

An Understated Dominance (Dustin Rhys)

Chapter 2697

At Sadie’s signal, two soldiers stepped forward to carry out her orders.

“W-Wait…” Lauren stammered. She quickly raised her hands and put on a placating smile. “Let’s talk this through like civilized people. No need to get physical.”

“What? Now you want to talk?” Sadie scoffed. “Done with your pretense?”

“I was just messing around earlier. Don’t take it personally. Ask me anything, and I’ll tell you everything I know.” Lauren immediately chose to give in.

“Don’t even think about playing games with me,” Sadie warned. “If you lie to me, I swear you’ll regret it.”

“Relax. I won’t lie,” Lauren said with an ingratiating smile. “I’m as straight as an arrow.”

Sadie frowned slightly but didn’t press further. Something about Lauren’s behavior didn’t sit right with her. One moment she was acting clueless, the next she was oddly cooperative. It was hard to tell what she was up to.

“Alright then. Tell me. Do you know Callan Banks?” Grace asked coolly.

“Do I know him? Of course, I do.” Lauren nodded eagerly. “We met online and hung out just a few days ago. Why?”

“He contracted the plague and nearly died,” Grace said flatly. “He claims you were the one who infected him. Care to explain?”

“What? I infected him with the plague?” Lauren looked stunned.

Then, she quickly denied it, “Don’t listen to his nonsense! Why would I do something like that? I don’t even know anything about the plague. He’s trying to frame me.”

“Frame you?” Grace frowned slightly. “ Even now, you still won’t tell the truth? You think you can get away with this?”

“I swear on my life that every word I’m telling you is the truth,” Lauren said earnestly. “Don’t let Callan fool you. Sure, he looks like some harmless guy, but he’s got a dark side to him.

“After we met in person, I knew something was off about him, so I tried to break things off clean. But the creep kept pestering me and refused to leave me alone. I got so fed up that I beat him up. That’s why he’s holding a grudge and trying to smear my name.”

“You seriously expect us to believe a woman like you could take down a grown man?” Sadie asked coldly.

“I’ve practiced martial arts before. Beating up Callan was child’s play. I could even take on several men his size without breaking a sweat,” Lauren replied confidently.

“I don’t care if you could beat Callan in a fight, but your story doesn’t add up,” Grace said coolly.

She continued, “We tracked Callan’s movements before he got infected. You were the only person he came into contact with during that period.

“He started showing symptoms the very next day after meeting you. And you’re telling me you had no idea what was happening?

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“Second, we looked into your background. You joined Nexology and have been actively working with them. Everywhere you’ve been, an outbreak followed. Don’t try to tell me that’s just a coincidence.

“And finally, you’ve been so calm since we brought you in. You don’t look panicked, as if you’ve already come to terms with whatever is coming. Most women would be scared out of their minds right now, but not you.

“I know you’re stalling, but it won’t get you anywhere. Keep playing dumb if you want, but I’ve got other ways to get answers from you. I don’t like threatening other women, but innocent lives are on the line. If that means I have to be the bad guy, then so be it.”

Grace didn’t raise her voice, but the calm in her tone made it more intimidating than any outburst.

“You’ve got a lot of theories, but no proof,” Lauren shot back. “Look, if I’m the one spreading this plague, then why am I perfectly fine while everyone else is dying? Look at me. Do I look sick to you?”

“That’s exactly what bothers me,” Grace said. “Either you have the antidote, or you’ve developed immunity to whatever this plague is.”

Lauren frowned. “Look, if you’re going to accuse me of spreading this plague, you need evidence. You can’t just throw around claims like that based on your own assumptions.”

“In the past, I would have been patient enough to gather evidence before bringing you to justice. But things are different now. I don’t have time to waste on games.

“I’m running out of patience, so I suggest you start cooperating. Otherwise, things are going to get unpleasant,” Grace replied as her expression hardened.

“There’s no use trying to talk sense into her, Ms. Linsor,” Sadie said. “Remnants of the Skull Covenant like her are as stubborn as rocks. If you want answers, you’ll have to use force.”

She had had enough. Every word Lauren spoke sounded like a lie to her.

“Fine. No need to get violent. You think someone as fragile as me can handle that?” Lauren said with a sour look. “You suspect me of spreading the plague, right? Fine. I admit it. Take me to whoever’s in charge, and I’ll confess everything.”

“She is in charge,” Sadie snapped. “ Whatever you have to say, say it to her.”

“No way! You’re actually the one in charge here?” Lauren gave Grace a slow once-over, then suddenly broke into a wicked smile.

She continued, “I’ve been turning over every stone looking for you, and here you are, right in front of me. I was ready to put on quite the performance, but it turns out I don’t need to.”

As soon as the words left her mouth, the chains binding her snapped loose on their own. Then, a scarlet mist suddenly erupted from within her body.