

The Mafia 381

Chapter 381 Bigger Problems

In a single moment, Vicente pierced the hearts of the two nearby men who were affected by the Seal of Spirits.

Two spears pierced their hearts, giving them no chance to defend themselves or resist the attack. Both were brutally impaled by weapons as big as themselves and quickly felt the sensation of losing the battle and 'seeing' death approaching them.

Unable to use his powers, even Viscount Symons, who normally had very tough skin, was terribly fragile for someone like Vicente.

As he felt the pain in his chest and a sudden pressure in his head, the muscular, blond man saw his surroundings darken as he looked in the direction of Vicente, who was standing 8 meters away from him.

"You... You..." He opened his mouth, but as he spoke, his body lurched forward until he fell face-first to the ground.

The other man fell backward onto the ground. He soon lost consciousness, dying along with the Viscount five seconds after Vicente's spear attack.

Meanwhile, the black-haired woman was still breathing, a spear lodged in her right shoulder, while several smaller blades were in her legs and arms, beginning to form chains around her under Vicente's manipulation.

When he was about to kill the woman, Vicente changed his mind and decided to take a hostage with him to interrogate her later.

There was no reason for two Mages to chase him tonight except for old problems. What he had bought at the auction wouldn't be valuable to people of their level.

Thinking that they had something to do with The Faceless Ones or maybe even the Congregation of Revelations because of the incident at The Vile Altar, Vicente decided not to kill that woman.

She probably had the most information for him as the stronger of the two enemies. So, he deflected his attack so as not to hit any of the woman's vital points in order to interrogate her later.

"Cough! You bastard..." She said as she felt pain in different parts of her body. "Why didn't you kill me?"

"Why? Do you ask me that?" Vicente asked back, laughing under his mask.

Old Torne had already told him what to do with the Seal of Spirits to keep this woman weak, so he was relaxed about controlling her for the time being.

"You will pay for this, Cesar! Your situation will only get worse if you continue on this path." She said as she knelt on the ground.

"Get worse? Nonsense. The worst thing is death. But that is what you wanted to achieve tonight. How could I stop moving just because of that?" He said as he reached in front of her and took off his mask.

"More beautiful than I imagined. Too bad you're an enemy." He said as he cupped her jaw and ran his thumb over her cherry lips.

She gritted her teeth as the veins in her face showed, furious at being touched like this.

'You wretch! All right, all right! You'll regret this later tonight.' She thought as she stared at Cesar's metal mask, thinking of the rest of her group, who should be attacking the Mazzanti estate right now.

But then, before they could say anything to each other, Miss Death's representative suddenly moved, arriving at the focal point of the previous confrontation, where more than 10 bodies of Mages lay on the outskirts.

Among the dead, there were 6 winners of items from the earlier auction, which amounted to 8 items, 7 of which were of the 3rd grade and one of the 2nd grade.

Of course, this doesn't include the items in Vicente's possession!

After leaving the auction, Vicente had not only received Shelby's Seal of Spirits from Layla, but he had also collected three 2nd-grade items sold at the auction from the Acolytes who had tried to attack him.

Thus, this street had 11 of the 20 items auctioned earlier at this instant!

Vicente and Sarah quickly realized what the woman wanted.

"You... You did very well. What's your name?" The dark woman stopped beside Viscount Symons's body and asked Vicente, looking at his mask.

'Master, be careful.' Torne warned him. 'If she wants to take everything, don't do anything. The Seal of Spirits won't work on this woman. She already knows you have it and won't make it easy for you if you take a chance with her.'

Then Vicente answered her. "My name is Cesar Mazzanti. And you?"

"I'm Thirty-Three." She said before continuing. "Your power is fascinating, but still, I don't think it's all you have, Cesar. Are you hiding something? If you reveal it to me, I'll let you keep everything you have here."

"I don't know what Miss Thirty-Three is talking about. Maybe I did something wrong?" He said in a slightly frightened tone.

She looked at him in silence, not knowing whether Vicente was sincere. It was common for people to have traits they didn't know about themselves. On the other hand, the person in front of her didn't seem to be lying.

"You really don't know? That's too bad. But since you didn't answer my question, I'll take most of what you deserve." She said as she slowly approached him. "You don't see a problem with that, do you? It's hazardous for a young Acolyte like you to carry all these things. I'll help you keep them safe."

Sarah laughed when she heard that, pleased that Cesar couldn't make the best of the situation.

'I hope this woman kills the bastard.' She thought as she looked at Vicente behind his back.

Vicente inwardly laughed when he heard that. "Then I thank you, Miss Thirty-Three. I'd just like to ask you to leave me one of the Viscount's items."

"What item?" She stopped right in front of Vicente while all the spatial rings of the dead men around her floated beside her as the darkness seemed to carry them in the air.

"The tuna brain."

She remained silent as she stared at Vicente, only a meter away from him, curious about this young man's appearance.

Thirty-Three spread her darkness around them and said. "All right, that's not important to me. But in exchange, I want to see your face."

'Take off your mask, master. No one but you two will be able to see you now.'

Vicente took off his mask a second later, feeling terrible about being forced to do something because he wasn't powerful enough.

'I must become stronger.' He thought to himself as he showed his face to the woman.

Chapter 382 Fiancé and Fiancée Showdown

Seeing Vicente's Magic Gem, Thirty-Three became even more curious about him, as his talent seemed ordinary for the level of power he had displayed earlier.

'How strange... There's something wrong with this boy.' She thought before she stopped looking at the Magic Gem on his forehead and took a closer look at the young man's features. 'I will remember you. Cesar probably isn't your name, but it will be hard for you to fool me now that I know what you really look like.'

She turned her back to him and tossed him a small card. "You can put your mask back on. When you leave Scott Province to get to know the rest of the kingdom or even the continent, use it if you're desperate enough to change sides.

My companions and I will have no problem accepting you into our group.

Anyway, if fate brings us together again, I'd like to fight against you. Right now, you're still weak, but I believe that with your abilities, this won't always be the case."

"I thank you, Miss. It would be an honor to receive instructions from someone of your caliber." Vicente said as the darkness in his surroundings diminished. He saw the woman walk away after leaving a spatial ring with him.

Sensing that she was no longer there, Torne said to Vicente. 'She is gone, master. You can rest easy. It seems she just wanted to meet you.'

'But why?'

'We can't be sure. But it's almost certain she felt something for you, especially your second magical form. As for what she wants, it can range from positive contact with a person who can help her in the future to a more malicious interest. This is not uncommon among Dark Path magicians.' Torne said.

'As much as I fight against the discrimination against Dark Path magicians, it is a fact that there are some terrible individuals on our path. Nothing can assure me that this woman isn't one of them.

In any case, you're right to want to become stronger. Gaining control over your second magical form should be your priority.'

Vicente took a deeper breath when he heard this. 'I will do my best. In the meantime, I hope she's not one of those difficult enemies.'

While thinking this, Vicente suddenly felt his short-range communicator call out.

"Boss, boss, we're under attack!" A soldier's voice, with various sounds of gunfire in the background, came on just after Vicente had put some of his mana into the small device.

"Shit!" He had already imagined that something like this might happen. He quickly picked up Sarah's wounded body, letting it float next to him as he made his way to his estate.

Being quite tired, he drank a restorative potion, leaving Layla behind.

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At the same time as Vicente's departure, the situation at the Symons estate was not much better than the one he had just resolved before leaving for the Mazzanti estate.

During the early part of the Viscount's fight against his first opponents, Shelby, Molly, and some of her hired assassins arrived at the Symons estate.

They launched an immediate attack as soon as they realized the Viscount was occupied and only Acolytes were in the area to protect the relevant family members!

As the outer defenses of the estate fell and more than half a dozen people made their way into the building, Layla arrived to join the chaos.

Her job was simple, and she did it to perfection in the initial moments of the confrontation inside the Symons mansion.

Shelby wanted to kill Marcus, but she also wanted to wipe out the Symons family so there would be no one left in that house the next day to seek justice or revenge.

How could she do that with the many guards, level 5 Acolytes, and even level 7 and 8 Generals on that estate? Their group was good, but so was the Symons' group.

If they fought without outside participation, the result would be very even, and both sides could lose a lot in the confrontation.

Layla was there to be the balancing piece in this problem!

As soon as she got there, after separating from Vicente, she did what she had promised him and used her great speed to attack the House Symons men defending the place.

Her attacks were too fast for these "ordinary" people to keep up with. Once she entered the fray, it took only a minute for Shelby's assassins to do their work, eliminating more than half of the enemy.

Because of this, while several people were fighting around the compound, spreading screams of terror throughout the building, Shelby managed to find room to move toward Marcus!

Reaching the safest part of the estate, where Marcus and the Viscount's wife were, Shelby and Molly, both level 4 Acolytes, came face to face with the two level 5 Acolytes.

"Shelby? What are you doing here?" Marcus' mother asked in disbelief, knowing why her house was being attacked.

How could her future daughter-in-law be there?

But Marcus figured it all out, finally connecting the dots and seeing that his fiancée wanted to kill him and was an enemy.

"Shelby, what the hell are you doing? Don't you know how important our union is to both of our families? Do you really want to go ahead with your plans because of some stupid ideals you have?" He asked as he stood in front of his mother, furious at this woman who had betrayed him and was trying to kill him.

"Wake up, you stupid woman! If you try to kill me, your Staples family of Millfall will be wiped out by the king in a matter of days! Everything you hold dear will disappear, and if you don't die, you'll have to live on the run for the rest of your lives!

Quickly, give this up and accept my seal of slavery. We'll get married and start a family. Then everyone wins!" He said as he gestured for her to come to him.

Hearing all this, Shelby clenched her fists in anger, the veins in her neck bulging. "Dream about it. It'll never happen, Marcus! Today, I will kill you... No, today I will destroy your filthy family! You should never have stood in my way, but since you did, prepare to die!"

"Die?" Marcus' mother finally understood. "Miss, do you think you can kill us? Just the two of you?"

Marcus couldn't feel threatened either, these women who were weaker than him and his mother. "I think you're overestimating yourself, Shelby. Think about it. If you don't give up now, I will have to act!"

At that moment, Shelby and Molly pulled two Mazzanti family guns out of their spatial rings and showed them why they had the guts to take on two people stronger than them.

"Oh, shit!" Marcus shouted, realizing the relationship between Cesar Mazzanti and these two too late.

"Goodbye, Marcus."

Bang!

Chapter 383 Confrontation at the Mazzanti Estate

The moment the two level 5 Acolytes saw Shelby and Molly's weapons, they both knew that their chances of survival had just dropped a few degrees.

But they were both in the dark about Vicente's recent improvements in producing higher-quality guns.

What frightened them most was not the fact that their lives were in danger but the fact that these two were associated with Cesar Mazzanti, someone who was truly dangerous.

But before they could do anything to defend themselves or call for help, Shelby said goodbye to her "dear" fiancé and squeezed the trigger of her gun while infusing mana in the small device.

Bang!

Molly did the same, leaving the mother and son no chance to defend themselves or even understand what was happening. Before they heard the sound of the two shots, their bodies were pierced at the points the two had targeted.

Shelby had shot Marcus in the head, while Molly had aimed for the Symons matriarch's heart.

But regardless of where they were wounded, these two died instantly after suffering considerable damage from these shots.

A hole the size of an adult fist appeared in the middle-aged woman's left breast. At the same time, almost all of Marcus' brain was destroyed by the bullet that passed through his head until it exited behind him and hit one of the walls of the room.

Electric currents ran through their bodies at the moment they were hit, their bodies convulsing as their muscles stiffened from the powerful electric current that electrocuted them.

If they hadn't died from the simple damage caused by the bullets fired, they could have died from this electrical attack or even, if they survived, been weakened and temporarily restricted by it.

But Shelby and Molly wouldn't have the chance to see the full potential of the weapons in their hands in action.

Soon after they saw holes appear in their bodies, they saw them both fall to the ground, dead!

"That was easier than I thought," Shelby said as she sighed, feeling a great relief in her chest.

With Marcus' death and the end of the Symons family, she would no longer have to get married, at least in the short term!

That would give her time for other plans and bring her closer to what she had wanted since her mother's death.

"What do we do now?" Shelby's redheaded companion asked.

"We're going to kill everyone in this place." She said sternly, cold as a piece of ice. "Time to eliminate all witnesses."

"What about the resources of this family? I imagine the Symons family vault must be full." Molly commented.

"Vicente said that some of the men from the Scarlet Syndicate would help us after we wiped out the entire Symons family. They must be waiting for our signal. So let's hurry. Let's leave nothing behind!"

"Okay."

The two of them set off, heading for the survivors, fighters or not, with the intention of sparing no one.

Wiping out a noble family was a very serious crime in the Seidel Kingdom. So they would erase all evidence and witnesses of their deed that night!

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Simultaneously with what Vicente had done to his opponents in front of the Mazzanti estate and Shelby and Molly's action, a battle was also developing at the Vice family headquarters.

After Sarah's signal a few moments ago, the two Mages in position around the Mazzanti estate moved in, the stronger one attacking Bart while the other had the enemy family's men as his target.

They had an initial advantage because they were stronger and faster than everyone else in the area.

However, as soon as the Mid-level Mage started fighting the basilisk, the whole family went on alert, noticing the two enemies of the moment.

When Rory spotted the Low-level Mage coming to kill them all, he was one of the first to counterattack, unleashing a barrage of attacks that neither enemy was expecting.

Using the family's newly upgraded weapons, several of the family's soldiers struck the Low-level Mage enemy, making him regret his carelessness in targeting mere Acolytes.

The Mazzanti family's current weapons were not as simple as the old versions that only annoyed Mages. These new versions weren't capable of killing Low-level Mages, but they were capable of injuring and, more importantly, limiting people of that level.

For example, while Bart and the enemy Mid-level Mage were fighting on the outskirts of the estate, the Low-level Mage was hit by several bullets capable of injuring him.

In about 10 seconds of fighting, he stopped moving while more than 50 wounds on his body could be seen from afar, as he howled in pain without being able to move.

Not only had the various shots that hit him caused painful wounds all over his body, but the special effects of those bullets were driving him crazy.

Each bullet that hit him was a new wound, but also a new electric current to electrocute him, immobilizing him while melting structures in his body.

Within 10 seconds of the attack beginning, he was standing outside the Mazzanti mansion while more than 15 men stood in front of him, shooting at him as if he were a motionless target.

"Aaaaaaaagh!"

He screamed in agony as his companion fighting the basilisk began to break out in a cold sweat, realizing they had outdated information on their enemies.

'Damn it! Can these bastards do this?' The Mid-level Mage asked himself in a cold sweat, feeling the power of Vicente's weapons as several opponents fired in his direction whenever they could without hitting Bart.

So far, Cole hadn't been hit by any of the enemy fire. Still, it wasn't pleasant to see his companion suffering while being targeted by the enemies.

Not being able to focus against the basilisk was also a problem, and part of it was putting pressure on him, even considering that he had been at the Mid-level longer than that beast.

Amid this, Rory felt comfortable with the weaker enemy's situation and moved to help Bart fight this Mid-level Mage.

He didn't underestimate his opponent, nor did he overestimate his group. As he acted, he used as much as he could, showing off his Flame Avatar while making his two pentagrams appear.

Boom!

The Mid-level Mage suddenly felt an explosion hit his abdomen, startling him as he thought he had just dodged a bullet.

'Have I been hit?'

A single moment of inattention on Cole's part had been enough. As soon as he lost his concentration, several of Vicente's soldiers fired in his direction, hitting the Mid-level Mage's body with their bullets.

Seeing him being shot, Bart opened his mouth and let out a high-pitched scream, along with Rory, who let his aura of flames burn around Cole.

The Mazzanti family had the upper hand against the enemy at this point!

Chapter 384 The End of a Long Night (1)

Minutes after killing Viscount Symons, Vicente arrived at the Mazzanti estate, carrying the motionless body of Sarah Mercer while being quite tired, with injuries here and there.

He had encountered 5 new opponents on his way here and killed them all, as they were level 5 Acolytes and a Low-level Mage. However, despite defeating these new opponents, Vicente still suffered a bit from them, considering how hard he had already labored tonight.

Potions didn't instantly restore 100% of a magician's strength, and even after a few minutes of using such a resource, a magician wouldn't be as well off as if they hadn't fought at all.

If the potion didn't have a stimulating property, it wouldn't bring the person who consumed it to their best state even after its full effect. Not only that, but the potions could heal mana and physical injuries, but not mental ones.

Incredible as it may seem, there were no potions that could heal the mental part of a magician. Some very rare natural resources could affect the mental part of magicians, but there were no pills or potions capable of it.

Given this limitation, warriors who used potions to recover would only partially regain their fighting condition, as the mental wear and tear would not be removed, and only with rest could one truly return someone to their 100% state.

That's why Vicente had suffered a bit on the way to the Mazzanti estate.

But even though he suffered, he made it all the way to see his family.

When he got there, with Sarah floating next to him, he saw two bodies in front of the Mazzanti estate. One had many puncture wounds all over his body. The other had lightly burned skin and a reddish liquid dripping from his facial orifices but mostly from his ears.

Smoke could be seen billowing around the Mazzanti building as many soldiers took up positions with their rifles pointed at the street.

Meanwhile, Bart was flying overhead, and Rory was on the roof of the mansion, still with his flame avatar activated as he looked in the direction of the man who had just died.

'It looks like the fight just ended...' Vicente saw his family had solved the problem for themselves and couldn't help but smile under his mask.

Then he said. "Congratulations to all of you for standing up to those bastards. Bart, you did a good job helping the family."

The giant beast looked to its master's side and didn't hesitate to land beside him, having been largely responsible for killing the Mid-level Mage.

The Mazzanti family's bullets and Rory's flames had wounded Cole's body enough to make him feel pain and fear for his life. But Bart's high-pitched scream had been responsible for the death of the Mid-level Mage.

As for the Low-level Mage with several punctures all over his body, he had died from the number of shots he had taken.

The bullets from Vicente's latest weapons couldn't kill a Mage with just one or two shots. But that man had been shot more than 100 times in the past few minutes, each of which contained powerful electric shocks.

Because of the HUNDREDS of shots, this man had fallen for a type of weapon designed to kill Acolytes!

Rory saw Vicente arrive next to a black-haired woman.

Sarah was staring wide-eyed at the two bodies of the Mages outside the Mazzanti mansion.

'How did this happen? Cole and Leo should have been able to eliminate this family!' She despaired, sensing that things were about to get very dangerous for her faction. 'Shit! I have to find a way to warn my group! Those bastards are still alive, and they're stronger than we expected.'

Rory stopped beside Vicente and asked. "Who's that? How was your evening? Were you able to carry out your plans?"

"This woman chased me after I left the auction... After I killed the Viscount, I kidnapped her so we could find out who she is." He looked at her, noticing the strange expression on her face. "But judging by her appearance, I think she's behind the group you encountered."

"That seems to be the case," Rory commented, also looking at the face of the beautiful woman hovering next to Vicente.

Meanwhile, several Mazzanti men had left the estate, following family protocol and being very cautious of their surroundings.

Their leaders were monsters, but they were ordinary magicians. As such, they had to be careful even after a battle was over.

While they checked the bodies of their enemies and set up a larger security perimeter, Vicente said to Rory as he massaged Bart's head.

"We will hear the results of this evening soon. I got some items through the auction and the event participants, while our friend probably got her wish. I think Layla will be back soon with news. An emissary from the Scarlet Syndicate will also be joining us in the next few hours."

Rory sighed when he heard this, as it would solve one of their problems and, at the same time, bring more resources to the family.

"If everything goes as planned, the city will be completely under our control from now on. We'll only have to worry about outside forces."

"Yes, that will be our concern from now on. The army has nothing for now since I haven't left any trace of my actions. But we'll have to be careful with the soldiers who will come because of the death of those four Commanders.

But once that's resolved, we'll have a stable local position." Vicente sighed, seeing some peace after months of turmoil in Millfall.

"True, there are still those soldiers coming from the capital... How much time do we have? Two weeks?"

"Yes."

The man with the mask and the red hair asked. "You want to solve Jasmine's situation after that, right?"

"Yes, we can't do it before then. First, I'll see what those soldiers will do. Then, it will be time for us to act against The Faceless Ones." He said, looking at the woman, imagining that there was a good chance that she belonged to such a faction.

She made an ugly expression as she looked at Vicente, seeing that neither of them respected or feared her speaking such critical things in front of them.

'You bastards! I'm going to kill you!'

While she was thinking this, the soldiers in the area noticed someone approaching and moved their weapons in the direction of the fast footsteps.

Then Layla appeared, having come directly from the Symons residence after confirming the deaths of Marcus and the Symons matriarch.

She informed Vicente and Rory, "The Symons family is finished. Your allies and their assassins have killed all family members, subordinates, and guards. No one was spared!"

Chapter 385 The End of a Long Night (2)

While Layla was bringing the latest news to Vicente and Rory, others in town were learning the night's outcome.

"Captain Bain, the men who went to the Symons estate say the whole family has been wiped out!" A soldier from the royal army entered a tent in Millfall's main square, where Nova was currently commanding the army's post-auction operations.

Upon hearing this and seeing the soldier's agitated face, Nova stood up from where she was while the people next to her stood in shock, unable to believe what they had just heard.

In the last few minutes since the auction had ended, at least six calls had come in from soldiers patrolling the city, asking for reinforcements in various parts of the city.

One of those calls had come from near the Symons estate, where a group of 15 men had moved in minutes earlier on Nova's orders.

But less than eight minutes after those reinforcements left, the man in charge of the group's communications that night came back with this information.

"What?" Nova asked, finding it hard to believe at first.

"The Symons family has been wiped out. There's no one left!" The soldier said what he had just heard.

In fact, not only was there no one left alive, there were no bodies. When the reinforcements sent to that side of the city arrived at the site of the confrontation where the Viscount had fallen and then at the Symons' estate, all they found were the burning bones of the members of that

family in fires.

How could they be sure that the Symons family had fallen? Every nobleman had his vital status stored in the capital and army posts of the city where they resided.

Since nobles were important state members, their vital status was very important to the official forces.

Viscount Symons' vital status had been upgraded to dead a few moments ago. Given the fact that there was no one else in the Symons family in the city nor signs of them seeking help or refuge, the soldiers concluded that they had been exterminated.

Further investigation would be needed to confirm who had died and if there were any survivors, but for now, based on the evidence they had, they had a good margin of certainty that the Symons had been eliminated!

Nova clenched her fists at this confirmation, unbelieving that she would have to deal with the fall of a noble family in her temporary command.

'Damn it! How could this happen? The Viscount was supposed to be the strongest in the city, able to withstand even a Sovereign! How did he die?' She felt terrible, aware it wouldn't be good for her army career that something like this happened under her command.

"Who was with the Viscount tonight? Who was after him after he left the auction? Let's consider all of them as suspects in the death of Viscount Symons." She said, seeing that she had to sort this out, even if the situation wasn't promising.

"At least 15 people were chasing the Viscount's party earlier. We don't have the identities of most of them, Captain." A soldier said, revealing how difficult it would be to deal with them. "Among them was the woman representing Miss Death and Cesar Mazzanti."

"Cesar?" She narrowed her eyes, seeing that this pest kept popping up in her path. 'That bastard is probably responsible for this too!'

"Do we have anything that could point to Cesar's involvement in the Viscount's murder?" She asked the soldier who brought the message.

The man closed his eyes and shook his head negatively. "All we have is that the Symons family had their property stolen before our soldiers arrived. But the thieves may not have had anything to do with the Viscount's death. They may have stolen the place after the family fell."

There were royal laws that punished acts against nobles. But when a nobleman died, his title would be passed on to his heir until there was no one to inherit it. From then on, the title ceased to exist, and his possessions theoretically became unowned goods.

Royal law served to order the state to ensure that the royal family benefited. Still, it also guaranteed the people their private property. However, a crime was only a crime if one side was harmed.

If an entire family was killed, their property theoretically had no owner and could be taken by anyone.

The mere fact that people had collected items from the Symons family was not a crime, and it would not be so easy to link thieves to the extermination of the family!

Therefore, listening to that soldier, Nova could only get more frustrated, seeing it would be tough for her to find a culprit and arrest them within the kingdom's rules.

"Since we don't have any indication of a first suspect, start the basic investigation into what happened. We'll make a full report and indicate what can be included. If the Martial Court is willing to help us, we can get something out of it."

She said before leaving with the other soldiers to start new actions that night.

Unfortunately, they were weak and couldn't do more in this situation.

The royal laws did not work in all cases. Even if the kingdom's forces wanted to enforce the rules, the law couldn't punish or protect people without evidence!

The only way out was to act through personal justice with one's own powers. But could mere Acolytes do that in this situation?

Without coins and political power on their side, these soldiers were practically tied down, unable to do anything more for the good of the kingdom!

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Quickly, all the confrontations inside and outside of Millfall that the previous auction had caused came to an end.

By the night's end, 20 Mages, 50 Acolytes, and 30 Apprentices had died due to disputes over the auction items or Shelby's actions!

Of the 20 auction items, 6 ended up in Vicente's hands at the end of the night, while 6 were with Miss Death's representative, who had already left the city by the time the "flames" had died down in the city.

Of the remaining, the members of the local Awakening Temple and the blacksmith Henry kept their items. As for those who were taken out of town after the auction, they left the hands of their buyers and ended up in the hands of strangers.

Few knew who had what now that it was all over. All that the survivors, or those who would investigate the battles of that night, would soon know was that much blood had been shed in the aftermath of the auction.

Few would come close to knowing who killed whom and who was with what.

With that, the long night ended, with consequences that would immediately affect the population of Millfall and things that would take weeks or months to change the area.

With the fall of a noble family, a new position in the nobility had opened up. Now was the time for those interested to seek the title left by Viscount Symons!

Chapter 386 Shelby's Ambition?

At the beginning of the day after the auction, the city dawned more quietly than it usually woke up every day.

The citizens muttered about the rumors already circulating in the city, talking about the clashes of the night before, the auction that had brought in thousands of gold coins, and most of all, the fall of the Symons family.

Nobles died almost every year. Most nobles were men of high rank by local standards or even experienced old men. Therefore, the death of one of them wasn't so shocking because some of them were close to their age limit, others might fail in their cultivation and become severely weakened, or even get involved in battles with others of similar power.

Thus, news of nobles dying and their titles being passed on to their heirs wasn't all that unusual, although it didn't happen very often.

But the death of all the members of a noble house was a totally unusual event!

To give you an idea, the last noble family to be wiped out in the Seidel Kingdom had its final moment over 280 years ago!

No one from Millfall's current generation had ever experienced such a moment!

And it was not only the ordinary citizens who woke up this morning feeling different as they commented in hushed voices on the subject of the moment. Even the local nobles were a bit scared.

Aside from the wiping out of a noble family, it was a very atypical event. The Viscount was no ordinary noble like the many local barons.

He was a Mid-level Mage who was said to have physical strength comparable to that of a Sovereign!

How could such a monster have fallen?

Also, there have been many power shifts in the city recently.

First, there had been the fall of the Defiant Tyranny. Then, the Mazzanti family had grown exponentially to 'swallow' the Scarlet Syndicate.

Second, the army Commanders, who were in the city to hunt the basilisk, had died strangely.

Now the Viscount and his entire family had been eliminated!

With so much happening in such a short time, the local nobles were naturally frightened.

Among the most frightened was Baron Staples, who was choked with the terrible news of that family's demise, as it was soon to be much closer to his own through the marriage of their houses.

When Shelby left her area in the morning, she found her father and Amy with deep circles under their faces as they sat in the main living room of the estate.

They both looked as if they had been run over, especially Amy, who looked like a woman who had just found out that her beloved husband had died.

"Shelby... Are you awake? Are you going to eat something?" Baron Staples asked as his face darkened, his tone very pessimistic.

"No..." She replied as she watched her father, who seemed to have lost a few pounds overnight. "I have no appetite. The news last night was horrifying. I didn't think an entire family would fall like that..."

Molly stood behind Shelby as she watched her lady speak as if she had no guilt whatsoever.

But Molly didn't blame Shelby. She understood her and saw nothing wrong with killing people like the Symons family. But the orange-haired woman's performance was truly incredible.

"I know..." Baron Staples said. "I'm sorry. You were going to marry soon and settle down." He said, knowing his daughter didn't like Marcus or the arranged marriage but believing it would be to her advantage. "But it had to happen... Let's take a few steps back for now and think about something else in the future.

For now, let's try to get back to normal. But as the fiancée of the Symons family, you have to arrange the farewell to House Symons."

"I know," Shelby said. "This is an opportunity for us as well, father. I don't want to sound like someone who uses the deaths of others for their own gain, but this is the time for us to try to improve our family's standing."

Amy looked at Shelby and understood what the girl meant, agreeing with her for the first time in a long time. "Do you want us to enter the competition to inherit the title of Viscount?"

"Yes."

The hierarchy and succession of power of the nobility in the Seidel Kingdom had its rules. A non-noble power had to evolve from the lowest to the highest level throughout the kingdom's history.

That meant that a group like Mira's family couldn't earn the noble title of Viscount by becoming a noble family. They had to earn the Baron's title first, then seek the Viscount's.

Thus, only families with the title of Baron could enter the race to fill the vacancy left by Viscount Symons!

Not only that but only families with the title of Baron from the same province as the extinguished family with the title of Viscount could enter the contest.

That meant that 81 families could compete for the vacancy left by Viscount Symons.

If one of those 81 families became a house with the title of Viscount, its title of Baron would pass to a new noble power that would rise with the appointment of the king.

Shelby said. "We can't delay if we want to compete for the title of Viscount. The process of transferring lands and rights should begin within a week of the end of the Symons family. But in similar cases in the kingdom's history, powers that have shown an interest in assuming a higher title earlier have had an advantage in competing with other interested parties.

If we're going to try for the title of Viscount, we should do it immediately and send our proposal to the king."

How did a king choose a new noble or promote nobles to higher titles?

That could vary greatly from king to king. Some kings simply gave new titles or promotions to nobles they liked, who were loyal and dedicated to the kingdom or even showed to be promising. Other kings followed financial parameters, giving more importance to those who were most capable of generating the best profits for the state by accepting a noble position or a higher title than the one they already held.

Of the 28 kings Seidel Kingdom has had in its entire history, 15 followed an approach that was more focused on the state's financial returns, while the others had their own methods that were difficult to predict.

The current king of the Seidel Kingdom was a man very focused on the finances and prosperity of his state, so Shelby felt that her family had a real chance to advance in status if they made the right proposal.

Baron Staples looked at his daughter strangely, aware that thinking about the future was important but somewhat annoyed by her concern.

"Damn it, Shelby. You should be thinking about your fiancé's funeral! How can you say such a cold thing?" He asked, glaring at her.

But Amy took her stepdaughter's side. "Honey, don't be like that to Shelby. She's right. The Symons are dead, which is a shame. But we don't have to give up our dreams because of them." She said, putting her loss aside to focus on the future. "We must immediately study our situation and see what offer we can honor, but also one that can satisfy the king."

As she watched Amy try to convince Baron Staples, Shelby smiled inwardly, seeing that it would be easier to make these two work for her to achieve her goals in the short term.

'That's right, Amy, convince him. That way, I can run the family when none of you are around.' She mischievously thought as she clenched one of her fists behind her back.

Chapter 387 Division of Power?

The Staples family in Millfall was not the only one discussing Viscount Symons' downfall as an opportunity. All eight of the remaining noble families in the city were talking about it at the crack of dawn.

Some wanted to do what Shelby wanted to do: sent their proposals to the capital, signaling their interest in taking over the Symons family lands.

Others, however, talked about it, pondering who had the best chance of promotion and the consequences.

Rising through the ranks of the nobility was a complex process, even in such unusual situations. It wouldn't be enough to have a noble title to compete in the way Shelby wanted.

Viscount families were not stronger and more relevant just because of their higher titles. They usually had more capabilities than Baron families, who may or may not be able to fulfill the obligations of a higher-ranked title.

In other words, there were different "levels" for each noble title. For example, there were simpler Barons, some of them newly promoted and of humbler origins, or even old but declining nobles. Someone like that would have to go a long way to become competitive enough to compete for the title of Viscount. But there were also those wealthier upstart Barons or old nobles with solid positions who could move up as the opportunity presented itself.

Some of the powers of Millfall had enough to aspire to the title left by Viscount Symons, but not all of the local Barons were in that position.

But even for those who didn't want to send their bids to the capital, this was a matter to be discussed, as it could have a major impact on their lives.

The Viscount's position was the most influential for this city, so a change in mentality, in the type of business policies, could significantly affect the other local nobles.

So even the most ordinary Barons in the city woke up this morning talking about who would be promoted.

There were two possibilities. One was that one of the 8 local Baron families would ascend to the position left by Viscount Symons, which would be less of a problem since all the locals had known

each other for a long time. The other was for the king to choose a Baron from outside Millfall, which would mean the arrival of a new family in town, something that could change many things locally, bringing opportunities and problems to the town.

However, this was not the only issue the nobles were discussing. When someone rose to the position of Viscount, a new noble family appeared in the province!

According to the kingdom's laws, Scott Province had to have 81 Barons, as this was the ideal configuration of nobles in this area for the best local functioning. That was something that the royal family had come to after a long period of observation and various tests throughout their reign.

The royal family benefited most when its vassals administered its lands. At the same time, it had long realized that there should be a balance of power within their provinces.

The Scott Province had 81 Barons, 27 Viscounts, 9 Counts, 3 Marquises, and 1 Duke. Through this division of power, the 3 Marquises had the same amount of land as the Duke, while the 9 Counts had the same amount of land as the 3 Marquises. The 81 Barons had the same amount of land as the 27 Viscounts combined.

The Duke's family could not lead the province in an authoritative manner due to this division of power, which was done to limit the power of the highest-ranking nobleman in the area.

Because of the royal interest in maintaining the parts of their state under this division of power, a new family would have to rise to the nobility after the fall of the Symons family.

A new group would gain a peerage, something less significant than for those who would gain the title of Viscount but still relevant.

Thus, not only those interested in the title of Baron among the non-noble powers of the city were talking about it this morning. Even those who were most concerned about the position of Viscount were talking about the possible consequences of a wealthy local family ascending to the position of Baron.

Among the non-noble families talking about it, House Burt, Mira's family, was naturally preparing to make their move, having already made proper preparations the night before.

As soon as Mira's father woke up, the young woman was already at his bedroom door to talk about the proposal they had to make to the king. She had prepared it in advance because of her agreement with Vicente!

...

While the wealthiest families in Millfall rushed to get their proposals to the king as quickly as possible, and others simply reassessed the local situation, Vicente was still at his family's Mazzanti estate.

He had spent the night with his people since there was no guarantee that they wouldn't be attacked again after the death of The Faceless Ones' emissaries.

But not only that, the night before, he and his men had been busy with many things, from counting the proceeds of the enemies they had killed, the robbery of the Symons family, to interrogating the woman Vice had kidnapped.

Vicente, Rory, and Layla had concentrated on this for part of the previous night but had also been on standby in the building in case they had to act.

They meditated in shifts to regain their better fighting states, which, along with counting the profits and interrogating Sarah, had consumed their entire night.

By dawn, the risks for them had decreased exponentially, and they would soon be able to separate again to go about their own business.

But before that, the three of them gathered in Vicente's office, having just finished interrogating the black-haired Mid-level Mage woman.

The three of them had serious looks as they sat around Vicente's office, all without masks, watching each other's worried expressions.

"What are we going to do? As much as we have a small advantage in this situation by knowing before the enemies know what we've done, it's not much. Besides, the enemies are worse than we can handle." Rory commented to them while Layla closed her eyes and Vicente looked sideways at the balcony of his office.

After torturing Sarah using the interrogation methods he had learned on Earth, Vicente had gotten her to say a lot of things.

He had confirmed his suspicion that she and the others were members of The Faceless Ones faction, but he had also learned from her about the strength of that group, where Jasmine was, and their plan regarding her!

Chapter 388 The Night's Findings?

The Mazzanti family group still had to finish investigating The Faceless Ones. Still, with what Vicente had gotten from Sarah the night before, they had discovered some disturbing things.

First, The Faceless Ones faction was very close to one of the few Marquises in the province, someone who had helped found the group.

Second, the leader of this group was a High-level Mage. At the same time, there were other Mid-level Mages like Sarah in this faction of the Ironcrest underworld.

Third, they were going to use Jasmine in some way to get something from the Sacred Devotee Barber, so either they were going to hurt the Mazzanti family by talking to that Sovereign about Jasmine's kidnapping, or they were going to hunt them down. They needed to wipe them out so they wouldn't get in trouble with a Sovereign themselves.

These three critical pieces of information were crucial and necessarily negative to their group and their goal of rescuing Jasmine!

'High-level mage... This is going to be difficult.' Layla thought, aware that the difference between levels became greater with each level.

The fact that they had managed to defeat Mid-level Mages from this enemy group tonight meant nothing. They could only do so because of their special methods and the fact that their enemies had underestimated them. Without these two points, they wouldn't have been able to win!

But the enemy had someone even stronger than Sarah and Cole, a High-level Mage, someone who could easily defeat Mid-level Mages like the woman trapped in the Mazzanti family cell!

'If their supporter, the Marquis, gets involved, we're screwed.' Rory thought as he waited for Vicente's answer to his previous question. 'We've had a lot of trouble with the authorities lately. All it takes is someone interested in us and a disturbing ability to show up, and we're in the crosshairs of powerful magicians.'

Though rare, people with special abilities like Jasmine's and Casey's existed throughout the kingdom. But the royal forces had access to such people. So if a high-ranking noble like the Marquis decided to investigate them thoroughly, they could be in for a lot of trouble!

But apart from a provincial Marquis, they still had to worry about a possible reprisal from a Sovereign!

Vicente then said. "We still have to confirm the integrity of Sarah Mercer's words. Interrogations like the one I conducted are not 100% efficient. In any case, it's very disturbing, but nothing new for us.

We already knew that The Faceless Ones were complicated and difficult to deal with. So, nothing has really changed in our situation. The great thing is that now we know more about our enemies, and we have someone who can be useful to us."

Before, they had been in the dark as to who exactly they would have to deal with, knowing only rumors about The Faceless Ones. But the same enemies they would have had to face before talking to Sarah were the ones they would have to face now that they had 'talked' to her.

"Still, our previous plans are no longer useful," Rory muttered as Layla looked at Vicente.

Vicente said as he looked at her. "We'll have to postpone our plans."

She narrowed her eyes, not liking that at all because, with every day that passed, the chances of them getting into trouble with Sovereign Barber increased.

"You know that..." She was about to say when Vicente raised his tone.

"If you want to fight a High-level Mage, go! Go to Ironcrest, Layla! Do you think I'm joking? You think I don't want to solve the problem?"

"Sometimes I have my doubts." She said as she stood up. "But that's not my concern right now. I fear that we'll all be found out by Jasmine's father! He's terrifying. You don't know the tightrope you're walking, Cesar!"

"I really don't. But what can I do? You want me to do things that are impossible. I wish I could save Jasmine today, but reality won't let me!"

I know Jasmine's father can be scary. But now that we've killed more of The Faceless Ones' people, it's almost certain that they'll send even stronger people to deal with us, and maybe even their damn supporter will join the problem!

We need to worry about that before we think about Jasmine's fucking father!" He finished as he stood looking at the woman, the veins in his neck stirring.

Rory looked at them, seeing that the atmosphere in the office was heating up, and said. "Layla, let's calm down. He's right. Jasmine's father is far away from us, while the enemies in the province can reach us very easily."

"So what are we going to do? The previous plans won't work."

"Not at our current level," Vicente said as he saw the grey-haired woman looking at Rory. "But what if we reach the 3rd stage?"

She looked at him. "We become Mages?" Layla laughed. "Do you think it's that easy? And do you think we'll get pentagrams before they act against us or contact Jasmine's father?"

"No," Vicente answered her. "But we can both reach the 3rd stage until the enemy moves. It will take them at least two weeks to send reinforcements and act against us. In that time, we can try our advances. In the meantime, soldiers from the capital will arrive in Millfall."

"Soldiers? Are you talking about the investigators who will come after the death of the four Commanders?" Rory asked.

"Yes, they should arrive in our city before the next emissaries of The Faceless Ones." Vicente nodded positively.

"Do you think they'll give us an advantage against our enemies?" Layla asked, frowning.

She understood what Vicente meant with this information about soldiers coming from the capital. Soldiers like those who came to Millfall didn't have to be as careful with nobles and provincial powers as those from outposts like Nova.

While the investigators from the capital were there, it would be more difficult for any group to operate near Millfall, as such a group would be extremely strict and would not turn a blind eye.

Such a group should come to solve the mystery behind the deaths of the four Commanders, so it would be a group that would not accept bribes and would follow the kingdom's rules to the letter.

Such a group would be under the supervision of a high-ranking member of the royal family. It would be different from any other group of soldiers one might encounter in the kingdom.

With the presence of such people in the city, it was certain that everyone would have to keep their heads down and act more cautiously during their stay in Millfall!

Vicente replied to Layla. "Yes. Not much, but it is virtually sure that there will be no conflict within the city while the emissaries from the capital are in Millfall. That means we'll be protected in the short term.

On the other hand, I have my plans for the soldiers who will be arriving in town soon. With their help, we may be able to turn the odds in our favor.

Anyway, this will buy time for us. After that, it will be time to act on Jasmine!"

Chapter 389 Respect Between Rivals?

After Vicente's words, Layla no longer argued with him and quickly left the Mazzanti estate.

There was really no way for her group to save Jasmine now. Even if they did nothing, they would still be in danger. Doing anything now would be very risky.

Jasmine's father was terrible, but if they tried to act now, their chances of dying wouldn't be much less than if that Sovereign found out what they were involved in.

If she were going to die anyway, even she would prefer it to happen later, preferring to annoy that Sovereign than to move against The Faceless Ones now.

But she was sad and worried about Jasmine because not only did she have a responsibility to protect that woman, but she was also very close to Nun Barber.

When Vicente and Rory were alone in the office on the top floor of the Mazzanti mansion, the young redhead looked at his friend and commented on what they had just talked about.

"Vice, you're not ignoring the fact that these soldiers from the capital are coming here because of you, are you? I agree they'll give us some security from The Faceless Ones acting in Millfall. Still, these soldiers are coming to deal with you."

Vicente laughed bitterly. "I'm not ignoring that... But it won't be easy for them to find out that I killed part of those four Commanders."

"I don't know, man. What if there's someone with a very surreal ability in this group of soldiers? I have a feeling that these 'protectors' could quickly become our enemies." Rory commented in a pessimistic tone. "The way we are unlucky... Sigh, have you thought about the possibility of being cursed, Vice? We really do have a lot of problems practically 100% of the time."

Vicente heard that and laughed bitterly again because that was indeed the case.

'Rory is really smart.' He thought as he remembered the item Julian had given him that was now in his spatial ring.

'Yeah, I've been thinking about that. Maybe I'm cursed. But maybe it's just bad luck. Anyway, as much trouble as we're in, we're still alive.'

"For now... But that could soon change with all these powerful people against us." Rory commented as he picked up a glass of water from the table in front of him.

"Don't be so pessimistic. I still have plans." Vicente said to his friend.

"In fact, I want you to help me. We're going to try to pit these soldiers from the capital against the damned members of The Faceless Ones faction."

Rory narrowed his eyes. "What exactly do you have in mind?"

"I was at The Vile Altar, where three of the four Commanders died... But so did the members of The Faceless Ones faction. As much as they were focused on fighting me and the Ironcrest Awakening Temple members, we can use their presence to our advantage."

"Oh?" Rory's worried look changed as he thought more carefully about what Vicente had in mind.

Vicente said. "Start gathering clues and information about the fact that members of The Faceless Ones were in Millfall before the Commanders died. Let's make the army waste some of their time investigating our enemies. It'll scare the bastards from Ironcrest while giving us time to deal with future problems."

"Okay."

"Ah, take the opportunity to involve the Congregation of Revelation's investigators in all of this. If the soldiers from the capital turn against us, it'll be interesting to have a way to threaten them."

...

After Vicente and Rory separated, Don Mazzanti gave his men orders to distribute some of the resources he had collected the night before.

The Symons family had a safe with many valuable items, items that were divided equally between Vicente and Shelby's groups.

Vicente would use his merchants to sell this family's items on the black market. But others, such as consumables, he wanted the most

compatible soldiers of his family to use them to strengthen themselves.

As for the coins, the family hadn't earned much in coins the night before. But what Vicente had obtained from the Scarlet Syndicate and the enemy spatial rings he had collected, he left in the safe at home for his men to use with the family's professionals.

After giving his orders, he left for his master's estate, where he had just arrived.

Seeing Vicente again, Benson sighed, seeing his student with new eyes after all that had happened that night.

"I can hardly believe that Viscount Symons has fallen... That was your doing, right?" Benson asked as he made Vicente sit down on a chair in the forge on his estate.

"Hmm, I was lucky. I used the Seal of Spirits on him when he was weakened."

"Oh? That item? But wasn't it purchased by Shelby? Don't tell me you stole it from her?" Benson asked.

Vicente laughed when he heard this. "Not at all. Miss Staples is my ally, master."

"So that's it... Tsk, these nobles are really hard to read." Benson muttered as he sat down across from Vicente. "Unfortunately, we didn't get the damn stone. If we had it, our efforts would have been much easier."

"That rock? Does the blacksmith Henry Woodward still have it? Hasn't anyone tried to take it from him?" Vicente asked.

"That fellow is not easy," Benson explained to his student. "Henry is just a Low-level Mage like me. But his influence in the province is great. The biggest local blacksmith is his disciple, but not only that, that old man has several disciples in the province who have reached the 3rd stage.

Because of his influence, even High-level Mages might move to avenge him if someone dared to act against him. So it's not just anyone who would dare act against him."

"I didn't know he was that influential," Vicente said in surprise. "Why is someone like him still in Millfall?"

Benson looked into his student's eyes and said. "Who says he's still in Millfall? He came here decades ago. He's not from this area. He made his way through the province's largest city, Saltstar City.

Rumor has it that he gave up some of his old ambitions after losing his wife decades ago. Since then, he has focused on developing his forging skills away from the limelight, away from the hustle and bustle of the city.

He has lived in Millfall ever since, helping to develop the local forge and teaching new talents."

Vicente saw a lot of respect in Benson's words and look and found it curious. "You seem to respect him. That doesn't fit with the rumors of your rivalry with him."

Benson laughed. "Just because we are rivals and have our differences doesn't mean I have to hate him or not be able to respect things about him. My differences with Henry are only in the area of forging. But I respect him very much as a person."

Vicente looked at his master differently, seeing that this world could have people who respected each other even though they were rivals, even considering the brutality of this world.

"I see... Why don't you try to make a deal with him? It's a pretty big rock. If we can negotiate 10% of it, it would be perfect for us, and he wouldn't lose much." Vicente suggested.

Chapter 390 Bet

"A bargain? What could we bargain for?" Benson muttered when he heard his student's question.

"That rock is huge and cost the blacksmith Woodward a lot. There must be things he's interested in that we could use to get a small part of the rock." Vicente said.

It would be better if he and his master had the complete piece of rock Henry had bought. That would give them enough material to make mistakes when adjusting the robotic armor. If they only got a small amount of the rock, they would be limited and probably wouldn't be able to use it until they had developed everything they could develop.

But it was better to have a small amount of something as good as this rock than nothing at all!

Benson thought for a moment, trying to consider what he had and what Henry might be interested in.

"There aren't many things I have that this guy would like to have. He's richer than me and has better contacts. On the other hand, he doesn't agree with my views and doesn't believe that my theories can be proven. He certainly wouldn't give me anything that would allow me to prove myself... That leaves only you." Benson looked at Vicente and pointed with a finger at the young man.

"Me?" Vicente exclaimed in surprise.

"Your talent for the forge is very high. I think that I could only get Henry interested enough to consider a deal with us by involving you in some kind of wager." Benson explained, thinking of something subtly different than Vicente.

After a moment of silence, he asked his student. "Vice, how's your progress at the forge? How would you do if you had to create a 2nd-grade artifact without using your magical form?"

Vicente thought about it and said. "I think I can make something between 75% and 80% efficient. But I've had a lot of problems lately that have prevented me from training as much as I could.

I'm also studying many theories behind robotic armor, so now that I have more time, I could improve that efficiency level in a few days.

Why? What exactly do you have in mind?"

Benson said. "What do you think about a little competition, Vicente? I know you don't want to participate in the big forge events so as not to waste your time, but I think the only way we can get part of that mineral is if you agree to compete a little."

"Oh?"

"I will meet with Henry later today and get him to agree to a bet with me. This bet will involve the best student of his and mine in Millfall at the moment. The two of you will compete with your forging skills to determine a winner.

If you win, we'll get a share of the rock in Henry's hands. If you lose..." Benson paused, wondering what Henry would ask of them. "Well, if you lose, I think the old man will try to use you in some kind of competition between the blacksmith associations of Scott Province. That would be the only thing he could want from us."

This year's annual Scott Province Forging Tournament was scheduled to take place over the next few days in a town in the central part of the province. The group of competitors from the Millfall Blacksmiths' Association had already been selected and would leave for that city in less than four days. But if Vicente showed up now, Benson was sure that Henry would be interested in having this young prodigy on his team.

This annual tournament gave prizes not only to the competing blacksmiths but also to the units of the Blacksmiths' Association that did well, giving them more resources and access to rare and hard-to-find materials in that area of the continent.

This was an important event for the blacksmiths of the local council of elders, of which Henry was the leader.

Vicente knew about this competition, as Lukas had already told him he would participate in this year's tournament. He would leave with the association group at the end of the week and be out of town for the next 20 days.

He thought carefully about the risk of joining that group and said. "I'll have less than four days to practice. I don't know how much I can improve in that time, but I'll do my best. You can go ahead with the wager. I'll wait for your notification about the competition match."

Benson smiled when he heard Vicente agree to his suggestion. "I will try to meet Henry and make this bet. I'll see if I can make it on the eve of his group's game. Then, I will go home and practice. If he accepts this bet, he won't give us much time to prepare."

Vicente nodded to his master before saying goodbye, leaving the estate to take care of some business before going to the forge.

...

After leaving Benson's estate, Vicente was soon in front of Nova's house, where he saw a carriage with two Mages standing in front of it.

When Vicente saw Nova leaving her house with Myra and Max, he realized they were already returning to Dryhaven.

"Leaving already? Why don't you stay in town a few more days?" Vicente asked as he walked up to them.

Seeing the young man with the black hair, Myra and Max looked at Vicente and sighed.

She said. "Unfortunately, we have failed in our mission. Now, we must return to Dryhaven and get on with our business. We have missed a great opportunity here."

Max nodded in agreement and remained silent, feeling bad about losing the tuna brain they so desperately wanted but also not knowing if it had been all for bad.

Like it or not, they hadn't gotten anything at the auction yesterday, and maybe that was the only reason they hadn't had to face dangerous people the night before.

Viscount Symons was much stronger than them, but he had been greedy and had bought more things than he could keep.

Even though they were both sad about not getting their desired item, they had also thought several times that morning about what would have happened if they had won this fight.

"It's time to go home," Max muttered.

"But it's good to see you before we go, Vicente." Myra approached him to kiss him goodbye.

As she leaned her face close to his, she said softly. "Take good care of my little sister. She's growing up in the army, but there are always dangerous possibilities."

Vicente smiled at Myra as he saw Nova behind her, watching them

intently.

He squeezed Max's hand and said. "Since you're leaving, I wish you a bon voyage. But don't be so discouraged about the Colored Tuna Brain. Viscount Symons fell last night, and now it is with someone connected with his murder.

What do you think will happen to the tuna brain? I think there's a good chance that it and other items from the previous auction will appear on the black market in the next few weeks.

So keep an eye on the black market. There may still be a chance for you to get that brain."