

Rising from the Ashes (Andrew and Lauren)

---- Chapter 1991 Andrew was not ready to give up and kept pressing. "Sure, you've got money, but without people, what's the point? Don't you want revenge? Don't you want to hit the Driscoll family where it hurts? "And can you honestly protect that much cash all on your own? Come on... Right now, the Driscoll family's Shadow Division is in my Serenity Villa. Your base just got wiped out, so this is the perfect time to blow off steam. Come kill a few to honor your fallen men." Aaron cursed.

"Damn you, Andrew, you actually talked me into it. Hell, you're right. Right now, I'd love to use Maurice's head as a urinal. I can't get to that old dog yet, but I can sure as hell kill a few Shadow Division bastards to honor my men." Andrew chuckled. "Then I'll be waiting. Talk to you later." He ended the call and turned his head, only to find Tiana staring at him with an odd expression and Eric watching with a mocking smirk.

Natasha and Dylan had already charged into Serenity Villa to back up Lauren and the other two women. Tiana covered her mouth with a laugh. "I guess it's my turn. You two talk." ---- She then darted off into the darkness toward Serenity Villa. Eric's voice carried a faint chill. "Tell me... Did you happen to foresee the Blumendale's two underground kings ending up like this from the start?" Andrew neither confirmed nor denied. "They took my money and worked for me.

The Driscoll family getting mad and wiping them out isn't exactly shocking." Eric gave a dry laugh. "That's true... but if we flip it around... If they hadn't taken your money and helped you, then the Driscoll family wouldn't have come after them, right?" Andrew shrugged. "They took my money and refused to give it back. I had no choice but to make them work for me." Eric took a deep breath, his eyes narrowing. "And that's what makes you dangerous.

From the very beginning, you probably foresaw this exact outcome. You made sure they couldn't say no, and in the end, they had no choice but to quietly help you leak Driscoll family intel. "There was no way they could escape Maurice's payback. And once they were crushed, that's exactly what you wanted: lure the tiger into the wolf pack. The wolves die or scatter, and the lone survivor, full of hatred and with nowhere else to go, ends up running to you. Perfect plan.

Andrew, you really are a scheming ---- bastard." Andrew laughed. "Eric, you think too highly of me. You really believe I planned all that? It was all just a coincidence." Eric scoffed derisively. "I'd rather believe that pigs can fly than believe a single word you're saying right now. Andrew, you set a trap for both the underground kings, and they didn't even complain." Andrew patted his shoulder in a friendly manner. "Eric, you flatter me. But I can tell you that this was just a small game."

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---- Chapter 1992 While the battle at Serenity Villa was raging under the dark moonless sky, underground Blumendale at Ronald's headquarters was also filled with flashing blades and thunderous battle cries. "Sir, it's over. Our entire operation is gone," a trusted aide, bloodied and teary-eyed, stumbled to Ronald's side. Ronald's sinister face was blazing with fury. "Is the Driscoll family really going to wipe us out completely?" His subordinate broke down completely.

"We've already lost over 100 men. The attackers are Driscoll family affiliates, including elite martial artists pulled from various family branches and dozens of hired mercenaries from the martial arts world. "With all these core forces combined, we don't stand a chance against them. Sir, we need to surrender and preserve what little strength we have left!" Surrender? Ronald's weathered face twitched violently, his teeth nearly cracking. His own turf was worth more than any gilded palace.

Here, he was the mighty Dragon King of Blumendale, a man who could call the shots. ---- However, surrendering would strip him of that crown and turn him into nothing more than the Driscoll family's dog, a crawling insect. Still, refusing might mean he would not even live to be a dog and would be crushed into mud. The Driscoll family's strength was not something one Dragon King could match. "That damned Andrew... He's a jinx," Ronald muttered. He wanted to roar, to rage, to curse the heavens.

Yet, all that came out was a long, heavy sigh. At this point, words meant nothing because the Driscoll family's slaughter had already reached his doorstep, and blame would not change a thing. He swept a glance at his men and saw only fear in their eyes. His fists clenched as he made his decision: he would yield. He was not like Aaron, that hardheaded fool who refused to bend. He knew when to bow his head; survival came first. As long as he could ensure their survival, they could start again.

Ronald asked, "Who's leading the Driscoll family outside?" "Three of the Driscoll family's top enforcers, along with the head of a vassal family; he's a martial king himself. They're coming in strong," the aide replied. ---- Ronald took a deep breath and shouted, "Friends outside, stop the fighting, please!" However, the sounds of battle did not fade, and his men kept falling. His temper flared. "Friends, I am Ronald Potter, the Onyx Dragon King of Blumendale.

I announce here and now that the Driscoll family's advance is unstoppable, and I can only beg for mercy!" At last, the fighting outside began to quiet. Soon, Ronald's battered men stumbled in and lined up to the sides as the Driscoll family's fighters strode in, chests out, steps firm. At the front, the martial king family head, Mario Marsh, eyed Ronald with a smirk. "Ronald, this is it? Weren't you supposed to be tough as steel?

It didn't take much to make you surrender, did it?" Ronald's head was buzzing. The humiliation was overwhelming. Not long ago, he had been so proud and successful, or else why else would he call himself a Dragon King? Yet now, these dogs trampled his dignity and treated him like nothing. Nonetheless, for the sake of survival, he could only endure. "Gentlemen, I lay down my arms and swear allegiance.

Tell the Driscoll family to stop slaughtering my men," he said, raising his ---- hands in surrender. Mario seemed reluctant, but with Ronald clearly yielding, he held back. "Fine. Since you know your place, the Driscoll family will spare your life. From now on, you're a slave of the Driscoll family. Serve us well, and you might keep breathing."

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---- Chapter 1993 Mario shouted, "Now, come over here and get on your knees!" Ronald trembled from pure rage and humiliation. Forcing a man to kneel was no different from slapping him across the face and spitting in his mouth. Nevertheless, with the situation pressing down on him, refusing

was not an option. He told himself that a real man knew when to bow and when to stand tall. Andrew had already caused him enough misery, and he could not let that bastard's games cost him his life as well.

"Fine!" he ground out, forcing the words past his teeth. Mario wore a smug, mocking smile as he spread his legs apart and waited for Ronald to kneel before him. Ronald bent his knees slightly, doing mental gymnastics and telling himself it was just like giving respect to this man's grave in advance, so what did it matter? Then, out of nowhere, a scream ripped through the air outside. Ronald's people and the Driscoll family forces were simultaneously alarmed and confused by the commotion.

The next moment, the Driscoll family soldiers burst in, shouting angrily, "Don't believe Ronald's lies. His reinforcements have ---- arrived, and they're attacking our men!" Mario exploded with rage. "Ronald, you lying piece of shit, how dare you play games with us!" The other two martial kings also roared in anger. "You bastard, you tricked us? Go to hell!" Ronald stepped back, his mind completely blank with confusion. What the hell was happening?

He had genuinely been about to surrender, so how could this possibly be a trick? Moreover, where were these supposed reinforcements coming from? He did not have any backup forces. "Mr. Potter, we've come to help you!" "We underground forces will never be slaves! Kill!" The shouts rang out, and Ronald heard someone specifically calling his name. Then, he watched in shock as Logan charged in with just a single sword.

Ronald was completely baffled and shouted angrily, "Logan, what the hell are you doing?" Logan was frantically attacking the Driscoll family soldiers while ---- shouting back, "Andy sent me to reinforce you! He said he'd definitely help you wipe out all the Driscoll family forces!" Then, he yelled, "Kill them! Kill every last Driscoll family dog!" The Driscoll family's elite fighters could no longer restrain themselves, and all attacked at once.

A new round of brutal fighting erupted throughout the place. Mario roared as he threw a vicious punch directly at Ronald's skull, his strike incredibly ruthless and precise. Ronald had no choice but to fight back savagely, finally releasing all the pent-up rage in his chest. Between blows, Ronald shouted, "Logan, did Andrew really have a change of heart and send you to save me?" Back-to-back with Ronald, Logan laughed. "That's right, Ronald. Didn't expect Mr. Lloyd to be so loyal to you, huh?

The moment you were in trouble, I came running!" Ronald felt a wave of emotion. "Seems I was wrong to doubt Andrew all this time, thinking he was setting me up. Turns out, when I'm in real danger, he's the only one who shows up. Logan, you're a true brother. Tell me... How many men did you bring?" Logan answered honestly, "Ah, well, you know I'm loyal, so of course I came to save you. But... It's a bit embarrassing... It's just me. I came alone." ---- Ronald froze, almost soiling himself.

"Just you? No one else?" Logan nodded. "Yeah, just me. And to be honest, Mr. Lloyd said the enemy's too strong, so you should fight while retreating and get out of here first. We'll deal with the Driscolls later." Ronald was furious. "You son of a bitch, if it's just you, why did you make such a huge commotion when you arrived?"

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---- Chapter 1994. Ronald snarled, "You're here alone, and you call this reinforcement? Logan, do you even realize you've just gotten me killed?" Logan's face was the picture of innocence. "Got you killed? Now that's unfair. I followed Andy's orders to the letter and came here to save you. Do you have any idea how much danger I put myself in to get here?" Ronald nearly lost his footing.

If this were not life or death, he would have gladly stopped fighting the Driscoll family just to strangle Logan first. One by one, his men fell, cut down without mercy by the Driscoll family's fighters. His blood boiled as he roared, "Everyone, fight your way out of the hall! Save your lives first!" In that instant, everything clicked in his mind like a hammer to the skull. Logan was not here to save him; he was here to drag Ronald straight to hell. He knew Ronald was about to surrender.

So, he staged a sneak attack, making the Driscoll family believe Ronald's plea for mercy was a lie. Once they stopped believing him, they would strike to kill. ---- Forced into a corner, Ronald would have no choice but to fight back, locking both sides in a death spiral until one was wiped out. The mastermind behind it all, the director of this twisted play, was none other than Andrew, the "sugar daddy". No, Ronald did not see him as any kind of "sugar daddy" now.

He felt a chill running down his spine as he roared, "Andrew, you jinx! You're driving me straight to my grave!" Nonetheless, shouting did not ease the frustration clawing at his chest. He silently cursed, 'Damn it! In the end, I'd still fallen into that bastard's trap!' Outside Serenity Villa, in the shadows, Andrew sneezed. He rubbed his nose and muttered, "Who the hell's cursing me?" Eric smirked coldly. "Ronald isn't like Aaron. You won't reel him in that easily.

That guy is just as cunning as you." Andrew chuckled. "True. Catching him won't be easy, so we'll let him suffer at the Driscoll family's hands first." Eric frowned, sensing trouble. "What did you do this time?" Andrew just smiled and stayed silent. Moments later, Logan's call came through. ---- "Andy, it's perfect! Just like you said, Ronald's a spineless dog! When the tide turned, he was ready to surrender.

But thanks to your plan, I hit the Driscoll family from behind and made it look like Ronald was betraying them. "Now neither side trusts the other, and the fight went full throttle. Bodies everywhere. Ronald lost badly, got hurt, and fled. He and the Driscoll family are sworn enemies now. I didn't even have to recruit him! "He came to me himself, saying Gabo Creek's a big place, but you're the only one he can count on.

He swore the past is in the past, and all he wants is for you to give him and his men a place to stay." Andrew ended the call. Eric stood frozen, eyes wide. Then, he shivered and stared at Andrew with genuine fear. "You dragged Ronald down with you, too? Damn... Good thing I'm on your side. I'm starting to see why Henry fell into your hands. Andrew, you're inhuman!"

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---- Chapter 1995 By the time morning broke, the Driscoll family's first wave of retaliation had wrapped up without a hitch. Maurice had gone to bed long before, never bothering to concern himself with something this trivial. With the firepower they had sent, he believed Andrew had no chance. In Maurice's eyes, everyone else, aside from Andrew himself, was just useless dead weight. Before dawn, Maurice was woken up.

"Dad, last night our Shadow Division raided Serenity Villa, but we came back with nothing!" Scarlett stood there with a dark look on her face. Maurice swung his legs out of bed, frowning. "Nothing? What does that mean? Where's Andrew's crew? Did they take them all down?" Scarlett's jaw tightened. "That little punk was on high alert and set an ambush inside Serenity Villa.

Not only did we take heavy casualties, but his people pulled out early and disappeared somewhere we can't track." Maurice gave a cold snort. "Dead men are nothing. In the ---- Driscoll family, lives are the cheapest commodity. But I'll admit, I didn't expect they'd fail to catch a single one of them. Scarlett's voice dripped with hatred. "It's time. I'm heading to Driscoll Corporation with Mr. Gurney and waiting for Andrew to walk into his own death.

Once he's gone, the Kellers and the rest of those little nobodies will be nothing to worry about." Maurice nodded. "Exactly. Scarlett, last night the family poured everything into restoring your strength, and I even transferred most of the true energy from my energy core to you. Don't let our family down." The weakness and pallor on Scarlett's face had vanished, replaced with a faint flush, the kind only a martial artist at their peak could show.

She clenched her fists and said confidently, "Don't worry, Dad. With the family investing this much in me, I won't disappoint. I've fully stepped into the rank of martial saint now. Even though the boost was forced and I'll lose some ground later, in this state, with Mr. Gurney beside me, killing Andrew will be easy." Maurice's gaze turned dark. "Originally, the plan was for you and Franklin to take him head-on, while I'd strike midway to ---- make sure he couldn't escape.

But Luna's been watching me too closely. She's a General in the military, and I can't openly move against her for now." Scarlett let out a cold hum. "You don't need to worry, Dad. Mr. Gurney and I are enough to take him down. I trust him, and I trust myself even more." Maurice gave her a faint smile. "Go ahead." However, Scarlett did not move. She hesitated before asking, " Dad, what about Joe? The link to the origin of this information rests in

How do you plan to handle him?" Mia and Franklin had a messy past, and Joe's parentage had always been a mystery. Scarlett had always treated him as her real younger brother, but she could not deny there was a doubt in her heart. If she was having second thoughts, then Maurice, who was grooming Joe as his successor, must be going through much worse internal turmoil. After all, Maurice was training Joe to eventually take over the Driscoll family.

If this heir were not actually a Driscoll by blood, it would be absolutely ridiculous. "Joe is my son, and one day the Driscoll family will be entirely his. No one will drive a wedge between us. Anyone who ---- threatens the bond between us will be killed without mercy, Maurice said with a cold snort. Seeing the grim determination on Maurice's face, Scarlett could only sigh quietly. Her father's love for Joe was something everyone could see.

Rising from the Ashes (Andrew and Lauren)

---- Chapter 1996 Nonetheless, love was one thing. What if that love was misplaced? What if all these years of nurturing and investment had been wasted on the wrong person? Scarlett wondered if Maurice could handle that kind of heart-wrenching pain. Fortunately, everything was still hidden beneath the surface, and no matter how one looked at it, Joe appeared to be a true Driscoll. Otherwise, he could not have inherited such excellent family genes.

This was how Scarlett comforted and reassured herself. After saying goodbye to Maurice, she got in the car and headed to Driscoll Corporation, where she had always held absolute power over the family's business operations. Franklin was already waiting in the car, having finally changed out of his robes into casual clothing. When Scarlett got in, he immediately bowed respectfully and said, "Praise the Eternal Eclipse, Ms. Driscoll!" Scarlett remained expressionless. "Mr.

Gurney, since you've left the monastery, there's no need for that act anymore. That casual outfit you're wearing looks pretty expensive." ---- Franklin chuckled. "It does look quite nice, doesn't it?" As he laughed, he smoothed down his clothes with satisfaction. Scarlett's mouth twitched as she felt disgusted by what she saw. One look at the clothes, and she could tell they had been bought by Mia. Why was she buying fine clothes for her former lover in front of the entire Driscoll family?

She felt stifled but did not dare say it aloud. After all, Mia was not just any woman. For now, she was still Maurice's wife. Speaking against her would be insubordination, and the consequences would not be worth it. Still, the fact that Mia was so close to Franklin, completely ignoring the family's pride, made Scarlett think she really was a shameless bitch. "Mr.

Gurney, you're recognized as the number one martial master in Gabo Creek," Scarlett said, steering the conversation back to business. "With your skill, what are the odds of you taking Andrew down?" Franklin's expression grew serious. "Over 80%. Originally, it would have been 100%. But this kid's martial talent is ---- exceptional. He's not a martial saint, yet he can unleash the same level of power and has high-level techniques to back it up. In that way, he's a lot like Victoria.

So, I'd say I'm 80% sure." Scarlett smiled. "That's as good as a sure kill. That's good enough." Franklin narrowed his eyes. "As a monk, I shouldn't take life lightly. But this man has committed too many crimes, and heaven itself would not tolerate him. I have no choice but to rid the world of him for the greater good." Scarlett did not respond, though inwardly she was full of contempt. He was the worst kind of hypocrite, pretending to be a righteous monk while living like a shameless fraud.

She knew the real reason Franklin had agreed to act was fear. He feared that Andrew was growing too strong, too quickly, and might come for him later. For all his strength, Franklin was still alone. If it came to a real fight, there was a chance Andrew could surprise him. That was why Franklin wanted to eliminate him early, cutting him down while he was still within reach. Scarlett said, "Alright, then we'll wait for him at Driscoll ---- Corporation.

This time, I'm going to wipe away my past humiliation." She gave the order, and the convoy set off in a flashy show, ensuring Andrew would hear about it. In the backseat, Franklin closed his eyes to rest, bringing himself to peak condition for the fight ahead. He was not quite at his former glory, but he was close. Back then, his opponent had been Victoria, not Andrew. Yet, even that freakishly resilient woman could not kill him. Without her at Andrew's side, Franklin, once the number one martial artist in the region, was certain that killing a junior like Andrew would be more than doable.

Rising from the Ashes (Andrew and Lauren)

---- Chapter 1997 Over at the Peck residence, Rachel came in with a report. "Mr. Lloyd, Scarlett has already headed to Driscoll Corporation. Judging by her grand show, it's like she's not afraid of you at all." Andrew simply gave a faint hum and said nothing, as he was still listening to Victoria and

Tiana give their reminders. "That poor kid Joe is most likely not Maurice's son," Tiana said with a mocking smile. "Why do I say that?

Because back when Mia, that shameless woman, decided to marry Maurice, she had already slept with Franklin multiple times. So Joe is most likely Franklin's child, not Maurice's." Tiana glanced at Victoria, who nodded. "What she's saying is very likely true. Andrew, you're bound to face Maurice sooner or later. When the final battle starts, you could use this to throw him off balance, then strike him down while he's distracted." Andrew shook his head. "I don't like using tactics like that.

I can kill Maurice in a fair fight." Tiana's eyes lit up. "Andy, don't tell me the second seal in your energy core has already broken?" ---- Andrew smiled. "You could say it's just one step away from being completely shattered. The last time Victoria and I fought the Driscoll family, I noticed signs of it breaking. I've been taking out their key people one by one, using the continuous battles to crack the final seal." Victoria gave an approving smile. "Smart thinking!

Put yourself in a life-or-death fight to push past your limits. A high-stakes battle really can break that barrier! But Andrew, you still need to be careful. Maurice is extremely cunning. With his patience and skill, I wouldn't be surprised if he's already reached Franklin's level, or even surpassed him." Tiana nodded. "Exactly. You might be going after Scarlett this time, but the Driscoll family's true core is its leader, Maurice. I've always been wary of him because he's unreadable.

Andrew, you're young, incredibly talented, and a prodigy in martial arts. However, that youth could also be your greatest weakness, especially against someone like him." Andrew's tone stayed calm. "If I were at my full power, the Driscoll family wouldn't even be worthy opponents. Mrs. Rhodes, Victoria, don't worry. I know what I'm doing, and I won't be reckless. Victoria smiled warmly. "Go, we'll be waiting for you to come back." ---- Tiana chuckled. "Andy, I'll be waiting too.

Ah, the more I look at my dearest son-in-law, the more I like him." Andrew quickly made his exit. Tiana's teasing did not bother him, but if Victoria heard too much of it, she might get jealous. Then, there would be trouble. Between these two beautiful women, he knew better than to provoke either of them. Once Andrew left, Victoria's dignified expression vanished, replaced with a cold smirk. "Tiana, you think you're closer to Andrew than I am, don't you?" Tiana arched her brow.

"Well, isn't it obvious? I'm his mother ~in-law, so of course I'm closer to him than you are." Victoria gave a sharp laugh. "Shameless bitch! Look at how you act around him. If Lauren wasn't already Andrew's woman, would you have no shame and try to seduce him yourself?" Tiana's face flushed with both shame and anger. "Victoria, do you think I'm like you?

I've only ever seen Andrew as a junior, a son-in-law, and my feelings for him are nothing but restrained and appropriate." Victoria turned her head away. "Yeah, right. You broke ---- through in martial arts so quickly. Are you going to tell me that Andrew didn't help you? And with your sect's methods, it definitely requires a man and woman to be naked together, balancing masculine and feminine energies to achieve that kind of enlightenment.

Tiana, I know exactly what kind of woman you are." Tiana's cheeks burned. "You... fine, let's say it's as you claim. But I'll tell you, what happened between me and Andrew isn't, as bad as you're imagining." Victoria scoffed. "Maybe not for him, but for you? Andrew's not like his father. He can

control himself." 'Tiana, now cornered, shot back in frustration. "And what about you, Victoria? Can you honestly say you've never had certain... feelings for Andrew?"

Rising from the Ashes (Andrew and Lauren)

---- Chapter 1998 Tiana scoffed. "Back then, you loved Reggie more crazily than anyone else. You were willing to do anything for him. At least when I do something, it's open and direct. I love, I hate, and I say it to someone's face... Not like you, hiding and scheming in the shadows." Victoria's face flushed with a rosy color that made her look absolutely stunning. If this had been her old self, she would have already exploded and beaten Tiana senseless.

But now, with her weak body and ruined martial arts, she was essentially helpless. She could only respond with a cold laugh. "Tiana, I'm not as shameless as you are. Besides, I'm completely alone now with nobody in my life. Calvin's betrayal has already made him dead to me, and Reginald left me years ago. "What I needed to forget, I've forgotten, and what I can't forget has turned into indifference or hate. I owe him nothing; if anything, he owes me.

Now that I've lost everything, nothing really matters anymore." Tiana exclaimed in shock, "What are you trying to say?" Victoria lowered her gaze with a soft, almost demure smile, ---- her flushed cheeks making her look like a painted beauty in a classic portrait. "I'm saying, even if something strange did happen between me and Andrew, it would be something I deserved." She added, "First, I don't owe anyone anymore. Second, I'm. single and alone. Third, I genuinely like him.

And fourth, if I took Andrew for myself, it would be the perfect way to get back at Reginald. Tell me, wouldn't that feel amazing?" Tiana was stunned. She could hardly form her words. "Victoria . you wouldn't actually go through with it, would you? Andrew's the type who values loyalty. If you were serious, he probably wouldn't slap you away, but he'd be too stunned to move. "But if you used his sense of morality and respect for you just to become his woman, then I'm telling you, Victoria...

You'd be downright despicable." Victoria lifted her chin and met Tiana's eyes head-on. "Tiana, forget all the moral codes, the so-called rules, and social constraints. I'm only asking you one thing: could I be Andrew's woman? Could I be his?" Tiana's expression became complex, and it took her a long time before she finally nodded reluctantly. "You could. Back in ---- the day, you were one of the most beautiful women in the southern martial arts world!

"Reggie liked me for my playfulness, but for you, it was your beauty, and I hated admitting it, but I had to. Franklin was even willing to die for you. Even though he was faking it, it just showed how captivating you are. And above all, you're an extraordinary woman. In martial skill and ruthless cunning, I'm only half of what you are." She added, "But you can't just do whatever you want. Spare Andrew.

You might feel satisfied, but he would be the one left hurting." Victoria suddenly burst out laughing, bending at the waist as her laughter shook through her. "Tiana, I was talking nonsense, and you actually believed me. You're still just as easy to fool. "Relax, I'm not going to be some cougar. No matter what, I have to think about Andrew's future.

He's the King of Gabo Creek I've been grooming, and he's going to dominate this place someday." She continued, "Besides, even without my martial strength now, I'd never make the first move. If I

did, he would probably be over the moon. Do you know how many young men these ---- days dream about sleeping with an older woman like me but don't dare to try?" Tiana's face turned bright red as she spat angrily. "A bitch is. always a bitch!

You're so scheming and impossible to figure out!" At that moment, Otis, the butler, entered the room. "Mrs. Peck, someone has delivered a letter for you." Victoria frowned. "A letter?" Tiana chuckled. "Who even writes letters anymore? Go on, open it." Victoria shook her head. "You open it. I'm not risking it if it's a trap." Tiana nodded, took the envelope, and opened it. A single sheet of paper fell out, with one sentence written on it. Follow current

[If you want Reginald's keepsake that he meant to give you, come and talk. Signed, Mia Hernandez.] After reading it, Tiana's voice turned icy. "So that bitch finally admits to stealing the keepsake Reggie left for you all those years ago!"

Rising from the Ashes (Andrew and Lauren)

---- Chapter 1999 At the Driscoll Corporation building, security was incredibly tight today, with all uninvited visitors being turned away. Even official government inspectors were rudely blocked from entering, and if they had any complaints, the Driscoll family would deal with Derek about it later. This unusual operation naturally drew a lot of attention and endless speculation from onlookers. One commented, "It looks like the Driscoll family and Mr.

Lloyd from the Gabo Creek Chamber of Commerce have brought their fight out into the open!" Others were even more dramatic in their assessments. "It's way beyond just being in the open. They've probably been clashing behind the scenes countless times already, beating each other bloody!" Another chimed in, "The Driscoll family has held their position as one of the Three Titans for years, so Andrew is basically digging his own grave" However, not everyone agreed with this perspective.

"Actually, I think the Driscoll family is going to take a major fall this time. At this point, Mr. Lloyd is doing just fine, which ---- basically shows that the Driscoll family isn't what it used to be. They've lost their edge!" There were all kinds of theories floating around, but nobody dared to actually get involved. Representing the Phelans, Luna maintained a neutral stance and just watched from the sidelines.

She did not care who won or lost, as long as their feud did not spill over into society and cause chaos. Otherwise, she would have to step in. Meanwhile, the Fischers, rooted in martial tradition, were more concerned with the martial world and Goldridge, not Blumdale, and they had no intention of interfering. Inside the Driscoll Corporation, Franklin and Scarlett waited quietly for Andrew's arrival. He did not keep them waiting long; almost immediately, he stormed right in.

The building had already been cleared of unrelated personnel, leaving only Scarlett, Franklin, and a few Driscoll fighters to hold the line. Scarlett sneered. "Andrew, you actually had the guts to come. Can't you see this is a trap set just for you?" Having home-field advantage took some of the fear out of her, but the memory of nearly dying at his hands still left a knot in her chest. ---- A martial artist's heart was just as important as their skill.

Once fear crept in, it could ruin future progress. Scarlett knew she had to kill Andrew to erase the shadow in her mind. Andrew stopped less than 30 feet away, his face expressionless. "Whether it's

a trap or not doesn't matter to me. Even if it is, so what? I'll solve it with a single punch." Seeing Andrew's complete composure made Scarlett's anger flare up as she sneered viciously. "In Goldridge, you nearly got me killed, and last time you almost finished me off for good.

Today, I'm going to make you pay back everything you've done to me 100 times... no, 1000 times over!" Andrew shrugged. "Fine. Let's settle this once and for all. Back in Goldridge, I wanted to kill you, but didn't get the chance. Since you were bold enough to step out of the Driscoll stronghold, I'll do you a favor and end it here." Speaking slowly, he rolled his shoulders and flexed his fists before lunging forward. Scarlett's eyes widened in shock and anger as she instinctively stepped back.

However, she only gave up half a step before roaring and striking first. If she kept retreating, she feared her will would crumble before the fight even began. ---- Her anger flared even hotter when she realized Andrew's immediate killing intent did not match her rhythm at all, throwing her off balance. "Praise the Eternal Eclipse!" As they clashed, Franklin strolled out from behind, muttering more monk-like chants.

However, Andrew had long since dismissed him as a hypocrite and ignored the act completely. Their fists collided in a clean, head-on blow. Andrew stepped back, mildly surprised. "Not only have you healed so quickly, but your strength's improved a lot too."

Rising from the Ashes (Andrew and Lauren)

---- Chapter 2000 "It looks like the Driscoll family really spared no expense for you." Andrew observed with interest. Scarlett felt more confident, and her arrogance swelled again. "What's wrong? Getting scared already now that we've just started fighting? Too bad it's already too late for regrets." Her martial arts style followed a vicious path, with energy in the same dark category as Victoria's.

However, Victoria's pure Pale Specter's energy, while Scarlett's was a murderous aura cultivated through killing. The two were completely different in nature. 'The pressure in the lobby of the Driscoll Corporation's first floor spiked, making the surrounding glass creak and rattle. Scarlett attacked in a relentless storm, her clawed strikes aiming straight for Andrew's vital points. Unfortunately, even with her improved fighting power, she was still quite weak in Andrew's eyes.

Andrew pushed out with one palm, timing it perfectly to strike just as Scarlett's strength was exhausted. She immediately let out a muffled grunt and could not help ---- but slide backward, feeling both shocked and furious that this little bastard had also improved his abilities. Though she had grown stronger, it seemed like Andrew had become more powerful, too. Her heart started pounding wildly with growing unease and fear. Andrew did not give her time to dwell on it.

He moved with wide, open strikes, launching his Inferno Strike straight at her. The scorching heat in his palm made her relive that same life-or-death terror she had felt before. 'The memory of that technique weighed on her like a curse. Snarling, she met him head-on, but as expected, her hand felt like it had been plunged into fire. The bones shifted under the impact, and she let out a scream as her body was hurled across the hall.

Andrew gave a cold snort and stepped forward, his figure blurring as he leapt high and swung a brutal whip kick toward her head. Scarlett instinctively curled up and screamed, "Mr. Gurney, are

"you just going to stand there? If I die here, have you thought about how my dad will react?" ---- This was her way of pressuring Franklin. If he had seen enough, he needed to step in and help. Otherwise, if something happened to her, Maurice definitely would not let him off the hook.

Franklin chuckled and took a step forward, pushing his speed to the absolute limit. A series of afterimages faded away as he struck from behind, arriving later but attacking first, sending his palm toward Andrew's skull. He was attacking the enemy's weakness. If Andrew killed Scarlett, his own brains would be splattered everywhere. However, Andrew, who had been charging forward, suddenly turned around without any warning, as if he had planned this all along.

As he spun around, both palms struck out wildly, directly targeting Franklin's face. The scorching heat from the Inferno Strike even made the air shimmer and distort slightly. Franklin snorted coldly. "I knew you were waiting for me to make a move all along!" He had used a single palm while Andrew used both, and Andrew had gone all-out from the very first strike. That meant one thing: Andrew had never truly been focused ---- on killing Scarlett. He had been waiting for Franklin from the start.

Franklin growled, catching one of Andrew's palms. In the split second that followed, he threw his other hand forward, meeting Andrew's other strike. A burst of sparks erupted as Franklin's Mighty Beast Palm met the Inferno Strike. His hands felt like solid steel, lacking Andrew's flames but matching in raw force. 'The two were knocked back, barely a second apart, before Andrew's eyes went cold and he lunged forward again like a predator. "You think I'm afraid of you?" Franklin roared.

'The hall thundered with deafening impacts as the two collided again and again. Inferno Strike against Mighty Beast Palm, speed against speed, power against power. Scarlett's heart trembled as she watched, realizing just how far beneath them she truly was. Facing Franklin was one thing; he had been a legendary master for decades, on par with Maurice. However, Andrew was Joe's age, yet he had already reached the absolute peak. ---- For the first time, Scarlett wondered if making an enemy of this man was truly a wise move for the Driscoll family.