

THE DAY THE WRONG MAN WAS PROVOKED

The entire terminal froze the moment Steward James Leonard stepped inside.

The old man's sharp eyes scanned the area, and when they landed on Ethan, looking at how his arm twisted behind his back by a rough policeman—his expression changed instantly.

"Master Ward...?"

His voice cracked in disbelief.

Even the policemen holding Ethan shifted uneasily. Something about the old man's presence didn't just demand respect... it commanded it. ²

Steward Leonard hurried forward with surprising speed for someone his age. His long coat flared behind him as the two towering enforcers followed, their heavy steps echoing through the silent terminal like warning bells. Every guard instinctively stepped aside for them.

Ethan pulled his arm from the officer's grip and pushed the man back—not violently, just firmly, clearly done with being handled like trash. ¹

Steward Leonard reached him first. ²

He immediately dusted Ethan's blazer, straightened his collar, and checked his wrist for marks as if inspecting royalty.

His voice trembled with anger and worry. ¹

"Master Ward, did they harm you? Who dared to lay a hand on you?" ¹

Ethan's jaw tightened. "I'm alright. They were doing their job... until someone decided to play hero."

Caleb Stone stiffened. 

Even beaten by fear, he tried clinging to arrogance. He stepped forward, though his voice shook.

"You... you're all being fooled!" he shouted at Steward Leonard. "This nobody used fraud to book a Special Services flight! He's broke! He can't afford anything! I am very certain that he hacked the system!" 

"He's accusing me again, This bastard is accusing me again." Ethan said quietly, the coldness in his voice was like a blade. 

Ethan stepped forward as if he might grab Caleb and rearrange his face with a punch.

But Steward Leonard raised a gentle hand, stopping him with respect and firmness. 

"Young Master," he said calmly, "please permit me." 

There was zero hesitation in his tone. 

"I know how to discipline a man who oversteps his boundaries."

Before Caleb could blink, the old man moved. 

A single, fluid step. 

A pivot of his waist.

Then—

CRACK. 1

Steward Leonard's foot smashed into Caleb's face with the precision of a trained master.

Caleb hung in the air for a fraction of a second before crumpling like a sack of broken pride. 2

The crowd gasped.

A policeman stepped forward instinctively. 1

"S-Sir, the law enforcement is right in front of you. You can't—"

His colleague grabbed his arm sharply. 1

"Hey, what do you think you are doing. Look at their badges. If you interfere, your career is finished." his colleague whispered.

The first officer froze instantly. 1

Steward Leonard moved again—sharp, controlled, merciless. 2

"You dare insult Young Master Ward?"

His foot crashed into Caleb's stomach.

Caleb folded, coughing violently.

Again.

And again.

Until—

"Stop."

Ethan's voice wasn't loud, but it cut through the air like a command carved in stone.

Steward Leonard halted immediately and bowed. 

"As you command young master."

Caleb lay shivering on the ground, his cheek was purple and swollen. Desperation forced his words out.

"H-He committed fraud!" he choked. "Arrest him! I'm a CEO! I demand an investigation! For the maintenance of law and order. I promise you all, that man there used a fake badge!" 

Steward Leonard's eyelid twitched dangerously.

Ethan raised a hand.

"Let him speak. He's already destroyed himself."

The airport manager—a sweating man in a navy suit—ran in with two supervisors after he recieved reports about the altercation in the terminal. 

He stopped immediately when he saw Steward Leonard. 

"M-Mr. Leonard! Sir! What happened here? We received reports—" 

Caleb pointed with trembling fury.

"Him! That man! Arrest him! The badge is fake! I swear it!"

Steward Leonard snapped, "Silence."

The airport manager swallowed hard and turned to Ethan. 

"Sir... may I see your badge for verification?" 

Ethan handed it to him without speaking.

The manager scanned it. 

A soft beep.

Then the screen flashed bright green.

His face drained of color.

"This badge is genuine. It was issued under direct request from one of the highest-ranked families in the continent." 

Caleb's jaw dropped.

Steward Leonard placed his hands behind his back. 

"From the Xavier Group."

"Yes," the manager confirmed immediately. "It was processed under Xavier Group executive authorization." 

Silence slammed over the terminal.

A policeman whispered, "He's... from that Xavier Group?"

His partner replied, "No wonder the terminal shut down..." 

Caleb Stone couldn't believe his ears when he heard that Ethan had

some affiliations with the Xavier group.

How foolish of him to harass Ethan. 1

Ethan stepped forward, voice steady. 1

"Officers."

Both policemen snapped to attention.

"I want Caleb Stone arrested for filing false accusations with intent to damage my name and personality." 2

"Yes, sir!" they answered simultaneously.

They grabbed Caleb by the arms.

"You can't arrest me!" Caleb shouted. "I have a major conference in Longham province! I'm the keynote speaker—you can't do this!"

Ethan stepped closer, his eyes colder than ice. 1

"You won't be attending it."

Caleb's breath caught.

"Y-You can't stop me." 1

Ethan raised an eyebrow.

"Watch me." 2

He turned to Steward Leonard. 1

"Steward Leonard." 1

"Yes young master."

"Freeze all of this mans passports. Domestic and international. For three good years." 1

A cold wave passed through every staff member present.

The airport manager stuttered, "I'll—I'll execute it now, sir." He didn't wait for steward Lee so relate the directive to him. 3

Instantly the airport manager bmade a direct call. 1

Within thirty seconds: 3

Caleb Stone's travel privileges were revoked. 1

His ID was frozen. 2

His visas were suspended. 1

His exit rights were blocked.

Caleb's body trembled violently as the officers dragged him away. 2

"No! NO! THIS IS ILLEGAL!" he screamed. "ETHAN WARD, I SWEAR YOU'LL—" 4

His voice faded down the corridor as the policemen pulled him out of sight.

Everyone turned to look at Ethan with awe and fear. 3

Steward Leonard swept his gaze across the staff. 1

"No one speaks of what happened here. Not a word."

The manager nodded rapidly.

"Y-Yes, sir. Nothing happened."

The staff chorused the same. 1

The enforcers lifted Ethan's bag.

A path opened toward the private jet like a red carpet.

Ethan walked forward, his expression was unreadable but dignified. 1

When he stepped onto the jet's staircase, every staff member bowed.

The pilots bowed.

The engineers bowed.

The cabin crew bowed. 1

A stewardess approached, voice soft with respect.

"Welcome aboard, Young Master Ethan. The Xavier Family has been expecting you." 2

Ethan paused at the doorway of the luxurious jet...

And the world he thought he had lost forever opened before him yet again. 1

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