

The Mafia 71

Chapter 71 The Proposal?

The man who greeted them led them to a room in the back of the tavern, smiling as he said, "Your men helped us a lot that day. If not for them, half the tavern would have been destroyed, and we would have lost up to 10 gold coins!

So I really appreciate what your men did. It saved us from having to close our business."

"Oh? Are you doing badly?" Rory asked, frowning.

As someone who wanted to sell his services, it would suck if his potential first customer went bankrupt!

This man called River said in a more serious tone. "Things are complicated for people like us, young man. Our tavern has good customers, people who have been coming here for decades, and I'm confident in saying that we have the best beer in town.

But having good products is not enough. Some customers sometimes lose control of their actions and cause us losses. Since some of them are people from a higher class than us, sometimes we don't have the option to ask for compensation, and these people don't always have the good sense to pay us for what they destroy.

In addition, there are petty criminals who harm our tavern and other small businesses. Who do we complain to? The Royal Guard, who is subservient to the groups behind these rats?

Tsk, that's why it's hard to grow and compete with places patronized by the local nobility."

Vicente and Rory looked at each other when they heard this, seeing that the situation of these brothers was not good and needed to be fixed, but this was just the kind of favorable situation for them to gain customers!

River said before showing his brother's office to the young men. "Because of these losses we have from time to time, we hardly make any profit even after decades of operation.

We only continue this business because we don't know how to do anything else. But if another incident happens, we may not be able to continue our business."

"I see," Vicente commented as he sat on a sofa beside Rory.

"We will try to help you. We don't have enough to guarantee that more trouble won't catch up with you, but we have enough to at least try." Rory said.

The man smiled upon hearing this and said nothing until Zander arrived after being informed of the young men's visit.

A man similar to the one who had received them appeared at the room's door and entered, speaking. "Are you Vicente and Rory? I heard about you from one of your men."

Looking at the man a little taller than River, a level 2 Acolyte, Vicente, and Rory stood up to greet him.

River and Zander were stronger in magic cultivation than Vicente and Rory. However, the magic forms of these two young men were focused on combat. In contrast, the forms of the brothers behind this tavern were compatible with cooking.

In particular, Zander was a beverage specialist, while his younger brother was a cook.

Their mana was many times denser than those two young men's, but they could not use combat spells, and even if they strengthened their bodies, they would not fight well.

They even had a lot of strength, moved well, etc., but directing their powers incorrectly, they didn't know how to battle.

Vicente and his people, though weaker, could do more in battle than these men. That was the difference in their abilities!

"Yes, nice to meet you," Vicente said with Rory.

"So, one of your men told me that you are willing to work with us. Is that true?" Zander asked, getting straight to the point since there were often trouble and attacks by criminals in his tavern, and the sooner he got partners, the less chance his business would end.

"Yes, we can work with you and put some of our men at your disposal," Vicente said. "My purpose is not only to prevent the deterioration of your tavern but also to allow you to open for more hours a day. I heard you close the tavern at sunset. Is that true?"

River, still there, nodded affirmatively. "Yes. After dark, the chances of establishments like ours being damaged increase greatly.

As corrupt as the guards are, they still protect the city during the day. But at night, we are pretty much on our own, so we usually close the tavern and only open at dawn."

Rory saw the big problem with this place. If the tavern worked like that, it probably missed the best hours when many workers and people were free to go out and eat and drink.

His mother had a brothel. He knew that people frequented places at night much more than during the day.

Rory then said, "We can put some of our men here, but you will have to pay for their food while they are here. As for our wages, we won't ask for much, just 1 gold coin a month."

"1 gold coin?" The brothers asked at the same time.

"How many men are we talking about?" Zander asked first.

"Two or three, depending on how busy your tavern is. More than that, we would double the price." Rory replied.

'But that's too cheap!' River looked at his brother, knowing it wouldn't even pay for an ordinary person to work as a guard in a place like this.

But Vicente and Rory were talking about 2 or 3 men!

Zander liked to make good deals, but he was suspicious when things were too good.

He asked. "What would you get out of it? I doubt that you would be able to pay those men with those sums."

Vicente replied. "In Seidel Kingdom, you have the right to protect your property. As much as there are ways for troublemakers to try to act against the punishments or rules of other people's property, an owner cannot be punished in broad daylight by the rules of his business.

From now on, anyone who causes trouble in your tavern will be stopped by our men and have their items collected as punishment for breaking the establishment's rules.

We will take what criminals and troublemakers have if they dare to come here. That's what we get."

"Their belongings?" Zander and River were surprised to hear that.

"Are you sure? Many troublemakers are arrogant, but they have their reasons for being arrogant. Won't that be a problem for us?" River asked, more concerned about his business having more trouble than the safety of Vicente's men.

"To that end, we will form a group of mercenaries to stand behind the men you will receive from us," Rory said. "Then any trouble will come to us first and not to you."

Vicente agreed. "We will take care of those who want deeper trouble because of the punishments we mete out. Anyway, our income will come from that. But eventually, we will raise the price of our services if you manage to increase your profits because of our help.

We can renegotiate the prices when you start getting results. What do you think?"

Chapter 72 Agreement at Millfall

In theory, Vicente and Rory's idea could work very well at first. But two things could happen once people realized the danger of causing trouble in the establishments their people guarded.

One, there would be fewer incidents, which would cause their financial returns to plummet. The other would be more trouble, and a higher level crisis would hit them.

In the first case, Vicente's group could continue to operate only by adjusting the monthly fee. In the second case, they would have more work and, therefore, more income.

Stronger enemies usually had more resources, so as the risks increased, so did the returns.

In this situation, they would either be able to withstand the pressure or not, which would lead to the extinction of their group or to peace and a consequent increase in the price of their fees.

Vicente made it clear that this would happen eventually.

He wasn't going to plan for his demise, so he could only plan how his business would work.

"How much would the adjustment be?"

"We'll see about that when we go to renegotiate. But don't worry. It won't be anything you can't afford." Rory replied.

If their service worked and the time came to renegotiate this agreement, then these brothers could work longer hours and have fewer losses from bandits and troublemakers.

Some of the savings would have to be used to pay the guards in the future.

But that would be the cost of making a different profit than they currently had.

The two brothers looked at each other and realized there was no hitch in the two boys' proposal. It would cost them very little in the short term, but eventually, they would have to pay fair value for the service.

But that was not a bad thing. With this arrangement, they could continue to have their tavern as long as things went well!

As for the dangers involved, if they did nothing and lost their business, they could face much greater dangers.

There was slavery in this society. If someone could not pay their debts, the one behind the loan could file a claim with a royal guard post and take the freedom of those in arrears.

It was easy for someone with large debts to lose their freedom, but the opposite was highly complex.

Knowing this and their debt, Zander and River were more than willing to go through with Vicente and Rory's proposal.

"Very well, I agree." The older brother said. "When do we start? What about the payments?"

"We'll start tomorrow. Your opening hours are almost over today, so let's leave it until tomorrow." Vicente expressed. "As for the payment, that can be done after the service. That is, at the end of each month of service, you must pay us for the continuity of our operations."

"Oh? That's fine then." River smiled, glad he wouldn't have to hand over a gold coin right away.

A gold coin might not be much for nobles or successful magicians, but for ordinary, low-level people, it was an amount that could take weeks to gather.

Even if these brothers had a trade, they still had their debts to pay, so not having to worry about this amount right away would be a relief.

With that decided, they soon signed a Magical Agreement between the four of them, sealing the terms and conditions already discussed.

After that, Vicente and Rory left the tavern and went to the second place they wanted to try. But unlike Zander and River's shop, the other place had not experienced the help of one of their men...

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By the end of the day, night had taken over the sky above Millfall as Vicente and Rory finished their attempts at local businesses.

They couldn't find the second shopkeeper they were looking for, so they only had the deal with Zander and River for now.

On their way back to the Fuller residence, Vicente and Rory were walking through downtown Millfall when they came across the Millfall Blacksmiths Association building.

The association was an institution present in several states of the continent, a non-military, non-profit organization whose purpose was to develop blacksmith's art in the Polaris Realm.

But there was no charity in this world. To join this institution, one could not simply ask to learn.

The association did not teach its members how to forge but rather helped them develop by providing an environment of dialogue, books that could be rented or purchased, and access to resources that were difficult to find.

To become a member of the association, one would first have to find a master, learn the art, and then be recommended by their master. If one passed the membership test, one could enjoy the benefits of being recognized as a de facto blacksmith not only within the group but also in society.

A blacksmith could not sell their services without membership because no one would pay for an unclassified blacksmith.

Seeing the place and already knowing about it, Vicente paused for a moment and thought about how he could get into such a group.

"You will have to show your skills to a blacksmith, Vice. Without that, it will be difficult for someone to take you as a student." Rory realized what his friend was thinking.

Just like ordinary professionals like Vicente's father, blacksmiths wouldn't take just anyone as a disciple, and they usually wouldn't have many students under their tutelage.

A blacksmith would never call youths to be their apprentice if they didn't see their skills, so potential students had to run after the masters and try to catch the attention of one.

Thinking about Rory's words, Vicente was sure of that. "Not exactly my skill, but the result of it." He said in a low voice.

"What will happen if I ask a local blacksmith to evaluate my armor?" He smiled, knowing his creation would catch someone's eye since it had not been handcrafted using the usual forging techniques.

"That's a good alternative... But who? Having a famous teacher can get you into trouble, as masters usually want their students to follow them and compete.

On the other hand, a little-known, low-level master might not be enough for you to learn what you need." Rory raised this question.

"We will look for the blacksmith Aaron told us about. We'll ask him about the best blacksmiths in town and see if we can find one that would best help us with our plans." Vicente muttered as he walked back to his house.

But as soon as they started walking again, a voice called his name.

"Vicente?" A voice that the black-haired boy had heard before came from the association building and caught his attention.

"Hmm?" Turning to see who it was, Vicente saw the young man, Lukas, who had exchanged a few words with him during Rory's awakening. "You... You were that person in the Awakening Temple!"

"Yes, Lukas." He said, helping Vicente to remember his name. "It looks like you awakened your powers, huh?"

The blond young man looked closely at the gem on Vicente's forehead, ignoring the color and concentrating on its unusual shape.

"Interesting... I've never seen a gem like yours before." He muttered before saying. "Vicente, how about we take a walk around? You were looking at the Blacksmith's Association, right?"

Chapter 73 I want to make contacts!

"You... Were you listening to our conversation?" Rory looked at the young blond man, who had an unusual magical gem on his forehead, green like his own.

Lukas' magical shape was very distinct, much like a sledgehammer, something hard to see around, as it completely escaped the geometric pattern usually found around the kingdom.

"No, I just saw you two talking while looking in the direction of the club." Lukas smiled at Rory. Then he looked at Vicente. "Fate has brought us together again, so I can't pass up the opportunity for us to talk.

I won't lie to you. With such a different gem, it would be ridiculous for me not to try to approach someone I've talked to before."

Vicente looked at the young man and narrowed his eyes.

This was a complicated society, but just like on Earth, one's contacts could take them further or further away, hurt them, or help them.

Lukas was interested in what Vicente could do and achieve with his magical form. He didn't have to say that out loud. But the same could be said for Vice.

Vice knew very few people in Millfall and relied heavily on Aaron and his own luck to make new contacts. Then wouldn't it be interesting to expand his reach with a young man with great potential, as was the case with Lukas?

"Hmm, let's talk while we walk. We have a few free minutes." Vicente said, leading the way to Lukas.

"By the way, this is Rory, my friend and business partner."

"Nice to meet you, Rory. I'm Lukas Oak."

Rory greeted this young blond man, a Senior Apprentice, who didn't seem much older than he and Vicente.

After a brief introduction, Vicente asked. "Since you are so open about your goals, I won't hide the fact that working with young talent like you would also benefit me. What kind of things are you involved in?"

Lukas nodded positively, knowing this should be the case. He answered. "I am a 1st stage blacksmith, so what I do is somewhat obvious. However, unlike most local blacksmiths, I am not part of a blacksmith's family."

Magical form and talent were closely tied to the genetic heritage of magicians. So you would normally find families of blacksmiths, alchemists, and so on.

There could be cases where a blacksmith had children with an alchemist, creating a family with multiple talents. But the most common thing was that similar people got together to form families that focused on specific skills.

This was a way to strengthen their genetics and increase the family's position within a particular specialization.

Often, the family patriarch would choose mates for their sons and daughters who followed the family's compatibility.

This had several social implications, but in particular, it was responsible for the concentration of power in the hands of certain groups rather than diffusing that power throughout society.

In this case, because he was not part of a blacksmith family and had a different skill set than his family members, Lukas did not have the same support and favorable conditions that many of his competitors had.

"As you can imagine from someone in my position, I need more friends than enemies, or I'll have problems."

Lukas was an outgoing person from an early age. But after his awakening 3 years ago, he learned how hard it was not to have proper support. Thus, he developed more social skills.

He was a threat to the young talents of the established powers, so more than his competitors, he needed to make friends and allies.

"So that's why..." Vicente said, understanding Lukas' reasons for being so open and approachable with strangers.

"Does your family have any special background? I mean, are these talents of yours above average or just different in form from what one normally finds in your family tree?" Rory asked.

"I'm a little more talented than the people in my family. As for their magical form, it is related to alchemy." Lukas said.

His family members were alchemists, which could be good at first sight since he would still have good support to grow in this society. But his family members were people with yellow talents, lower than his.

What did that mean? They could hardly provide him with all the opportunities he would need to develop his potential.

Lukas realized this the next day after his awakening. Since then, he had started looking for friends and potential future allies.

He had approached many people in Millfall since then, just as he was doing now with Vicente. His purpose for the moment? It is simple to have options available, if possible, to give aid in anticipation of a later return.

He did not simply believe that these people would help him in the future. But by acting sincerely and with no intention of harming anyone, he believed he would at least have people to propose more profound agreements to in the future.

Lukas was not stupid. He would not propose a deal to Vicente, a stranger he knew nothing about. He just wanted to leave that 'door' open for the sake of his own future.

"What about you guys?" He asked them both.

"Rory and I have magical forms of combat. And we are merchants." Vicente said.

In this society, talking about your specialty wasn't a problem. It didn't say much about a person.

"Two merchant warriors," Lukas muttered.

"But I think I also have an affinity for the forge," Vicente commented.

There were cases of magicians who could actually have two specializations.

The most common thing to see was not that. In general, people were totally focused on one area, as in the case of the brothers from the tavern Vicente had passed earlier.

But some skills useful for alchemy, for example, could also be useful in combat. A person with flame-related powers could use their affinity with the element of fire to make pills and potions but also to fight.

Not every such ability would lead to an affinity with two specializations. Yet, it was possible, and there were several cases like Vicente's in Polaris Realm, although they were the minority.

"Oh? Is that true?" Lukas looked more seriously into Vicente's eyes. "Is that why you seemed so interested in the association?"

Rory nodded along with Vicente.

Lukas smiled and asked, "Who is your master? Do you already know how to forge?"

"No, I don't have a master yet. All I know for now is my affinity for forging," Vicente said before showing the armor he was wearing. "I made this armor myself."

Since Lukas was a blacksmith, there was no reason why Vicente wouldn't use this opportunity to get names of blacksmiths who could accept him as a student!

"You made it?" Lukas' eyes narrowed as he studied the armor closely, noticing details he hadn't noticed before, as this item didn't seem to be of a high level.

But as he looked more closely, he couldn't help but notice some strange signs. 'This... But how was it put together? More importantly, how does he take it off?'

Chapter 74 Contact Made?

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"That... You did that? But how is that possible?" Lukas asked as his face twitched.

Rory smiled as he saw the young blacksmith's expression.

Vicente said. "I won't go into details, but it has to do with my magical form. Anyway, I assure you that I am not lying. I made this armor, but I must say that I have no knowledge of forging, and I did not make it for defensive purposes."

Lukas didn't understand the last part of what Vicente said, but it was obvious that this black-haired guy did not know forging. There were several flaws in the structure of the armor, not only things that would prevent one from taking the armor off and putting it back on but also things that would make it weak defensively.

But it didn't matter what problems there were with this armor. If he made it himself, he definitely has potential as a blacksmith. Lukas thought and said, "I see. Well, since you don't have a master, I can refer you to some acquaintances.

I'm only an apprentice, so you won't have any advantage with them because of me. You'll have to convince one of them by showing your skills. Whether you get a good master will depend on your skills.

Rory liked what he heard. "That will help us a lot. What do you want in return?"

"As I said, I want friends and contacts who are willing to do business with me in the future. For now, I don't want anything, just remember me. If we are compatible, we will certainly do something together in the future."

He didn't know how to use his contact with these two to improve his position. From what they had said, they did not belong to a powerful family and were on their own.

In that case, even if they were talented, they would have to develop on their own before they had the potential to positively influence Lukas' forging journey.

But that could change quickly, so Lukas wanted them to be available to him.

Vicente considered this and agreed. He sincerely preferred to pay his debts, but debts had to be made in a society like this.

To get deals and access to certain places, he would have to have a lot of influence or resources. But at the moment, he had nothing, so he could only promise Lukas.

"All right, we'll keep our doors open for you in the future, Lukas. Who do you have in mind to help me?" Vice asked.

Lukas said without hesitation. "About that, I know 5 blacksmiths who take students in Millfall."

Not every professional teaches. There were many who learned and would not have disciples for long, either because they lacked the aptitude to teach or because they had no interest in passing on their knowledge.

"Of these five, only two are Mages, and the rest are level 4 and 5 Acolytes. One of those two is my master, but I'm sorry to tell you that he's not accepting new disciples at the moment. Otherwise, I would refer him to you.

I also heard that Mr. Wood would be out of town for the next few months, leaving 3 names.

The first is Landon Fraser, a level 4 Acolyte, my master's first apprentice. He is said to be one of the most talented 2nd-stage blacksmiths in the city. But he is also the weakest of the three I can name.

The second is Zane Smith. He's been at the peak of the 2nd stage for several years now, so he can become a Mage in no time. However, as a member of a renowned blacksmith family, he is naturally more selective with his students.

Last but not least is Benson King. He is the second 3rd stage blacksmith in the city, a man who is said to have grown up on his own as a blacksmith and does not get involved in local disputes.

Anyway, those are the names. Other blacksmiths in Millfall accept students, but my master considers these to be the most talented, the only ones he would pay attention to as rivals or potential elders in the association.

Lukas smiled and added, "Landon would be my choice, but I am suspicious of saying that."

"Hmm, thanks for the information. I'll look for these people and see who has more affinity with me." Vicente said and put the names in his head.

"Right. If you need potions and magic pills, look for Ava in the Oak Supply Store and mention my name. She will help you." Lukas said before saying goodbye. "Anyway, look me up if you manage to get into the association, Vicente. We can exchange information and favors."

"Sure. See you later."

As they said their goodbyes, Vicente and Rory quickly returned home, chatting about it.

"What do you think of him? Reliable?" Rory asked.

"I can't say for sure, but given his sincerity, I don't see any problems for now... When we get home, have our men do some research on these blacksmiths. Let's see who they are and where they live." Vicente said just before they entered his house.

"Lukas seems to be the kind of person who knows a lot of people like us without the support or with the willingness to work with people outside their own family. Having contact with him won't be bad."

When they got home, they would soon have dinner with Eve and Nina and talk about what they had done in the previous hours.

Vicente would spend some time with his little sister until she fell asleep and then focus some of his time on meditating. With his magical powers under control, he needed to begin increasing the mana in his being.

The easiest way to do this was to use his energies in training and then rest or eat resources with mana.

He would spend some time doing this while Eve would use some of her time off from her responsibilities with Nina to give orders to some of the personnel in her group.

Rory had told her about the deals he and Vicente had made with the two brothers earlier, so she immediately gave the orders to the men who would be working in the tavern the next day.

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The night passed, and another day dawned in Millfall.

Vicente awoke from his hours of sleep just as dawn broke and hurried down to the kitchen of his house to grab something to eat before heading out.

Today, he would meet Aaron to talk about the Irwin family!

Rory was up too, having slept there last night, and when he saw Vice coming to get something to eat, he asked. "What are we going to do with this family?"

"We're going to look for business. We are merchants, after all." Vicente smiled before biting into an apple.

"What about the robbery?" Rory asked in a quiet voice.

"We'll see about that after we gain access to this family's residence. Anyway, with my skills, I think it will be easier than we thought to break in and steal."

"Really?"

"Don't worry. We'll have time to think about it. Over the next few weeks, we'll work on the robbery plan while we develop our operations in this tavern and other places. This is just the beginning, my friend."

Vicente smiled before they finished up and headed out for another day of trying to do business but also to get in contact with the Irwin family.

Chapter 75 The First Problem

Four days later...

Vicente and Rory had spent the last few days negotiating with local business owners like Zander and gathering information from Aaron about the Irwin family.

In relation to his business, he had tried to contact three other small local taverns, a type of establishment that tended to have problems due to the type of product they traded. But Vicente and Rory had not been so successful. They were only able to get one new deal.

At this point, six men from their group were already working in two local taverns and had even started to get involved with troublemakers.

As for the Irwin family, Aaron had promised that he would be able to arrange a meeting for Vicente and Rory to meet with people from that family to talk business. But it would take a few days before that could happen.

Someone like Aaron would have to move several subordinates around until he could get a meeting with a Baron.

As low as it was, the title of Baron was still the title of a noble, someone much rarer to find in the kingdom than people with Green-grade talent.

But Aaron had his contacts and made sure that Vicente and Rory would meet this family later this month.

After that, Aaron would have nothing more to do for them, so he was determined to get this done and get rid of the agreement with these young people.

Meanwhile, Nina and Eve lived quietly in this town, slowly getting to know the area while Vicente's other men continued their investigation into the three blacksmiths Lukas had mentioned.

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At Zander's tavern, the place was bustling as usual around noon.

Taverns were trendy places in this society. Not only did they offer a variety of food from early in the day to late at night, but they were also places where ordinary or less wealthy people could get beverages without spending too much.

Some taverns were so successful with some of their drinks that they attracted even wealthy people.

When one mixes alcohol, people from different backgrounds, and relatively large crowds throughout the day, problems naturally arise in places like these!

But River and Zander's regular clients noticed something different about this place, even at peak times.

Three strange men, one standing at the door, one at the only bathroom, and one at the bar, had been working there for the past few days.

But those closest to the place already knew who these people were, as they had already acted on at least three different occasions.

In particular, the night before, an agitated young man, known in this area of the city for his fights and arrogant attitude, had been beaten up by the three guards of the tavern!

Some of the customers there at the time had seen this incident and witnessed the young man being deprived by these men of all his belongings, including his clothes.

Knowing the new rules of the tavern, which River had written at the entrance to warn his customers not to lose control in this establishment, many there felt a little uncomfortable.

"Did you see what happened yesterday?" An old man with a huge mug in his hands asked the person next to him at one of the tables inside the tavern.

In this dimly lit place, a bit gloomy for the time of day, the person next to that old man continued with a sober expression on his face and said, "Hmm, it was right over there." He motioned his head toward the entrance where the young man had been beaten.

"Right there, those three beat him until he passed out...

Why are River and Zander doing that? Don't they know what kind of trouble they'll get into? Man, I like their beer. I don't want them to get killed for it."

"Sigh... I don't get it, either. Things are the way they are. Can't they just continue with their old ways? I think it's enough not to care about those who make a fuss," said the old man to his drinking companion.

But there were satisfied customers. Not all of them were thinking of the worst that could happen, and they liked the chance to eat in peace.

'Tsk! Old fools always think of doing the same old thing.' One of River's young customers thought to himself, smiling as he cut the steak on his plate.

How many times had he not lost his food because of the lack of respect and order in this place?

Unfortunately, he couldn't afford anything better or more organized, and this was the tavern with the best discount for the quality of the food.

The food of the two brothers was delicious!

This young man and others there preferred things as they were now, quieter and more predictable.

But not everyone knew what Vicente's people were doing, and some bandits didn't even care. Their "job" was to steal, and those guards would not stop them from acting for their own good!

A young man of about 22 years old, an Intermediate Apprentice, who was standing at the bar, where the counter was, looked from side to side and put one of his hands into one of the pockets of a customer there.

When he felt the man's bag of coins, he smiled, tucked it into his clothes, and casually walked away as if nothing had happened.

But then a hand pressed hard on his shoulder. "Stealing? Brat, I'll break your leg and take your stuff as punishment!"

Gulp!

After saying that, Vicente's subordinate, a Senior Apprentice, moved one of his fists hard and swung it at the little rat's stomach.

A second later...

Pow!

"Aaaaaagh!" A scream came from the young thief's mouth before he felt a powerful attack on his right leg.

"AAAAAGH!"

In an instant, several people in the surrounding area turned their attention to the young man, noticing his leg strangely bent as he screamed in agony.

As comments poured in, the guard quickly gathered this person's things, leaving him naked for all to see his little friend.

But just then, a scream drew everyone's attention away from the young thief. "Uncle, it was this place! This is where I was beaten and robbed yesterday afternoon!"

Hearing these words from outside the tavern, several people there looked toward the entrance, some recognizing the voice of the young man who had suffered the punishment of these guards before the young bandit now in agony.

Vicente's three men looked towards the entrance of this place and saw the young man they had stopped from causing trouble the day before coming there next to two muscular men dressed in armor.

They had ugly looks on their faces, with grimaces that would easily frighten children.

Their fists were clenched, and their lips pressed together as they stood one step behind the young Intermediate Apprentice.

"Who beat up my dear nephew? Who dared?" The strongest of these men shouted loudly, silencing everyone in the vicinity of this establishment.

Chapter 76 Necessary Revenge ?

"Come forward, you cowards! Let's see if you're brave enough to beat my nephew in front of me!" The stronger one shouted while the blue-haired young man next to his uncle smiled.

Brody Peters was not from a noble family, let alone a relevant group in Millfall. But he had been pampered by his family and given the best opportunities from a young age.

At 20, he was already an Intermediate Apprentice with Green talent, someone with a bright future ahead of him.

Even though he did not come from a wealthy background, he acted confidently, and there were few people he would lower his tone or his confidence in front of.

But in this humble tavern, someone had beaten him, taken his belongings, and, most importantly, humiliated him in public.

He could not accept this and had run to his uncle the previous afternoon, the strongest of his family!

'It's time to beat those three bastards!' Brody thought as he smiled, seeing his uncle take charge of the matter.

Jax Peters looked around and soon spotted the young bandit in agony and a tall, middle-aged man holding the naked young man's belongings.

"You... Are you one of the people who hurt my nephew?" He shouted in the direction of one of Vicente's strongest men.

Vicente's group consisted mostly of Junior and Intermediate Apprentices. But there were 4 Senior Apprentices among them. Two of them were now in Zander's tavern.

The one who had broken the now naked bandit's leg was looking at this muscular man, one of whom was a level 2 Acolyte and the other a level 1. Narrowing his eyes, he dropped the little bandit's things and quickly placed one of his hands behind his body, where one of his guns was.

"Sir, the young man next to you tried to destroy this establishment the night before after losing a bet. We only acted to protect the other customers and the establishment itself." He said, preferring not to get into trouble with that person. "There were warnings about what could happen to troublemakers, so your nephew accepted the risks."

"Tsk! A damned Senior Apprentice! How dare you talk to me, maggot? You think you can just touch my nephew because those are the rules of this fucking tavern?" Jax shouted as several customers rose from their seats and moved away from where these people were standing.

The other two guards there moved their hands to their weapons, preparing to act as the opponents seemed to have no idea who they were.

"Sir, if you continue, I will consider you a threat to the establishment's integrity." The guard said in a slightly nervous tone as he saw his group standing by.

"Then show me what you can do!" Jax shouted before pulling a baseball bat from his back and jumping at the man.

Seeing this, the strongest Senior Apprentice of Vicente's men there drew his gun and aimed for Jax's head, firing without hesitation.

Bang!

As the shot rang out, the other two acted, firing at the second man who had come with Brody and jumping at the blue-haired young man.

Bang!

"Shit!" Feeling the power of this weapon, Jax made an ugly countenance and moved his power to increase the rigidity of his body.

The amount of mana an Acolyte had was much higher than an Apprentice had in their body, to the point that the vision of someone of that level was more developed. Jax could see the path of the bullet heading for his forehead!

He could not dodge it, but he managed to raise his defenses against this unexpected action.

The same happened to his companion, who had the disadvantage of being attacked from behind.

"Damned cowards!" The other man shouted as he felt the base of his neck hit by one of the fired bullets.

They both felt the force of Vicente's gun's shot at that moment but neither died.

Having acted quickly enough, they withstood the bullets with relatively minor injuries.

The weaker one had his skin punctured, but the bullet did not hit his bones or destroy any important arteries. Only a little bit of blood flowed from the wound in his neck.

Jax suffered less, but even though he did not bleed from this attack, he felt severe pain in the middle of his forehead.

After feeling that, he couldn't help but turn red with anger. "Son of a bitch! I'm going to kill you!" He shouted as he swung his baseball bat at the strongest of the group of guards.

River saw this and felt his body go cold, afraid of the outcome.

When the two men who had been hit by the first bullets moved again, two of the strongest among the guards suffered from those two first attacks and unloaded their weapons, but without success.

One of them was hit by his opponent's blows and screamed in pain as he lost his weapon, running out of ammunition.

"Aaaaagh!"

"Prepare to die, worm!"

As Jax was about to smash the man's head in, the third of Vicente's men suddenly screamed.

"Stop! Stop, or I will kill your beloved nephew!" The weakest of the guards yelled, pointing a gun at the back of Brody's head.

Swallow!

"Uncle..." Brody said softly, in a timid tone, as he did not normally speak.

Looking in the direction of the door to this place, Jax made an ugly face as he saw his nephew in the cross hairs of a third enemy.

Those bullets wouldn't hurt him or his little brother. But they would do fatal damage to Brody! Jax could feel it!

"Wretches! Fight if you dare!" He shouted angrily at this person using shameful strategies, using a hostage against them.

"I will not repeat myself! Stop, or I will kill this little shit!" The Intermediate Apprentice shouted.

The two brothers ignored the injured guards and looked at the last enemy that could threaten them there.

But this Intermediate Apprentice had been trained by Vicente and knew that in a situation like this, either they would all die or he would use a dangerous strategy to escape from these people temporarily.

"Leave your belongings here and get out of this shop. I will release your nephew when I no longer feel your presence." He shouted, coldly sweating as he followed the protocol Vicente had taught the group.

"Our belongings? Are you insane?" The level 1 Acolyte shouted, taking a step forward.

"Hey, I'll kill him! I'm not kidding!"

The sound of the gun being loaded rang out, and Brody swallowed his saliva. "Uncle, please do what he says!"

Jax clenched his fists so tightly that his muscular hands bled while his face was as red as a tomato.

"Motherfucker! You'll pay for this!" He shouted as he angrily picked up his things and threw them on the ground, the first time being threatened in years.

The surrounding people watched with open mouths, unbelieving that the weakest of the guards had taken such a bold strategy to save their group temporarily.

But the elders there felt this was useless. This was just a way for the group to suffer more, as Jax's group would definitely return this humiliation with interest and correction.

But this subordinate of Vicente's was not worried. He had already used a small magic device that all the men of the Fuller family carried with them, something that would alert his people.

Rory, Vice, and others probably were already coming to this place!

'When the boss arrives, he'll know how to solve this problem.' He thought to himself, grinning at the two Acolytes but nervous inside.

Chapter 77 Time to Act!

Five minutes after Brody's aunt and uncle left...

Vicente and four of his men arrived at the tavern, each with a sharp look on their faces, knowing that a problem had arisen.

His group knew they could only use the emergency alarms in cases of extreme need.

Upon arriving at the location and noticing that there was no battle going on and the mana in the area was as it should be, Vicente entered the two brothers' tavern with a nosy look on his face.

"Myles, what the hell happened here?"

As the people in the area continued to crowd around the sides of the inner area of the tavern, looking at the situation there, several people glanced to where a young man with black hair and an iron mask on his face had entered, asking a question.

Myles, the young Intermediate Apprentice holding Brody hostage, looked at the entrance and sighed when he saw his leader.

Vicente noticed two of his men injured, lying on the ground as River and Zander knelt beside them, trying to help.

"Boss, some bastards came here and tried to kill us," Myles replied, his tone much calmer than it had been moments before when he had threatened the people in the area to stay where they were.

"This bastard I'm holding hostage came here yesterday afternoon to cause trouble. We did what we were supposed to do, and then he brought his uncles to deal with us today."

"Someone unhappy with the way things are going?" Vicente frowned at the blue-haired young man with a gun pointed at the back of his head.

Brody was sweating, fearing for his life. But seeing the support his enemies had received, he couldn't help but tease. "Are you counting on this person? He won't save you from death, you bastard! After what you did to my uncle..."

As Brody spoke, the dozens of people in River's tavern watched as a bluish bolt of lightning shot out of one of Vicente's fingers and struck that young man.

In the next moment, Brody's eyes rolled back, and foam formed in his mouth as he fell to the ground, unconscious.

"I hate people like him," Vicente said as he slapped one hand against the other.

"Are there any other enemies in the area, Myles?" One of the men next to Vicente, also wearing a mask, asked.

"No, they all left fearing me because of this one," Myler said as he holstered his gun and pointed a finger at the young man on the ground.

While his men spoke to Myles, Vicente crouched beside one of the two badly wounded men.

Both had suffered at the hands of Brody's uncles in the moments since the bar fight.

One had significant injuries to his abdomen, with several purple marks on such a part of his body.

The other had a few broken bones, especially one of his arms, which was in an unnatural form while he moaned in pain.

"How are you? Can you understand me?" He asked, looking at one of them but close to both.

One of them continued to moan in pain, his eyes closed. But the other was aware enough of what was happening around them to say. "Boss... Unfortunately, we are not strong enough against Acolytes."

"Hmm, don't worry about it. I'll send you to a doctor and solve this problem." Vicente said as he stood up and walked to the tavern door.

He stopped next to one of the men and said, "Take care of this place for now. When the others arrive, get some of them to take these two to a doctor."

"All right. But what do you want to do for the next hour?" The masked man asked.

Vicente looked at the people around him and shouted, "Listen to me. If those responsible for this incident come back here, tell them I will kill this fool if they dare to touch my men".

Vicente paused for a moment and let Brody's body float towards him while a Red Pentagon appeared in front of his hands.

He had already hidden metals all over the young man's body, but no one there knew how he was doing it.

Gulp!

Seeing such a spectacular power, the people there felt nervous as Vicente looked at them.

"If anyone here dares to take revenge on my men for doing their job, they will have trouble with my entire group."

With these words, Vicente left the place with Myles and quickly headed to the headquarters of his family.

His place where he would act as a criminal was already ready and operational. Several of his men were already living and training in this second property of Vicente's.

"Boss, what should we do? These people are going to cause trouble for our group." Myles said when they were already in a carriage.

Vicente answered him. "Let's see who is behind this fool. Since they want to fight with us, let's take everything they have."

"You want to steal his family?" Myles looked curiously at Brody's unconscious body.

Vicente had big plans for robberies, assaults, etc. But just as he hadn't robbed small homes or businesses on Earth, he had no intention of doing so in the Polaris Realm.

On Earth, he would rather rob a bank than a rich person's store or home.

On the other hand, in the Polar Realm, he wanted to rob the homes of nobles, not ordinary people. After all, robbery involved many risks, and he preferred not to take risks for small prizes.

But if Brody's family was so irrational as to treat his men this way, then Vicente thought he had to punish them by stealing what they had most precious, their coins!

Every magician depended on their coins and resources more than people on Earth depended on money.

But in this world, there were no reliable institutions where one could place one's wealth, so everyone kept their coins and valuable possessions either with them or in their homes.

Vicente had studied this society since entering the Academy of Stars, and he knew that every magician's home would have safes containing the family's most important possessions.

He planned to rob the Peters family for revenge!

"Actions have effects, Myles. They acted against my men. Now, I'll act against this family's things. It's not unfair." Vicente commented.

"But won't that be difficult? I mean, our plans for the Irwin family are developing bit by bit. How are we going to pull off two robberies simultaneously? Won't that be dangerous?"

"Simultaneously?" Vicente laughed. "Myles, robbing the Irwin family will be difficult because they are a noble family. Their residence must have more advanced security measures than that fool's family.

Breaking into an ordinary house is not that difficult."

The same was true on Earth. Breaking into a bank was infinitely more complex than breaking into a house.

A bank had a lot of resources and was made to protect them from people like Vicente. But ordinary houses didn't have the same purpose, and someone with the will to break into one could easily do so.

For a known criminal like Vicente, breaking into this family's house would be as easy as the kidnapping he had done in the village before killing his father's former subordinate!

Chapter 78 Night Action?

As Vicente left, the rest of his men, who were on duty to help the group in case of need, arrived at Zander's tavern.

There, they quickly picked up the two injured men and took them to a local medical clinic.

In the meantime, no further trouble occurred. Several of the spectators from the earlier "show" had left, and the pace in the tavern had returned to normal.

Meanwhile, Jax's emissaries had already discovered that Brody had been taken by someone behind the group responsible for the men guarding Zander's tavern.

...

"Damn it! Who do these brats think they are?" Jax exclaimed as one of his men, the one who told him what had just happened.

Not only had he been humiliated by an Intermediate Apprentice and forced to retreat, but now his nephew was in the hands of his enemies. If he acted against the people in that tavern, he would have to explain Brody's death to his older sister!

As he watched her son almost explode with rage, an old woman with white hair and an orange gem on her forehead said in a low voice. "Jax, you have to handle this."

"I know, mama. I'm gonna fix it! I'm going to get those bastards and torture them for this!" Jax growled as his little brother stood next to their mother, very upset about the whole thing.

"First, you need to think straight, Jax." The old woman said with a sigh.

Unfortunately, the man had inherited his father's intelligence. In fact, half the family had inherited the aggressiveness of the patriarch of this family.

Maybe things would be better for the Peters family if they were more like her.

But unable to do much about her family members' genes, Amina could only do damage control to keep her family's best hope alive.

"This tavern can't afford to hire its own guards. They must have hired some upstart mercenary group. So go to the mercenary guild and look for information about them. I believe we will find the group behind little Brody's kidnapping." She instructed, thinking about targeting the right people.

If they went after River and Zander, they would only incite the men behind the guards in the tavern to do the worst to Brody.

But by going after the real people responsible for all of this, they could find ways to resolve this situation.

Her youngest son agreed as he stood up. "I'll take care of it, mama. If all goes well, we can have Brody back by the end of the night."

"Hmm, you do that." She looked at the level 1 Acolyte, the most like her in the whole family.

She looked at Jax and said, "You must get little Brody back alive, no matter what. Without him, we'll always be lowly miners. But if he has a chance to grow, we can eventually raise the family's importance."

"I know. I'll do my best." Jax replied, knowing Brody's importance.

The Peters family was in the mining business. They ran a small mine near Millfall, working for a noble family that owned the area.

But even though they didn't own their land, this family had a lot of potentials to work in the area. Not every noble family exploited the labor of others without giving opportunities and rewards to their contractors.

Like this family, some workers had opportunities to grow and become rich if they provided quality services.

In this case, if they improved their results, they would receive larger and larger shares of what they produced in their mines.

It would not be impossible for them to build their own mining business and even become nobles one day due to the power they could have through their success!

But to do that, they needed someone talented who could use the family's spells to the fullest, increase production, and more. To do that, this one had to be talented enough to get stronger without the family having to go bankrupt to raise them!

Magicians had no limit to their level. One would go as far as one could, given their abilities, luck, etc.

But some produced results with little investment, and others needed rivers of resources to grow.

In the Peters family, most people fell into the second case, and it would be impossible for the family to produce a single Mage, even considering all they produced.

But Brody was different. With him, the matriarch hoped her family would finally raise someone capable of being more than an Acolyte!

Knowing the importance of his nephew, Jax would soon leave the day-to-day matters he was dealing with to solve the situation of the arrogant blue-haired young man.

...

Late at night in Millfall, Jax's younger brother returned from his hours of searching the local mercenary guild.

Meeting his worried sister, mother, and Jax, he brought better news to ease the family's tensions.

"I managed to find out the group behind these people! They are a newly formed group based in an estate..." He quickly revealed the information he had gathered at the guild, talking about the Fuller family's headquarters.

In the Seidel Kingdom, one could not have a large group because it was against royal laws.

However, there were exceptions. For example, a group of mercenaries was not considered an unauthorized army but rather a group of people acting together.

Mercenary groups in the Seidel Kingdom could exist and have up to 10 members and could operate in the cities and lands of the kingdom.

Vicente had created the mercenary group behind the men who guarded the two taverns he protected to protect his group legally.

This served to draw the attention of offended potential enemies away from his group's customers but also to keep the royal forces from suspecting that these people were part of an unauthorized army.

As they figured out where to find their enemies, the core of this family soon discussed how to deal with these bold people who dared to threaten them even without Acolytes at their side.

While they were discussing it in Jax's office on the house's second floor, someone dressed in black landed on the roof.

As he lay on the roof of that house, he closed his eyes and made a Red Pentagram appear in one of his hands, feeling what metals were there.

'Hmm, there are some coins here.' He felt a great weight on his conscience as he noticed something underground in this property.

He stopped using his abilities when he realized where he should go and opened his eyes again, looking at the street next to the house.

He nodded in the direction of a tree, and soon after, he entered the chimney of that house!

Chapter 79 Magical Agreement?

As he entered through the house's chimney, Vicente heard the voices of these people, Acolytes in general.

From the position of metallic objects such as coins around the house and where the voices came from, he could feel exactly where each person was. At the same time, he could sense how strong they were by the mana disturbance around their bodies, which vibrated with the metallic objects near them.

Vicente's magnetic ability was sharp. It could tell him what the metallic objects within his range 'felt.' Thus, he knew how many and how strong the people there were.

Items with and without the ability to contain mana had a very similar function in terms of absorbing mana. Both sponged mana that struck them, but some kept the mana within themselves while the others returned it to nature.

Coins were of the second type, and when they received mana that leaked from magicians' bodies, they absorbed it and then lost it over time.

Noticing the different metallic objects on these people, Vicente could tell the difference between the mana of each person talking about their group.

Some had colder mana, others warmer mana, which were like fingerprints, individual and unique to each person.

At the Academy of Stars, Vicente had learned that even twins emitted different mana. Using his ability to sense this property, he learned this in practice.

Noticing how many there were, he walked slowly down the chimney that led to a large living room on the mansion's second floor.

When he quietly reached the second floor of the residence, he used metal around his body to hold himself upside down and looked through the unlit fireplace into that living room.

There was no one in the room at the moment, but there was a hallway in Vicente's view where some lamps were lit, and two servants were standing by, waiting.

From the door in front of these servants, he could sense the people talking.

He went on into the fireplace, raising himself a little to hide his head.

'24... 23... 22...'

He closed his eyes and continued counting, waiting for the moment to act.

...

Outside the house, some of the men from Vicente's group were standing on the street corners, getting ready.

Rory stood with these men, mentally counting down to the moment of attack.

'15... 14...' He kept his eyes closed, feeling a little nervous.

The armed men, their identities protected by masks, looked at that place and sweated coldly, anxious because this was their first time acting like this.

But considering that they would soon be acting against nobles, this was a good test for them!

"One!" Rory opened his eyes and said, making his men swallow their saliva and follow Vicente's earlier orders.

Sss!

Flames came out of Rory's hands as these men helped him point in the direction of the devices that had been placed around the estate earlier.

...

'Zero!'

BOOM!

When Vicente finished counting, a moment passed, and then a huge explosion erupted, shaking the entire residence.

The people there heard the loud boom and put their hands to their ears, while the stronger ones realized that the noise and shaking had been caused by something too close to them.

"Enemy attack!" Jax shouted as he rose from his seat and ran out of the residence.

The women were nervous when they heard this. Still, like magicians who had faced difficult situations before, they circulated mana around their bodies, raising their defenses.

While the people there ran out to see what the problem was and to defend the place, Vicente took advantage of the general distraction. He came out of the chimney, eventually standing in the main room of the place.

He paused for a moment and felt the structure of this residence, feeling the 3D map of this house appear in his mind due to the number of metals used in the construction of the house.

Seeing the way to the place where most of the metals of this residence were, Vicente didn't hesitate any more and moved silently towards his goal.

When he came to a locked door, his Red Pentagram appeared in front of his right hand. Soon after, Vicente felt the lock's components on this wooden door and moved them to the open position.

A low metallic sound came from the door. Noticing that no one was around, Vicente opened it. He entered shortly after, manipulating the traps' metal objects there so they wouldn't move.

He quickly descended a flight of stairs and came face to face with a small room of about 10 square meters, with several side cabinets similar to a closet.

But there were no clothes inside them, but several coins of different types, jewelry, crystals, and documents!

Seeing this, Vicente smiled, grabbed a bag, and quickly collected the most valuable items for himself and his group.

As he did so, he noticed what was written on one of the documents there.

[Magical Mining Agreement...]

He saw the beginning of an agreement between this family and a local noble house regarding mining rights and the provision of services by this family to that noble house.

'This family is mining for the Symons?' He was impressed because the family in question was the only noble house of a Viscount in this area of Millfall!

Thinking about it, Vicente couldn't help but be interested.

'If I steal these concessions, they will be useless to me. But if I trade with this family, I can legally take part in their business!

In Polaris Realm, Magical Agreements were things of the utmost importance. Not only did they obligate both parties to fulfill the contract, but they could also be used as property titles.

If party 'A' signed a Magical Agreement with party 'B' to exploit a mine, for example, that also functioned as 'ownership' of the right to exploit that mine.

Anyone with the appropriate papers could claim rights to the exploitation of the mine and act as if they were the actual owners of that agreement.

Why is this? The person possessing the papers in question could destroy the Magical Agreement, thereby nullifying that agreement. By doing so, one could end a pact that may have been in place for decades and, by doing so, present a better option to the other side of the treaty, such as House Symons.

In that case, a family like Peters would be in big trouble!

Vicente knew that if he stole those papers, the chances of Viscount Symons negotiating with him would be very slim. But if he could get the Peters family to hand them over to him, everything would be different.

He smiled and left the papers there, quickly walking back the way he had come.

With 2 cloth bags full of items, he used the distraction created by his staff to leave this place, having closed the door of this secret underground room before leaving.

While climbing up the chimney, someone suddenly stopped on top of that place, and Vicente stopped climbing it. He manipulated some of the metals on his body to form a metal box that covered his whole body inside that dark tunnel.

'That was close!' He shouted in his mind while maintaining his position.

Chapter 80 What Really Matters?

When he stopped in the metal box in the house's chimney, Vicente almost stopped breathing, keeping as much of his body still as possible to avoid attracting attention.

After 5 minutes there, he realized that no one had found him, but he decided to stay still for a while to make sure his enemies wouldn't notice him.

This robbery aimed to harm the family that had dared to act against his group. But if he were caught or seen stealing, he would have several problems.

As long as no one had proof of what he had done there, Vicente could not be publicly implicated by the royal forces. But if he was seen leaving this place, he would be immediately recognized as a criminal and could soon have a bounty on his head.

Criminals in the Seidel Kingdom had bounties on their heads, and occasionally, fights between bounty hunters or even other criminals interested in those bounties would make news in the kingdom.

At the same time, the royal forces would publicly pursue people with bounties on their heads, which could greatly hinder his operations.

'I will stay here until dawn. By then, this family's group will have lowered their guard over this place, and I can leave unnoticed.' He thought as he settled into the metal box.

...

Meanwhile, Rory's group had already left the area around the Peters' residence, having split up and scattered to different parts of the city.

Their plan was simple. Attack the area around the Peters family, create a scene to justify the resources Vicente would steal, while he would have space to take what he wanted and leave.

It was not in their plans to fight the people of the Peters family, so after the attack, everyone fled the area without looking back.

Amidst this, the men of the small Peters family did not pursue the fleeing opponents, worried about their fallen defenses and the possibility of further attacks.

In a society where one had to protect one's wealth, it was not so easy to have their home attacked like this!

Everyone in Brody's house was on alert, surrounding the place as the security perimeter of his property was destroyed.

"Shit! Who dares?" Jax shouted loudly as the mana around him glowed brightly.

"Could it be the same ones behind Brody?" The young man's mother raised the possibility, causing her brothers to furrow their brows in concern.

It was not impossible!

In this place, people used fire to put out the fire, and revenge was the most common thing one could see in a world where people could have a lot of individual power.

"If it's them, I'll kill every last one of this bunch of scumbags!" Jax yelled, saliva flying from his mouth.

"Brother, let's wait until things calm down and go to that place. Let's get Brody back and take out this little group!" Jax's younger brother suggested as he scanned the area for enemies.

Their group would scour the area for the next hour, noting no enemies nearby.

After establishing a security perimeter, Jax would soon head out with some of the family's subordinates to Vicente's group headquarters.

Only the women and a few servants would remain in that residence, while Vicente would remain in his place, quietly waiting for the best time to leave without attracting attention.

...

Two hours after the attack on the Peters family began, a good part of Vicente's group had returned to the Fuller family's headquarters.

It was there that they began to worry about Vicente's situation.

"Rory, what do we do? What if the enemy has captured the boss?" One of the young men most uncomfortable with Vicente's delay asked worriedly.

In the entrance hall of this residence, which was very similar to the entrance of an ordinary guild, with several tables and places to sit and talk around the entrance, almost all of the men of this group were there now.

Rory had a worried look on his face, but he knew his friend better than anyone else there.

"Guys, let's wait until dawn before we worry. Right now, he might be hiding to avoid trouble. So let's not get desperate."

One of the men stood up and snarled. "Rory, why did we go against this family? Just for those brothers who own a tavern? Why risk ourselves for so little?"

Rory clenched his fists when he heard such nonsense. "Are you an idiot?" He shouted in the man's direction, unable to believe that something as basic as this could be questioned by his men.

"Does anyone else here still not understand why we are acting today?" He asked, causing everyone to stare at him in silence, some annoyed because they also thought like that man.

Rory said disappointedly. "Idiots... We didn't act tonight for the sake of two of our clients. We acted for the sake of the Fuller family, for the sake of our territory!"

Every facility under our protection is an extension of the Fuller family's territory! What would happen if we did not do our best to ensure the safety of our own domain?"

Some frowned and opened their mouths as they realized the true motivation behind these actions.

This was no simple revenge by Vicente on behalf of his injured men nor to protect their clients. This was their group shouting to various local business owners like River and Zander that they would defend their territory and that there were advantages to being under their protection!

Even if no one knew about the Peters' robbery after today, as long as Zander's place was more secure, they would be able to draw the attention of other establishments in the area they were in!

Explaining this to his people, Rory managed to get some of them to understand what they were doing until a shout came from outside the building.

"Motherfuckers, give me back my nephew, or I'll destroy this place!" Jax's voice reached the ears of the people from the Fuller family, causing them to quickly put aside their previous concerns and worry about an enemy attack.

"Damn it!" Rory muttered before ordering his men. "Position yourselves. Shoot anyone who crosses the security perimeter!"

With that, the people there ran to their positions while Rory went to a balcony on the second floor of the building.

When he got there, he saw Jax's group already surrounding the building.

Rory wore a mask, but he could see Jax and this person's men very well.

"If you come closer than 10 meters around this property, we will kill your nephew!" He said in a thicker tone, using mana to change his voice.

"Brat, don't think you can threaten me. I surrounded this place and will not allow you to leave until my nephew is released!" Jax said, knowing he had to be careful as Brody's life was worth a lot.

"Were you the ones who attacked my property earlier?" Jax's brother asked, trying to extract a confession.

"I don't know what you're talking about. Were you attacked? Tsk, that's too bad, but judging by how arrogant you are, there must be many suspects behind this, right?" Rory moved away from the responsibility of this from his group, knowing Vicente's plans.