepted the invitation and sat down, his posture impeccable.

Zachary sneered, "You could at least say thank you after the master of the house has offered you a seat, you know."

“So, introduce yourself,” Michael said, his voice firm and gravelly. “I should at least get to know the man who is seeing my daughter.”

“I’m Kingsley.” That was the end of Kingsley’s introduction, apparently, because he merely turned to fix his steady gaze on Michael afterward.

There was a long and awkward silence in the living room that would have stretched on forever had Michael not cleared his throat and said, “Name aside, could you tell us a little more about yourself? Like your job or your family, perhaps?”

“I don’t have a job or a family,” Kingsley replied easily as if it was the most natural thing.

“Pfft!” Zachary sputtered. “Well, that explains the brief introduction! You’re an unemployed philanderer!”

Asher didn’t even try to hide his scorn as he interjected, “I’m a platoon leader in the Cleapolis Military District, Cecy. I can’t have my sister dating some pathetic loser!”