

The Mafia 341

Chapter 341 Restoring Control

As Vicente descended from the third floor of the Scarlet Syndicate headquarters, he reached the second floor of the building.

As he appeared in a large hall of that building, several men, uncertain of their future after the earlier events, looked toward the stairs where several people were coming down from the second floor.

In front of these people coming down the stairs were Vicente and the two level 4 men, who were currently wearing handcuffs on their wrists and heels but also being carried in the air by metal plates.

Colt felt a shiver run down his spine as he realized what this was all about.

'I barely escaped.' He thought to himself as he looked at Cesar and sensed his leader's current magic level.

Not only did he realize this, but so did everyone around him, whether they were men of the Mazzanti family or of the Scarlet Syndicate.

So the people standing in the hall soon bent their knees to welcome Cesar back, all shouting with the same level of respect.

"Welcome back, Don Mazzanti!"

Of those who shouted, only the wounded men of the Mazzanti family weren't there, as they were still recovering in the estate's meditation room.

But all the others who had felt or heard the current commotion left their seats to gather there, quickly bringing more than 120 people into a 150-square-meter hall.

Arriving at the center of this area, Vicente looked around and spoke, pointing to the two men. "My friends, I have just returned from a mission. But to my surprise, instead of finding a group united to solve their own problems, I found two rats planning to act behind my back.

At the first sign of danger and uncertainty, these two had already started talking about betraying my Mazzanti family and taking advantage of my wounded soldiers!"

As he said this, Vicente made all the men of the Mazzanti family look at the two of them in ugly ways, some muttering curse words.

Meanwhile, the men of the Scarlet Syndicate broke out in a cold sweat, afraid that they would be punished somehow for the idiocy of two of their leaders.

"Then I'll use my return to settle this matter first," Vicente said in a thicker tone as he put the two men on the ground while he formed a sword out of the metals they were carrying.

He looked at Colt and said. "You, come here."

"Yes, boss!" Colt quickly arrived at Vicente's side in a cold sweat but did not dare to question him.

"The punishment for treason in our forces is death. But these two have never betrayed me. They only talked about treason. As such, their punishment should not be death."

The terrible looks on Paul and Jaxon's faces suddenly improved as they sensed that Cesar was more merciful than he seemed.

"Boss..."

But then Vicente gave his final verdict on the matter. "Colt, rip the dominant hand from each of these fools!"

Hearing this, the people around stopped muttering as they watched Colt pick up the sword Vicente had made and prepare to do the deed.

Paul and Jaxon broke out in a cold sweat as they stared at Colt, trembling as they tried to summon the courage to beg for mercy.

But under Vicente's gaze, neither dared say a word, simply standing still as they watched their old companion move to tear their hands off.

"Aaaaagh!"

Colt was quick, and soon both men were screaming in pain, already without their dominant hands, as they lost blood from the wound in their fists.

Vicente then roared. "From now on, those without their dominant hands will be known as fools, rebels, incompetents. Anyone who makes mistakes as serious as these two will suffer similar punishments.

Remember that. I'm watching all of you. So don't mess with me!"

"Yes, boss!" The men there said simultaneously, all feeling different things within themselves, from fear to respect for their leader.

Killing these two would have been easy. But Vicente had chosen to keep them alive, to limit their fighting power, to make their lives difficult, but most of all, to humiliate them in front of the people they worked with every day.

At the same time, they would still have to serve him, a punishment far worse than death for many of the people there.

As Vice left, those many men looked at his back, seeing how complex their leader was.

"Now get back to work."

With those words, the people there quickly dispersed, leaving a few individuals next to Paul and Jaxon.

Meanwhile, one of the level 2 men from the Mazzanti family approached their leader, walking alongside Vicente as they made their way to where Bart and Rory were.

"Boss, congratulations on your promotion." He said before getting down to business. "As you can see, we followed Plan B. Unfortunately, we couldn't stop the enemies and lost the 3rd-stage herb."

"Hmm, I know."

"We tried everything to make Plan A work, but the Viscount and the Commander were too strong for us. Even Miss Bain got in our way a bit, so our chances weren't good."

Anyway, following Plan B, we abandoned our headquarters to avoid confrontations with ambitious groups. So we're in the dark about what happened to our headquarters and the items in the safe. But some soldiers and members of the Symons family certainly took a dozen of our weapons.

The good thing is that these weapons have no ammunition, and with the boss here, we can track them down easily.

The bad news is that the Viscount and the Commander have taken the herb and will probably move on to the middle level of the 3rd stage."

"I killed Commander Hogan before I got here, so the problem is 'only' Viscount Symons," Vicente commented, aware that this in itself would be terrible.

The man looked at Vicente admiringly and said. "The boss really is powerful. That will help us a bit in solving our local problems."

"How were our losses?"

"Bad. We lost 20 men this afternoon, and we have 8 wounded, counting the deputy and Bart. But that wasn't all. While fighting at our headquarters, Layla and Jasmine were attacked by a strange group."

The moment he heard this, Vicente stopped walking down the stairs leading to the training area of this estate and looked seriously at his soldier. "What?"

Jasmine's situation was what could ruin his life right now!

"This unknown group kidnaped Jasmine while Layla managed to survive and stay behind with Casey's help. She checked in with us an hour ago and left her contact so we could let her know when you were back."

"Get in touch with her. I want to see her immediately!"

The man left to solve this problem, while Vicente finally met Bart and Rory.

Chapter 342 Discussion

When he met Rory and Bart, as well as the 1st and 2nd stage soldiers meditating on the last level of the Scarlet Syndicate headquarters, Vicente noticed how much they had suffered.

Bart was a beast very close to advancing to the Mid-level of the 3rd stage, but he still had several purple wounds all over his body, cuts here and there, and even part of his wings torn off.

These more external injuries made Vicente realize how difficult it must be to face the Viscount, the strongest man in the city.

But as he thought about it, walking slowly through the large meditation room, Torne couldn't help but congratulate his master.

'These two are really good assets, master. If they don't die prematurely, they could be very useful to you in the future and help you grow.' The old spirit said in Vicente's mind.

'This is especially true for this beast. The beast is still young and can reach the 4th stage if well nourished. As for the young human, he's not particularly impressive now, but once he becomes a Mage, his powers will blossom.

Given the average strength of our area, he might be able to run the family's business in this province in the future. But if the master wants him by your side, he won't be a burden to you either. He probably won't make it past the 4th stage, but there's still a long way to go, and you can grow together.'

'Hmm, I know.' Vicente said, already knowing the day would come when the difference between him and Rory would be too great for them to fight side by side.

But before that, he wanted to achieve his goals of revenge and a stable position in this society. After that, it would be natural for him and Rory to go their separate ways, with families or whatever they wanted.

Neither of them had ridiculous goals. They just wanted to be stronger and get justice. As for what they would do once they had achieved their goals, that wasn't something that concerned them at the moment.

Vicente wasn't worried about being separated from his great friend one day. They didn't have to live their lives together all the time, and he felt he could complete all the goals and plans he had made with Rory during their childhood until the difference between them became unbearable.

As Torne looked at them positively, everyone in the room realized their boss was watching them.

They came out of their meditation states. Soon, everyone there smiled at being able to see their leader again, knowing the many dangers Vicente had faced on the mission he was on.

"Did you really survive a Mages attack?" Rory asked before he realized Vicente's level.

But one of the soldiers asked first. "Boss, you reached level 4? How is that possible?"

Vice hid part of the truth since these people had no idea of his second magical form. "I had an encounter with destiny. I was lucky enough to get a head start before facing eight Mages."

"Eight?" Rory only knew of six, so he was surprised.

"Yes, a group called The Faceless Ones followed in the footsteps of one of the two groups I invited to The Vile Altar. Anyway, I wanted to ask you to investigate this group. I have a feeling we will have problems with them soon."

"The Faceless Ones? The most powerful criminal group in Ironcrest?" One of the soldiers said, making Rory and Vicente look at him.

He explained. "They are the second largest underworld faction in Scott Province. They are said to have several Mages in their group and even have the support of a Marquis."

Rory looked at Vicente. "If that's true, we're in trouble!"

Vicente bitterly laughed. "Investigate that carefully. I killed Commander Hogan before I came here, so we shouldn't have any problems with the army in the short term.

He was the only one in the army who knew about my invitation to The Vile Altar, so the deaths of those men in those ruins wouldn't be tied to me so quickly.

The only immediate problem is The Faceless Ones faction. I don't know who else in that group might know of the Mages I confronted if those ruins."

"Even if the army and the temple don't come after us in the future. If there's an investigator with a skill similar to Jasmine's, we're screwed." Rory commented in a terrible mood.

He already knew about the woman's situation, so The Faceless Ones weren't their only problem at the moment...

Vicente sighed. "We can only deal with this for now. We'll try to prepare for whatever comes our way... Anyway, I also want you to investigate the Hogan family of Arthur and Christopher Hogan. I want to know if there's any connection between this family and me."

"Oh?" Rory narrowed his eyes, fully understanding what was on Vice's mind.

"Christopher Hogan never made me think of that possibility. But his brother reminded me a lot of her." Vicente commented as he looked into Rory's eyes, indicating he was talking about Kate.

"Okay, I'll look into that for you, along with the problem with The Faceless Ones faction. But that might take a little longer. As far as I know, this Hogan family is from nearby Saltstar City, which is a lot farther away than Ironcrest."

"It doesn't matter. I'm in no hurry." Vicente said.

At that moment, the door to the meditation room opened, and a gray-haired, slender, relatively small woman appeared with a worried expression on her beautiful face.

"Cesar! You're finally back!" She called as she ran towards Vicente.

Everyone there looked in the woman's direction as she quickly appeared at Cesar's side.

Vicente had a good memory, so he immediately recognized the woman by her gray hair, similar to that of the masked person who had attacked him with Jasmine when he had left Ironcrest weeks ago.

"Layla, I presume." He said, still with the mask on his face. "You're really fast. Unfortunately, not fast enough to get away from the enemies with Jasmine."

Vicente's comment didn't bother Layla, and she got right to the point. "Cesar, I'm here to sign my contract with you. Are you still going to do what you promised, right?"

"Hmm, what happened doesn't change my plans for you. But we are all in danger, Layla." He said seriously.

"I know that. That's why I'm also here to ask you what you're going to do about Jasmine. We must save her as soon as possible, or we'll all be in trouble." She said in a more sharp tone.

"We're not going to do anything for now. It's out of our hands."

"What? Are you crazy?" She didn't like what she heard and raised her voice as she approached Vicente.

Vicente answered her. "I know how important your situation is to all of us. But I have a lot of problems here. I can't leave the city until I'm sure my family is stable."

"But Jasmine is under enemy control! We don't know what might happen to her!"

"I'm sorry, it's too dangerous for us. Besides, I don't think the enemies will move immediately. We have a few days, maybe weeks, to try to rescue her."

Layla clenched her fists in frustration as she listened to Cesar's comments and saw that nothing was being done for her friend.

"Cesar, if her kidnappers communicate with Sacred Devotee Barber, we'll all face his wrath. Do you really want to risk that?"

"What else can I do? I don't even know where to find these people, Layla. Besides, we have a local problem." He said louder, looking into the gray-haired woman's eyes. "Viscount Symons just stole my 3rd-stage herb. By now, he should have reached the middle of the 3rd stage, and his strength won't be as different as that of a Sovereign!

I can't ignore that! I know Jasmine's situation is delicate, and I care about her, but there's nothing I can do in the short term."

Layla had nothing to say in response to Vice's words, as she simply turned her back on him and made an annoyed 'tsk' sound.

"But that doesn't mean I won't do something. As soon as the local situation stabilizes and my group gets better information about the kidnappers, I'll solve this whole issue.

But I'm sorry, for now, Jasmine will have to stay in the hands of the enemy. Hopefully, nothing terrible will happen, and we'll be able to rescue her without any troubles in the future."

"Hopefully?"

Rory joined the discussion. "The enemy is unlikely to move on Jasmine so quickly. First, they have to get her to safety. But since they just left Millfall, hiding her somewhere safe will take them days or weeks. Until then, nothing will happen to her or her father.

Second, they need to assess their situation correctly. Several witnesses to what happened stayed behind to tell the story. But as a group that kidnapped someone important, they probably want to hide their real identities. So there's this problem to solve before they communicate with Jasmine's father." Rory said, indicating with his hands that they were the problem to be solved.

As much as they didn't know who the kidnappers were, their group had witnessed the enemy's movement, which in itself was a clue as to how to identify them. Not only that, Layla knew more or less where the enemies came from because of her past with Mark.

Although they weren't friends, the two had known each other for years. They had had several conversations and experiences in the province. The enemies knew about Mark, and that's why one of them had tried to kill her before.

Because of this 'loose end' left over from Jasmine's kidnapping, the enemy's plans had to be redone before they took a chance on a Sovereign.

Rory continued. "There are also several things that need to be done before a group like this contacts someone of Jasmine's father's level. If they're not careful, they'll be wiped out in an instant."

Layla knew that. After all, Jasmine's father was a Sovereign, and the kidnappers of that woman would have to go to great lengths to hide their origins.

She sighed and then said. "Then you should start your investigation in Ironcrest. Our enemies behind Jasmine's kidnapping probably came from there."

"Ironcrest?" Vicente and Rory looked at each other as a group of criminals from Ironcrest had recently fought with Vice for the 3rd-stage herb.

Considering the presence of two Mages and two Acolytes in The Vile Altar, those four had undoubtedly been in Millfall recently.

Given the coincidences, Vice and Rory couldn't help but think the same thing.

"Is there any chance that The Faceless Ones are behind this?" Rory muttered.

"The Faceless Ones?" Layla looked at Rory, remembering this criminal faction of Ironcrest, a group that even had the support of a Marquis. "Where did you get that from?"

Vicente explained. "I fought four members of The Faceless Ones' faction on my journey to get the local Mages out of Millfall."

"Oh?" She looked at him with more interest, seeing that their thought was not unfounded. "In that case, it's possible. Mark was a 1st-sage Prior in Ironcrest's Awakening Temple before he was sent to Millfall. So, the chances he had contact with people from that group are not small.

The group that attacked us was made up of level 5 Acolytes. Still, considering the trouble they got into, they must have Mage support.

The Faceless Ones are one of the few groups in Ironcrest with Mages."

Vicente said. "We'll check this group out. But if they really are Jasmine's kidnapper, it won't be easy to get her back. There are Mid-level Mages in this group."

Vicente didn't overestimate his strength. His victory at The Vile Altar was not a testament to how powerful he was. He knew that without the enemies in that place fighting each other and without Torne's help, he would have lost.

Repeating the result of the battle at The Vile Altar would not be easy at this point!

"If these are the enemies with Jasmine, we need to increase our forces considerably." Rory agreed and looked seriously at Layla.

Layla knew the power of The Faceless Ones faction and couldn't disagree with their words, as such a group was mighty by local standards.

"In that case, I suggest you try to improve your strength. I'll leave the investigation to your family and try to raise my stage to the 3rd realm. If you manage to improve your strength, I will accompany you to rescue Jasmine." She said seriously.

"Hmm, we'll do that," Vicente commented, finally agreeing with Layla on what to do.

After this first conversation, Vicente would formalize the agreement with Layla before she left, leaving them alone again.

Vicente removed his mask and sighed, "It looks like the second-largest underworld faction in the province is out to get us. Dealing with them won't be easy."

The Faceless Ones weren't strong just because of the level of their leaders. The group was powerful because they were backed by a Marquis, a title held by only three families in the entire province!

"Yes, it won't be easy... Do you have any plans? Your progress is fantastic, but we won't have enough time for you to advance to the 3rd-stage." Rory sighed, once again feeling surrounded by worries.

He had only been worried in the beginning about possible problems with The Faceless Ones after they had investigated the deaths at The Vile Altar. But if such a group were really behind Jasmine's kidnapping, then they would immediately know about Vicente's actions against those four men, but also about his knowledge of the kidnappers of a Sovereign's daughter.

As soon as the leaders of such a group knew everything that had happened, which frankly shouldn't take long, they would surely mark the Mazzanti family group for death!

Vicente looked at Bart and then at Rory before saying. "There is a possibility."

Chapter 344 Army on Alert

"This is Colonel Morrow at headquarters. Commandant Hogan's life flame went out a few moments ago. What's happening? What is Commandant Hogan's actual situation?" A male voice came from the other end of the line, while the soldier standing by for this emergency felt a little nervous.

A new battalion Commander would be appointed from the capital if a Commander suddenly left. However, until that happened, the soldiers in the battalion would have to elect one of their own to take over temporarily.

However, the person chosen for this was currently in cultivation, and this soldier had assumed the role by answering this line.

"Colonel Morrow, this is Captain Irvin. A few minutes ago, Supervisor March noticed that Commander Hogan's life flame was dying and immediately went to check on him. Unfortunately, it was not a malfunctioning life flame. Commander Hogan has been found dead in his training room."

The voice on the other end asked. "What was the cause of death?"

"We don't have the exact cause yet, but it seems to have been a deviation in his magical foundation. We're still investigating the cause. The barracks are currently under quarantine."

"Follow the prescribed protocols and, if necessary, declare martial law and a curfew in the city. By the way, are you the one in charge?"

Irvin swallowed his saliva and said honestly. "No, Colonel. That should be Captain Bain. We're trying to contact the Captain, but since she's off base, I'm forced to take this call in her place."

The voice on the line grew harsher. "Why isn't your chosen one in the barracks? Someone of her rank should be standing by!"

"There was an incident in the city earlier, Colonel. The Commander and a group of Captains were involved in the confrontation. After the army's victory, everyone involved was given a day off."

"Oh? The situation in your city seems very strange. Very well, do as I say and control the population. I'll send a group to your city as soon as possible. Until then, Captain Bain will be in charge."

"Yes, Colonel!"

As the call ended, the level 4 soldier ran over to the soldiers who were in charge of the situation in the barracks.

"Gentlemen, Colonel Morrow has just ordered a curfew and martial law for the entire city!" He said as he arrived at the place where Christopher's body was being examined.

When he said this, people in the area looked in his direction. But first, another soldier arrived and shouted something even more important.

"We just found three dead soldiers at the main entrance of the barracks! There is a possibility that we were attacked by the enemy tonight!"

"What?"

"How is that possible?"

Even the doctor examining Christopher's body found the situation strange since, at first glance, the Commander's death seemed to be related to an error in the absorption of the 3rd-stage herb.

He said. "I don't know what may have happened here, but Commander Hogan's death is certainly related to a deviation in his magical foundation."

"Perhaps it is the art of an enemy?"

"It doesn't matter. Now that we have this information put everyone on alert! Inform the Martial Court of the situation and begin our actions around the city. Let's prevent the enemies from escaping!"

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Meanwhile, the soldiers in the city who were there to help fight the basilisk, members of Peter, Arthur, and Alex's battalions, had not only learned of Christopher's death.

Although it would be more difficult for them to be contacted from the kingdom's capital, they would soon receive calls similar to the one above, informing them of the fall of their commanders.

Since they were away from their barracks, they received the news hours late. But just like the local post, they would soon have to elect their own temporary leaders and begin investigating the deaths of their leaders.

They would also have to wait for envoys to arrive from the capital to take control of the situation and further investigate the recent events.

Four army commanders had fallen on the same day, which was extremely unusual.

They would soon join the soldiers from the local post to seal off the city, initiating emergency protocols to prevent the enemies responsible for the soldiers' deaths from escaping while preserving the evidence of what had happened.

With the movement of so many local soldiers and reinforcements from different parts of the kingdom, the people of Millfall would realize later that night that the problems of earlier would not end with the end of the battle for the herb.

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Meanwhile, a group of four soldiers knocked on the door of Nova's residence and called out to her.

"Captain Bain, Captain, your presence is requested at the base. Please, Captain, answer. Something urgent has happened!" A level 5 woman said as one of her companions knocked hard on the door of the house.

Nova had just come out of her meditation state when she heard her comrades shouting at her door. She went to the entrance of her house with a strange look on her face.

"What is wrong with you people?" She asked as she opened the door. "I'm on my day off. Besides, it's the middle of the night."

"Captain, I'm sorry to disturb you. However, we have urgent matters that require your attention.

Commander Hogan was pronounced dead a few minutes ago, and the soldiers at our post have appointed you as his temporary replacement. Please accompany us to the barracks." The woman said as she saw the look of surprise on Nova's face.

"What? Are you making fun of me?" Nova didn't believe it at first.

"No." One of the men at her door said matter-of-factly. "Not only did Commander Hogan die tonight, but we received word that Commanders Asper and Ragan died this afternoon along with Arthur Hogan.

We still don't know what's going on. Still, we've already received orders from a Colonel to control the local situation while emissaries from the capital move in."

Nova's shock was compounded when she heard that four commanders had died on the same day, something that usually only happened in wars or foreign affairs involving great danger.

It wasn't common for army Mages to die like this within the kingdom's territory!

"Fuck!" She said in surprise before grabbing a few things from her house and leaving with the soldiers.

As for the fact that she had been chosen to temporarily lead this post, Nova wasn't surprised. As the most popular soldier at the Millfall post, but also one of the strongest, it was somewhat predictable that she would be chosen in a situation like this.

'Is it Cesar's work?' Nova immediately thought of the man's name.

"Very well. I want you to update me on the current situation. Has Cesar Mazzanti returned to town?"

Chapter 345 Millfall's Greatest Alchemist

While Nova tried to make trouble for Vicente, the young Fuller arrived at the Thomas estate, the home of a traditional family of local alchemists.

Vicente knew from his soldiers that Liam had left his estate earlier with alchemist Abel Thomas, owner of the Botanica Magica.

He was now there to conduct important business with the family alchemist.

Without delay, he knocked on the front door of the estate and was soon greeted by a servant of the Thomas family.

The Thomas family was not a local noble house, but given their position as owners of the largest alchemy shop in the city, their financial power was no less than that of some of the local Baron families.

Vicente noticed this when he saw how large and luxurious the estate was from the outside, but also the number of people working there, even at this time of night.

When a very well-behaved and well-dressed butler greeted him, he felt like he was there to talk to a nobleman.

After a minute of walking through the corridors of this large family residence, he saw some people he didn't know but who didn't work there.

Ignoring everyone in his path, Vicente soon neared a large living room where Liam and Abel were talking.

"Mister Thomas, Cesar Mazzanti is here to see young Liam." The butler announced as he arrived at the entrance of the large room, drawing the attention of the two men standing there with their backs to the entrance.

Turning to see Vicente standing next to his master's butler, Liam sighed, not knowing whether to be happy or sad at the man's return.

After all that had happened, they would probably have a lot of problems if they remained connected to the Mazzanti family. As such, it was a concern to consider.

Liam was not ungrateful. He knew how much he had benefited from the deal with Vicente and from absorbing the pentagram of the 3rd-stage herb. However, the current situation was quite complicated for the Mazzanti family, so much so that it might have been better for him if Cesar hadn't returned.

On the other hand, Vicente had helped him and didn't seem as bad as the rumors said. That's why Liam couldn't be completely sad to see that this guy had managed to escape from several Mages.

But before he could say anything to his new business partner, Liam heard his master talk to Vicente.

"Cesar... I didn't expect you to be on this level. I heard about you for the first time recently but look at you. You're practically at level 5 already!" Abel commented as he looked at Vicente with interest

He was particularly concerned about his student's situation. But to see someone who had grown from the beginning to the end of the 2nd magical stage in just a few months was a great rarity, something he couldn't help but be interested in.

Was Cesar's talent that great? Or was he so lucky that he constantly found resources to increase his own power?

Either way, rapid growth couldn't be achieved without a lot of effort, which in itself said a lot about Cesar.

Vicente looked at Abel and said. "Abel Thomas, I did not think I would meet you so soon. But lucky for me, someone did me the favor of bringing us together."

"Oh?" Abel imagined that Cesar wanted something from him.

"I came here today for Liam. But with Millfall's greatest alchemist in front of me, how can I pass up this opportunity? Abel Thomas, do you have any pills or potions for sale? I have a party needing resources, and I have the coins to make the necessary investment. Will you do business with me?" Vicente asked as Liam easily understood the situation.

It didn't take Liam long to realize that Vicente's words were related to the urgency of their current situation. There was no time for him to go and produce everything the family needed right now.

Liam had just boosted his power. He needed a few hours to get to know his powers better and then to improve his techniques.

Liam had already reached the top of the 2nd stage. He had studied the alchemical theory for 2nd stage alchemists thoroughly before absorbing his second pentagram. Therefore, now that he had done so and his magical foundation was solid again, he could quickly reach level 3 and begin to create 2nd-grade pills.

However, he would need at least five days to do all this and be at Vice's disposal.

But the Mazzanti family couldn't wait!

Then he said. "Master, please sell some of your 2nd-grade resources to Cesar. Unfortunately, I will need some time to adjust my condition, and the Mazzanti family desperately needs these resources."

Abel looked at Liam, knowing his student had an exclusive agreement with the Mazzanti family.

Liam had told him everything that could be said without violating the agreement with Vicente.

Abel was aware of the pros and cons of that agreement, which, by the way, was very favorable to his student's side.

In their agreement, Cesar had practically all the responsibilities, while Liam should only not sell his products or services to third parties.

Because of this, Abel didn't have a bad impression of Cesar. To him, as problematic as the young man seemed on the surface, Vicente genuinely appreciated Liam and was merely trying to build a powerful faction with foundations.

The fact that this brought danger closer to Liam was a mere detail, something that every magician had to face sooner or later if he wanted to grow.

But that didn't mean that he would help Cesar without a problem!

He looked at Vicente and said. "It's not impossible for us to do business. How about this? I'll provide you with all the potions and pills you need today. In return, you'll release Liam from his exclusivity with you."

Liam and Vicente were surprised by this, as neither had expected such a thing.

Abel elaborated. "I know about your agreement, but as advantageous as it is, Liam becoming a member of your family is a little more dangerous than I think is appropriate.

It was very generous of you to give him the pentagram of that herb. But with the Viscount and the Commander having gotten their hands on the 3rd-stage herb, the dangers to those connected to your family are too great."

"Master..." Liam muttered, seeing the concern Abel had for him.

Vicente, on the other hand, couldn't agree. "I understand your concern for your pupil. But I approached Liam because of how valuable he can be to my family, in the short term, but also in the long term."

Chapter 346 Business

"Considering how important Liam is to my group, I can't accept such a deal. Even if you were willing to become my exclusive alchemist, I would not accept such an offer." Vicente seriously said as he looked into Abel's eyes.

Liam's value lies in his current characteristics. He was talented and young, which meant that he had a more interesting growth curve to explore than someone of Abel's age.

In the early stages, the growth of a magician basically depended on talent and resources. As long as one has both, it won't be a problem to grow and even reach the peak of the 3rd stage.

After that, things became more complicated, and factors such as perseverance and luck began to play a more important role, reaching a level of importance similar to that of a given magician's talent, magical form, and resources.

Thus, by the end of 3rd stage, Liam could grow relatively easily with Vicente's support. On the other hand, someone like Abel had already lost his best growth moment, and any growth would require much more resources, time, luck, and talent.

Comparing them regarding their future prospects, Liam was worth more in Vice's eyes!

Not only that, while Abel could create resources with more purity and in greater quantities at the present time, Vicente's group didn't need someone as qualified as that man.

With only Bart at the 3rd stage in his group, it would be a while before Vice needed a 3rd-stage alchemist.

But that time would be enough for Liam to advance to 3rd stage. So, in a way, the young 2nd-stage alchemist could serve the Mazzanti family group longer without being overly expensive, but also without failing to provide quality service.

Vicente understood all this very well and would not accept a deal like the one Abel had just suggested.

"Really?" Abel realized that Cesar wasn't easy to deal with. "Then maybe we can't do business..."

"Abel Thomas, think about it. You don't want to do business with me in your student's name? Think again. If you do business with me, I can strengthen my group faster, reducing the risks for Liam." Vicente smiled under his mask as he pointed to the brown-haired young man.

He looked at Liam and said. "You will need some time to improve your strength and the quality of your products so you can stay at your master's side for the next few days. I'll leave some resources with you now, and you can use them for training and eventually producing your first 2nd-grade pills.

When you're ready, use the rest of the resources in this ring to prepare as many potions and 2nd-grade pills as you can. But don't worry about handing them over to me until the auction in the city in a few days." He said as he tossed Liam a ring containing over 2,000 gold coins.

Abel saw that Cesar would leave Liam alone for at least a couple of weeks and thought better of the young newcomer's words.

'The auction will take place in about two weeks. That's enough time for a lot of things to happen.' Abel thought to himself, considering that in a few days, he might know more about the position of the army and the Viscount concerning what had happened that afternoon.

At the same time, Cesar could really strengthen his group in the coming days if he had resources at his disposal, something that could increase the chances of peace in the city.

One of the things that could make a place like Millfall peaceful was not the absence of powerful people but the presence of people with more or less similar powers.

Only when the strongest had people to worry about would they think more carefully about their actions and avoid conflict as much as possible!

As impressive as Cesar's progress was, it couldn't go on for long. Besides, the Viscount was ridiculously powerful, and having someone with Don Mazzanti's powers in the city for any length of time would be a good way to make the Viscount cautious in his actions.

As someone who had personally challenged the Viscount that day, Abel also had himself to worry about!

'Cesar can reach level 5 through the auction, and he could also increase the strength of each of his family members with my help. That might draw the Viscount's attention away from Liam and me.

Meanwhile, if Cesar agrees with the Viscount, the local dangers for all of us could be greatly reduced after the auction.'

Feeling that it would be easier for him to assess the dangers for his student after the upcoming auction in Millfall, Abel agreed with Vicente.

"All right, I'll help you, but it won't be for free. I want you to assure me that when you make a deal with the Viscount, you'll include us in the clauses of that deal. Also, I won't give you any discounts on the price of the pills and potions I have to sell you."

"We can do that." Vice agreed immediately, seeing no problem with Abel's terms.

At the same time, he couldn't help but smile with satisfaction. Abel was the owner of the Botanica Magica. That meant he had a lot of resources to bargain with!

As he shook hands with this great local alchemist, Abel asked him. "What kind of resources do you need?"

"Mainly restorative potions, but also potions capable of temporarily increasing the magical attributes of my men's base at no great cost. As for pills, I mainly want those that can provide breakthroughs to low-talent men.

I want 70% of these resources to be 2nd grade and the rest to be 1st grade.

Meanwhile, I need a 3rd-grade recovery potion and a pill that can stimulate a breakthrough of my mount".

The first part of Vicente's request wasn't difficult to obtain, nor was it expensive for a person like him. However, the two resources of the 3rd grade were completely different.

"Can you pay for all this?" Abel asked. "This 3rd-grade potion and the pill alone cost 850 gold coins. Isn't that a problem for you?"

Vicente could buy about 10 2nd-grade pills or 10 potions with the same amount of coins!

Considering everything he had asked for, Vicente's spending on resources for his men could easily reach 5,000 gold coins.

That was an amount of coins that even nobles would have trouble collecting in a short time!

"Yes, don't worry," Vicente said as he threw Abel a ring with the coins he would spend on his men today.

Seeing that Vicente was willing to pay in advance, Abel realized how rich this young local mercenary was.

'Tsk! I should have become a bandit too...' He thought to himself as he picked up the coins.

"Very well, I'll deliver your pills and potions to your estate tomorrow morning. Is that okay with you?"

"Perfect."

With that settled, Vicente would soon say goodbye to these two and head off to Benson's estate!

Chapter 347 Time to Focus on the Forge

"Are you okay? What happened to you? How did you get a 3rd-stage herb? And how did you raise your level so suddenly?"

Vicente faced several questions from his master as he entered Benson's estate and saw the white-haired old man again after several days without seeing each other.

Vicente laughed bitterly at the situation and his master's agitation, seeing that Benson didn't know whether to be excited or worried about his situation.

He already knew everything that had happened in the battle that afternoon and how Benson had joined the soldiers of the Mazzanti family to fight against the Viscount and the Commander.

Waiting for Benson to catch his breath, Vicente began to answer. "Master, I'm fine. Thank you for your concern. Before taming the basilisk in The Rocky Gorge, I found and harvested that herb.

Unfortunately, one of the army groups passed by where the herb was, so I couldn't hide my possession of it. Otherwise, I wouldn't have taken so many risks.

Because of the witnesses to what happened in The Rocky Gorge, I was in a situation where I could either lose the herb or use the most important part of it to gain new allies.

I chose the second alternative, which led me to direct some of the enemies out of Millfall while my men stayed behind to give Liam Young a chance to absorb the herb's pentagram."

"Liam Young? Abel's disciple?"

Vicente nodded his head positively. "Yes. I was able to bring him into my family because of the herb. Not only that, I've just made a deal with Abel Thomas because of it."

"Oh? That's good for you. I didn't know this young Liam before, but from what I've found out in the last few hours, he seems to be quite promising. At under 18 years old, he's already about to reach level 3 of the 2nd stage. His future is bright, especially considering who his master is." Benson said, understanding that the value of this 2nd stage alchemist lay in his potential.

Considering this alone, Benson could tell that Vicente's move had been right!

The value of an alchemist like Liam was not small. Alchemy was one of the most important paths of magical specialization in this world, as it was necessary for virtually every type of being.

Having an alchemist with the potential to reach the 3rd stage or even beyond was as valuable as having influence with various Mages and even Sovereigns!

Why, you might ask? Simply because a single alchemist could provide RELEVANT resources for several Mages. So, any 3rd stage alchemist would be very relevant to practically all the Mages in a given region!

Having someone young and with the potential to become such an important influence in the province or even the kingdom was not as easy as it might seem at first.

Having Liam in the family was more important than having Bart!

Vicente smiled in agreement. "Because of the value I see in Liam, I took the risk and lured 8 Mages and 2 Acolytes to The Vile Altar. I've been taking care of them for the last few days, so I couldn't join the local battle. Because of this trip, I raised my level so suddenly."

"Eight Mages?" Benson's eyes widened at this information while he ignored the rest.

Opportunities for advancement abounded in this vast world. As long as one dared to venture out, had a bit of luck, and persevered long enough, it was not inconceivable to obtain special treasures and natural resources.

But an Acolyte who had to deal with 8 Mages was something to look forward to!

"Yes, that's right," Vicente confirmed. "Besides the local Mages who decided to hunt me down, old problems also came after me. Fortunately, I could use my enemies against each other and come out on top."

Vicente didn't want to say any more than was necessary for Benson to understand his situation. He didn't need to create another witness to his actions, let alone compromise another person connected to him.

But Benson at least deserved to know why Vice had been absent from the previous confrontation. The old blacksmith had not only been Vicente's master but had also helped the Mazzanti family when he had no obligation to do so!

Moreover, Benson already knew Cesar's true identity, which could hurt Vice more than anything else. So Vicente had no reason to hide these recent events from his master.

"So that was it... You're really good at fighting, Vice. You know how to use your fighting power, but don't neglect strategy. That's good. That way, your chances of falling are smaller." Benson said with a smile, breathing more calmly now that he understood the situation better.

Taking a few steps away from his student, now calmer than before, Benson thought about the whole situation and asked. "What are you going to do now? Those behind the men you fought at The Vile Altar won't stop. They'll try to make trouble for you."

"I know. For now, I've done all I can. So all I can do is continue to improve my family's forces." Vicente looked around his master's forge. "As fast as my progress is, I won't make much progress until these problems catch up with me."

I won't be able to use magical resources to increase my mana base for the next 6 months, and my cultivation isn't as fast as my enemies. So, I think the only way to strengthen myself is to forge.

I'll help my men with the resources I have, and in the meantime, I'll try to upgrade my weapons and carry out our plans for it." He pointed at the robotic armor.

An exuberant smile broke out on Benson's face, for this was what he most wanted to do.

With Vicente having reached the end of 2nd stage, all that remained was for the young man to improve his knowledge of forging so that he could try some of the things Benson had prepared.

Benson then said. "You are right. You have days or weeks to deal with those behind these magicians. Raising your level more than a little in that time is impossible. Only by forging can you raise the full strength of your family!"

Haha, all right, let this old man help you. Vicente, with your talent and determination, I can make you learn enough to start working with the robotic armor in a few days."

"Please, show me the way." Vicente smiled as he made a gesture of gratitude.

Chapter 348 Mother-in-law and Son-in-law

Later that evening...

There was a celebration going on at the Symons estate.

After a hectic day in Millfall, with many rumors circulating and the start of an army-imposed curfew, the Symons family was one of the few who had reason to celebrate that evening.

Having gone into seclusion earlier in the day to absorb part of the 3rd-stage herb, Viscount Symons had succeeded and advanced to the middle level of the 3rd stage!

Having left his meditation place a few minutes ago, the Viscount was joined at home by several of his friends and family to celebrate his progress.

There were his main wife, his other women, his son Marcus, some of his and his wives' relatives, as well as important business partners and even future family members, like the Staples.

The Viscount was now in a circle of important local figures, chatting and drinking with two local Barons and an important merchant from the city, smiling after greeting everyone who had come to congratulate him.

"Viscount Symons, you are now officially the man closest to the 4th stage in Millfall. From now on, nothing will stand in your way of becoming a Count." Shelby's father, Baron Staples, said with a broad smile.

This man was almost as happy as the Viscount!

With his daughter promised to the heir of the Symons family, his family's future looked brighter now that the Viscount had advanced to the next level!

"Hahaha, nothing will stand in OUR way, ours, not just mine. As business partners," the Viscount said as he gestured to everyone present before pointing to Shelby's father, "and as future members of the same family, we'll grow up together."

All the men beside the viscount laughed together, everyone there very pleased.

No one was worried about Cesar's situation and his suspicious return at the same time as Commandant Hogan's death.

Strange as Cesar was, now that a Commander had died and forces from the capital were coming to town, it was only a matter of time before someone would deal with the Mazzanti family.

Not only that but now that Viscount Symons had advanced and become a Mid-level Mage, he was a man with raw defensive power similar to that of Sovereigns. How could Cesar be a threat to the current him?

Consequently, no one at the celebration was worried about Cesar.

But while many people were laughing and celebrating the growth of the Viscount, Shelby was standing next to Molly, but also next to someone she didn't like at all, Marcus.

"My fiancée, you look so beautiful tonight," Marcus said as he looked into the beautiful eyes of the orange-haired woman in front of him, close enough to smell her perfume. "We'll be living together soon, sleeping side by side. So why don't you come with me for a walk? I want to show you our future home."

Shelby smiled and said. "That would be wonderful, but I'm afraid the curfew doesn't allow us to visit our future home, Marcus. Why don't we do it another day? There's an important auction the night before our wedding. That would be a good day to visit our future home."

"Oh?" Marcus didn't find Shelby's words strange because going out that night would be problematic even if they had ways to get around the curfew.

On the other hand, he didn't suspect Shelby of the attempted murder earlier. He knew how that woman was, but he didn't think she was stupid enough to act against her own family's interests and commit serious crimes that could lead to the death of not only her but her entire family.

Moreover, as Shelby had been betrothed to him, betrothed women showed behaviors like hers often enough for her manners not to be considered abnormal.

He was a man raised to be the leader of his own family. Hence, he saw this as a little rebelliousness from a woman who didn't yet understand her own place. But he intended to teach her well very soon and make her understand that her role was to please and obey.

"Okay. We can do what you suggested." He said with a smile, while his thoughts completely differed from what he expressed on the outside.

'Just you wait, you little slut, I'm going to make you a good submissive. That must be what you want, isn't it? Women like you who act so independently are actually great submissives in bed. When I dominate you, you'll understand the truth about yourself! I'll make you understand what you're really missing!'

Marcus thought as he turned away from Shelby, glancing discreetly at his future wife's stepmother.

Seeing Amy looking at him with interest, he smiled at his future mother-in-law before moving to a more secluded area of his estate.

Seeing this, Amy, who was standing near the wives of the men chatting next to the Viscount, excused herself and discreetly made her way to the same spot as Marcus.

Arriving at the back of the Symons estate, she saw Marcus smoking a cigar and looking at her body without worrying about being accused of looking inappropriately at his future mother-in-law.

She smiled, knowing that he was staring at her wide hips and that he desired her.

It had been evident to her for a long time, but Marcus had never demonstrated it as clearly as he did now. "You seem more confident about the future, don't you?" She asked as she approached him and took the cigar from his lips.

As he watched Amy puffing on his cigar, Marcus looked at this mature woman's cleavage and truly felt more confident.

His influence and social standing had just gone up a few notches with his father's promotion!

Feeling better than ever, he dared to take a step he had planned for months.

"Amy, my self-confidence has always been good. So much so that my current intentions are the same as they were months ago. You should know that." He softly said as he cupped her waist with one hand.

"I know." She smiled as she let out the smoke she had inhaled.

"But now I think you're also more willing to go on adventures than before..." He smiled as he watched her lips. "Perhaps you'd like to test your stepdaughter's future husband?" He teased her as he finally 'kneaded' Amy's beautiful ass.

She smiled even more when she heard that. "Testing you for Shelby?" She thought as she bit her lip.

It wasn't quite right, but it wasn't wrong either.

'My damned husband still thinks about that little bitch's mother... So why not take revenge on him with Shelby's future husband?' She brought her lips close to Marcus' as one of her hands went to his crotch.

As a woman with her own interests, what she was starting wasn't just an act of revenge for Amy. This was an investment. Marcus could be a Viscount or even a Count in the future. Why not take revenge on her husband while getting close to such a promising young man?

That could guarantee her a place at the side of a Count in the future!

Between being a Baron's wife and a Count's mistress, the second option was much more valuable!

So it wasn't long before Amy and Marcus disappeared from the party, leaving behind many people who wouldn't miss them for the next full hour.

At the end of this meeting, only they would know what really happened between future mother-in-law and son-in-law!

Chapter 349 The Faceless Ones

The next morning...

It was a sunny day in Ironcrest, with the local coastline calm and clear, like a perfect summer's day.

There was one area of the second largest city in the province that was even more compatible with the weather that morning than most of the city, where there was a large area surrounded by trees typical of tropical coastal areas.

There were lawns, gardens, swimming pools, and more, things similar to what Vicente remembered from resorts or even special clubs on Earth.

Polaris Realm and Earth had many differences. But leisure was valued by the people of both places. Even in the magic world, there were places like this one in Ironcrest where families often went to spend an afternoon or even a whole weekend.

On this sunny day, this large local club was already near capacity, with many carriages and mounts in the appropriate places for such transportation.

Meanwhile, in a mansion in the middle of this more than 15,000 square meter area, a group of men stood around an artificial lake playing a typical Seidel Kingdom game on what looked like a golf course.

Nearby was an artificial lake with dozens of colorful fish, while trees and plants decorated the surrounding area.

These men had drinks or cigars in their hands and were dressed in casual clothes, but their helpers in the surrounding area were dressed like businessmen.

While they were gambling, drinking, and smoking in peace at the beginning of the day, one of the men dressed in official attire answered a call on his communicator and soon became more serious.

"Bosses, we have a situation with one of our groups." A man with black hair and a bushy beard said as he put away his communication device, something that could send and receive voice messages over distances of less than 20 kilometers.

Communications in Polaris Realm were far from the level of those on Earth. Anyone in the old world of Vice could communicate with people tens of thousands of kilometers away. But in this magic world, only the strongest could communicate over distances of more than a few tens of kilometers.

In the magic world, devices of all kinds vary in efficiency and range according to the level of their creators. That meant that only the most powerful professionals could create truly powerful things, which naturally carried the value of the work of such individuals.

The result was obvious. A small fraction of the population lived as well or better than the wealthy people on Earth, while most of the world lived like servants from the European Middle Ages of such a blue world.

In any case, even Mages would be unlikely to have communication devices that could keep them in touch with, let's say, contacts across an entire province. Most of them would at most have devices like that bearded man's, which only worked well in the vicinity of a city.

But there were ways around this kind of problem, such as having people and devices like that strategically scattered throughout a given area. Through such a network, one person could pass on another's message until it reached the intended recipient.

That's how the message the bearded man had just received had arrived!

"It seems that Tyson and Kaleb's group ran into trouble in the Millfall area. We have information that they have kidnapped the girl Jasmine Barber, daughter of the Sacred Devotee Barber." The bearded man said as he looked at the three men who were dressed differently from the people in the area.

Hearing this, a man with a cigar in his mouth took his eyes off one of his partner's moves and turned his attention to the subordinate.

"What?" This tall, thin man with a large bald head and brown eyes asked in surprise, not expecting such a thing.

When he heard the exclamation of this Mid-level Mage, the strongest there, the only High-level Mage in the group, a man with red hair, medium height and very strong, he said. "Explain that better, Quinn."

"Yes, boss. It seems that Tyson's group has recently found an opportunity. Sacred Devotee Barber's daughter was kidnapped by a man named Cesar Mazzanti, a mercenary from Millfall.

A partner of this woman, Jasmine, used an old contact she had in our group and convinced Tyson's group to help him with this problem. However, contrary to the intentions of this Millfall Temple boy, Tyson, and Kaleb saw him as a chance to get their hands on Jasmine and then use her to negotiate with the Sacred Devotee Barber.

From what these two men said, they intended to get a reward for rescuing her but also to interrogate her in search of compromising information for us to use against Sovereign Barber."

"Oh?" The third of this faction's three strongest men, The Faceless Ones, a Mid-level Mage, made an interested expression on his old face, arching his gray eyebrows. "That sounds interesting. We can pin the blame on Cesar Mazzanti and act as the party that rescued this young woman. Not a bad plan."

"It wouldn't be a bad plan..." The man with the black beard commented.

"What do you mean?" The man smoking his cigar asked doubtfully.

"First of all, Tyson, Kaleb, and more of their men left their companions in Millfall a few days ago and haven't given any answers since. On the other hand, the 'rescue' of Jasmine Barber didn't go as smoothly as planned.

Our men in Millfall were without their leaders and ended up having a hard time moving away from our enemies.

In short, a witness to our actions was not eliminated, and one of our men did not join the group that fled Millfall the night before."

The three strongest members of The Faceless Ones looked at the subordinate with concern.

Even though they were powerful Mages and even had a Marquis behind them, they weren't confident enough to face a Sovereign head-on.

As much as they could make it look like they were rescuing Jasmine from her real captors, any strange action against a Sovereign's daughter could have unimaginable consequences.

"Not only is there a witness, but Jasmine Barber herself seems to see us as her real enemies, not the man who kidnapped her..." The man finished, delivering the last bit of bad news to his leaders.

"Fuck!"

"If that's the case, we've got a big problem in Millfall!"

Their leader then ordered. "I want you to take this girl to Ironcrest. In the meantime, send a group to investigate Tyson and Kaleb's situation and deal with the remaining witness in Millfall."

Chapter 350 Discovered?

Mid-afternoon, the day after Commander Christopher Hogan's death...

Vicente had spent hours at his master's side the night before before going home to rest.

With his master's guidance and most of the materials he needed, he would spend much of the next few days studying the forging art.

He intended to occasionally appear at the Mazzanti estate over the next few days as Cesar but felt it would be more appropriate to act as Nina's brother until the auction.

As such, he had slept at the Fuller estate on his return the night before and had a hearty breakfast with Nina this morning before taking her to the academy.

After dropping his sister off at the academy, he went to the Millfall Blacksmith's Association, which he was just about to leave alongside Lukas.

"... So that's what you're planning," Lukas commented quietly after listening to Vicente's short-term plans. "That's good. Having you in the association will be good for training our forging skills together. It will also be my chance to learn how to produce the family's equipment."

"I intend to develop a new model of weapon based on my affinities, but you will be able to produce similar things in the future based on your own characteristics. In any case, I want my second group to have common weapons, so you'll be responsible for producing them." Vicente commented, making it clear to Lukas that the new model of weapons would not make him obsolete in the Mazzanti family.

Lukas understood that Vicente's second group was the Scarlet Syndicate, a group he didn't intend to integrate fully into his family but rather leave as an affiliated faction.

"I see. That's good. I've got a lot of work to do." He commented with a smile, not caring whether he was making weapons for the Mazzanti family's main or secondary faction.

What he wanted most in the Mazzanti family was the opportunity to grow with Vicente's support but also the chance to learn from a forging genius. Making equipment for the main or secondary group was not a priority for Lukas.

"Anyway, you should prepare well, Lukas. We'll have a few days of training here in the association building, but then we'll be busy and full of problems again. Use this time. I don't know when we'll get the chance to do this again." Vicente sighed as he stopped in front of his blond friend.

Lukas narrowed his eyes and asked. "Do you think we won't have any problems now? You don't think THAT person won't act against us now that he's managed to raise his level?"

"I think it's unlikely," Vice said of Viscount Symons. "He's stronger, but there's no room for him to act now. Royalty doesn't like overly arrogant nobles."

"Do you think that would limit him?" Lukas understood Vicente's point.

Viscount Symons had just committed a crime by taking the 3rd-stage herb from the Mazzanti family. Nothing would happen to him since Vice wouldn't file a complaint with the Martial Court, nor would a noble be punished for a single act against a "common" citizen.

However, if the Viscount decided to act soon after his breakthrough and deal with the Mazzanti family again, the royalty might take a negative view of his actions.

To act twice in a short period, disregarding the laws of the kingdom, would be terrible for a nobleman, especially one as 'common' as the Viscount!

What message would this send to the rulers of the kingdom? That Viscount Symons considered himself above royal law and openly placed himself above the kingdom!

From a public point of view, an action by the Viscount now would be terrible for his image.

"Not only would he tarnish his reputation if he decided to act against our group now, but he has other things on his mind now. Besides being the strongest locally, which gives him time to think and

make his plans, there will be that auction you told me about in the next few days, and also his family's wedding.

These are two important events that could bring him closer to a better title than the one he currently holds.

At the very least, these things at his disposal for the next few days seem more important than eliminating a lesser opponent." Vicente sighed, aware that the chances of the enemy taking action were not zero but very slim, considering how weak he still was.

It had to be said that the Viscount didn't know about Vicente's situation and the Mages at The Vile Altar. But even if he did, his chances of acting against the Mazzanti family were now slim, not only for the sake of his reputation but because of the importance of the two points listed.

The upcoming auction has been the talk of Millfall for days. Many had said that items valuable even to Mages would be available at the event and that important groups from the province would be coming to town to participate in the auction.

On the other hand, the marriage of the Symons family and House Staples was not as simple as one might think. As much as the Symons family seemed superior to Shelby's family, things weren't that superficial.

There were reasons behind Marcus and Shelby's engagement that went beyond each family's current titles.

Shelby's family could benefit greatly from such a marriage, but the Symons family would also benefit from the union.

Vicente didn't know exactly what the Viscount's family would gain from such a union, but Shelby had always given him the impression that it wasn't just her house that would benefit from it.

Those two things gave him the confidence to believe that he would have peace for the next few days.

"It makes sense... Anyway, I hope you're right." Lukas said before he saw two army soldiers quickly approaching them.

"Vicente Fuller, we're here on behalf of Captain Bain, the temporary Commander of the local headquarters. She sent us here to bring you to her!" A serious-looking man shouted as he approached Vicente and Lukas, causing the young blond man to open his eyes in a cold sweat.

Gulp!

'Have they found us already?' Lukas felt every muscle in his body contract as he noticed sweat forming on his body more easily.

He was aware of the army's situation and the death of Commander Hogan. But he hadn't thought that the local soldiers would be so efficient and quick to reach them so quickly and unexpectedly.

He looked at Vicente in fear but was surprised to see the calm smile on the black-haired young man's face.

"Really? We're thinking along the same lines. I was about to go to her. Fortunately, she saved me the trouble of coming to you at such a terrible time." Vicente said with a smile on his face before joining the soldiers sent by Nova.