

Michael sighed, "Nancy, I regretted it. What grandpa and I did was just plain stupid! Let's not talk about this first. I'll tell you more once we get out of here."

Though Nancy did not believe his words, it was no doubt an opportunity for her to run away.

She decided to follow Michael and escaped from the side door of the house.

They hopped onto a car, which Michael had prepared earlier, and left the residence.

While they were driving on the road, Nancy said, "Now you can tell me why do you want to save me?"

Michael put on an angry face. "Do you know what Mance instructed grandpa to do again? He wants to take over the Whiteridge tourist destination development project from you, and our grandpa foolishly agreed to his request."

He continued, "It's clear that Mance is an evil man. He wants to take over the tourist destination development project and weaken the Hinton family. I'd rather burn the whole house down than give him the Hinton family!"

"What?" Nancy exploded with rage. "Mance and his wishful thinking! The contract for the Whiteridge project would end tomorrow, and I'll

be receiving the payment. If he comes in and takes over now, he's just enjoying the fruit of our labor! Oh no, Michael! We have to go back. The contract and my stamp are still at the Hinton residence. If grandpa finds them, he will hand them over to Mance."

Michael responded, "Don't worry, everything is under control. I've brought the contract and your stamp along when we left."

Nancy was relieved to hear that. "Thank God. Come, let's go and visit the site of the Whiteridge project. I'll discuss with the person-in-charge, Sofia, to see if we can add another clause to the contract to make sure we receive the payment by today."

Michael agreed. "Let's go."

...

After sending Dawn to Linton Group, Zeke immediately rushed to the Hinton residence in Riverdale.

He was not sure if Nancy's condition was any better than that of Dawn's.

Besides Dawn, Nancy was also Lacey's closest friend.

If anything happened to her, Lacey would

definitely cry her eyes out.

For the sake of his wife, he must make sure Nancy was safe.

He received a call from Lone Wolf when he was on his way.

Lone Wolf said, "Bro, we retrieved a text message from Mance. He ordered Michael to kill Nancy and snatch the Whiteridge project from her."

Ever since Mance initiated his big plan, Zeke had ordered Lone Wolf to monitor all his communication.

It was not easy because Mance's mobile phone had been modified. His text messages were all heavily coded, making it hard for others to crack.

Fortunately, Michael's mobile phone was just an ordinary one, and he would not be able to read his encrypted messages. This was why Mance had no choice but to send him a regular text message, and this was how Lone Wolf managed to obtain the message.

"Damn it." Zeke gritted his teeth. "That man doesn't mind killing someone just to get his hands on Linton Group!"

Lone Wolf responded, "Calm down, bro. I've deployed someone to monitor Michael's movements. So far, he has yet to harm Nancy. He just took her away from the Hinton residence, and they are heading to the west on the 302."

Zeke nodded. "Okay, continue to keep an eye on him. I'm on my way to the 302 now."

Zeke revved up his engine and rushed toward the 302.

In less than 20 minutes, Zeke found Michael's car.

He sped up, overtook his car, and drifted his car to stop Michael from continuing his journey.

Michael was nervous because he was about to kill his cousin, so he did not notice Zeke's car in front of him. He failed to hit the brakes and smashed into the car.

Zeke's face fell.

His car was not just any ordinary Santana!

This was the car he had used to ferry his wife for more than a decade! An old faithful of the Hinton family!

He had taken good care of this vehicle, and

someone just rammed into his car like it did not matter?



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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He hopped down from the car and rushed up to Michael in anger.

Michael and Nancy also got down from the car.

The moment Michael noticed Zeke, he immediately became alert.

*Damn it! This fellow is going to ruin my plan! Did he find out about our plan?*

Michael regained his composure. "Zeke, what the hell? Do you even know how to drive? Are you..."

*Slap!*

Zeke went up and gave him a tight slap. "B\*stard! She's your cousin! How could you want to kill her?"

Michael was dumbfounded.

*F\*\*k! He knew it! Zeke knew I'm going to kill Nancy! Oh, crap.*

Nancy got annoyed and pushed Zeke away. "What the hell is wrong with you? First, you blocked our way, and now you attacked him?"

Michael was relieved to see this turn of events.

Since there had always been bad blood

between the two, Nancy would definitely not believe what Zeke said.

Zeke explained, "Nancy, why are you still defending him? He wants to kill you!"

Michael shot an angry glance at him. "Mind your words." "Zeke, I know you hate her very much and you're always trying to make her life difficult. But you can't take revenge by making up stories about me! We're in a hurry to take care of a crisis, yet you appeared and got in our way. Do you know the losses she has to bear if things spiral out of control?"

Michael was certain that Nancy would not believe Zeke.

He was Nancy's cousin, after all. Despite the minor disagreements they had in the past, they were still family.

Nancy would never believe that his cousin would kill her.

Nancy responded in anger, "Zeke, get lost now! I need to attend to an urgent matter! If you keep blocking us, not only will I suffer a significant financial loss, but the entire Linton Group will also be affected by it."

Zeke was speechless. "Are you stupid, bimbo? Are you still believing the nonsense Michael

told you?"

Michael's frustration kicked in, and he pushed Zeke. "Get lost! Stop getting in our way. I'll sue you for defamation if you keep on tarnishing my reputation."

Of course, Zeke would not allow Michael to walk all over him. He raised his hand and was about to smack him. "You really don't have any morals at all, do you? Let me teach you a lesson."

Just before his hand landed on Michael, Nancy went up and stood between the two men. "How dare you? If you dare to hit me, I'll get Lacey to divorce you!"

Zeke was stuck in an awkward position now.

Nancy gave Zeke a killer stare. She then turned around and told Michael, "Come on, let's go! He's just a petty man. Ignore him."

They then returned to their car. Nancy instructed Michael to push Zeke's car to the side before speeding off.

Zeke was about to burst from rage. "Go to hell, stupid b\*tch. With your level of intelligence, I find it hard to believe that you and my wife are close friends. I guess you need to be taught a lesson! I'm done with this shit!"



Nancy kept asking Michael to drive faster even though there were not many vehicles on the road now.

When they were approaching Whiteridge, Michael took a left turn all of a sudden and drove into a minor road.

Nancy panicked. "What are you doing? This is not the way to Whiteridge."

Michael responded in annoyance, "We're taking the shortcut."

"Are you sure?" Nancy knitted her brows. "I didn't know there's a shortcut."

Michael continued driving and arrived at a dilapidated bridge. Suddenly, he hit the brakes and stopped the car.

"Get down!" He instructed Nancy.



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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Nancy got even more anxious now. “Why are we stopping here? Come on, let’s get to the Whiteridge project site, right now!”

Michael repeated himself, “Get down the car. Someone will help us deal with Mance. He’s coming to meet us now.”

“What?” Nancy paused for a bit. “Who?” she asked while stepping out of the car.

Michael took out the contract. “Sign this assets transfer agreement.”

“What assets transfer agreement?” Nancy slowly read through the terms and conditions and was taken aback. “You want me to transfer the Whiteridge project to you?”

Michael replied, “Yes.”

Nancy sensed something fishy was going on, so she immediately became alert. “Why should I?”

She shook her head. “Nope, I’ll not sign it. Send me to the Whiteridge project site right now.”

Nancy turned around and was about to get into the car.

Michael got frustrated. He grabbed her wrist and was ready to force her to drop her

signature on the document.

“Ah!”

Nancy was in shock. Michael had finally revealed his true colors.

She tried to pull her hand away but Michael’s grip was too strong.

In the end, she had no choice but to stamp and sign the agreement!

Nancy was hopping mad. “Michael, you a\*shole! Why did I choose to believe you in the first place? You’re really after the Whiteridge project.”

Michael was pleased with the signed agreement. He smiled. “Now that this is done, why don’t you do me another favor?”

“Dream on!” Nancy’s face was dark with dismay. “Just you wait. I’ll not let you off easily! I’ll sue you. I’ll take whatever legal actions to get my rights back!”

Just when she was about to leave in the car, Michael slammed her to the ground. “Where do you think you’re going? We’re not done yet!”

The impact was so strong that Nancy smashed headlong to the ground.

Nancy covered her cheek and looked at him in disbelief. "You... How dare you!"

Michael smiled bitterly.

*What are you so surprised about? Will you be shocked to death if I tell you I'm going to kill you now?*

Nancy knew he would not let her go if she did not do as he said.

She gritted her teeth. "So how do you want me to help you?"

Michael smiled grimly. "Very easy. Mance said he will make me his henchman if I kill you. So you can do me a favor by sacrificing your life!"

Nancy was thunderstruck!

Michael really did think of killing her!

*We're a family! How could he do this do me?*

*Scumbag! Monster!*

*Worse than a beast!*

Nancy clenched her teeth so hard that she almost crushed them.

Michael continued, "Zeke told you that I'm

going to kill you, but you still insist on coming. He's right, you know. You're stupid. What's the point of staying alive if you're so stupid? You should just die!"

"Ah!"

Nancy became even more devastated.

Indeed, Zeke had warned her that this beast was going to kill her.

Yet, she chose to believe this man and ridiculed Zeke!

*Idiot. I'm an idiot. A totally brainless idiot.*

Tears of regret rolled down her cheeks.

Without any hesitation, she gave herself a tight slap on the cheek.

Previously, she ignored Zeke's warning and was almost raped by Mance, and now, the same time happened again.

At that point, Nancy just wanted to die!

Michael took out a dagger. "Alright, Nancy. It's time."

The color drained out of Nancy's face, and she immediately wanted to escape.

Of course, Michael would not give her a chance to run away anymore.

He threw himself at her and pinned her to the ground.

She started cursing him, but Michael was quick enough to cover her mouth.

He gave her a perverse smile. "Do you know that whenever I have sex with other women, I'd always imagine you lying beneath me. Well, too bad. Guess I won't have the chance anymore. But don't you worry. I'll take very good care of your body as soon as I finish you off."

*What? How could this beast say something as disgusting as this? How could a human be so despicable? The Hinton family has raised a pervert!*



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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“Go to hell!” Michael raised his dagger in the air.

Nancy closed her eyes in desperation.

*That's it. That's how my life is going to end. I'll never get the chance to find out who my hero is anymore!*

She waited for some time, but the dagger did not reach her.

Opening her eyes cautiously, she saw a muscular hand grabbing Michael's arm to stop the dagger from stabbing her. Her eyes glistened with hope.

Nancy continued to look up and was surprised to see Zeke.

Zeke had come to her rescue!

Never in a million years did she think the man, whom she constantly looked down upon and ridiculed, was the person who would save her life.

She was flustered with mixed emotions, and her tears gushed down even more uncontrollably.

Zeke said, “I'll rescue you if you call me daddy.”

“Daddy!” Nancy said it without hesitation since

her life was at stake.

That suddenly rendered Zeke speechless.

*What a steady response. Uhm, not bad.*

Michael was shocked. He tried to pull his arm away from Zeke but to no avail. Zeke's grip was just too powerful.

Left with no choice, he grabbed the dagger with his other hand!

Upon noticing his action, Zeke immediately kicked Michael on his chin.

That kick sent him flying and spinning 360 degrees in the air. He then crashed directly into the car.

The impact was so strong that the windscreen shattered into pieces.

Zeke helped Nancy up. "You're safe now, my little daughter."

Nancy started crying out loud. "I'm so sorry for doubting you! I feel so stupid to have believed that monster! Zeke, quick! Catch him and send him to the police."

Zeke turned around and looked at Michael.



Michael broke down right away.

It would be the end of him if they sent him to the police.

Even if he were not sentenced to death for murder, his reputation would be tarnished, and he would be remembered as someone who attempted to murder his own cousin.

He endured the pain and crawled into the car. Seeing Zeke and Nancy in front of him, he stepped on the accelerator and tried to ram into them.

“Careful!” Zeke pushed Nancy aside and took a few steps back.

The car brushed against Zeke’s body.

Nancy got nervous. “Come, let’s go get him! He has taken over the Whiteridge project. We have to stop him from causing problems to the site!”

“Get in,” Zeke ordered.

The two of them hopped into the car and chased after Michael.

Michael, who was driving in a panic mode, rang Mance up.

“Mance, the Whiteridge project is mine now, but

I didn't get to kill Nancy. Zeke appeared and rescued her. They're coming after me now."

Mance responded in a deep voice, "Well, it's good that you're the owner of the project now. Since they're following you, just take them for a spin for about 20 minutes. Don't let them get to the project department. I'll send someone to destroy the department now."

"What?" Michael was dumbfounded, "The project is ours now. Why would you do that? We'll have to cover the losses if anything goes wrong now."

Mance explained, "This is called using a sprat to catch a mackerel. This is Riverdale's landmark project, and it is under Linton Group. They have signed the bet-on agreement with the district council. If Linton Group fails to complete the project before the deadline, which is tomorrow, the corporation will have to compensate the district council a large sum of money."

He continued, "Now Linton Group is in a dire financial situation as it doesn't have a healthy cash flow. It'll be forced to declare bankruptcy if it's not able to compensate the district council. As for us, we'll just have to compensate a small amount of money to Linton Group for the breach of contract. This project will be the last straw that breaks the

camel's back!"



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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Michael's eyes brightened. "Mance, I take my hat off to you. Alright, I shall follow your plan."

He gripped the steering wheel tight and started driving in circles to distract Zeke.

After ending the conversation with Michael, Mance immediately made another call.

"Sleek Rat, I have a mission for you."

A minute later, a mysterious fleet of cars departed from Eastend and headed towards Rivermouth.

Riverdale was located near the borders of three districts, and the cars soon arrived at the Whiteridge project department.

A group of men, dressed in black suits with sunglasses on, got down from the cars.

The leader of the bunch looked like a crook. He was Sleek Rat.

Sleek Rat waved his hand. "Come with me."

Under his command, about a hundred men started marching into the project department.

In the meantime, all the construction workers were adding the finishing touches to the site.

Tomorrow was the deadline, so by hook or by crook, they had to complete the project before midnight. If not, their salary would be deducted.

The workers noticed a group of men in black barge into the construction site while they were still working.

They grew alarmed all of a sudden.

Sleek Rat yelled, "Stop what you're doing and get lost. You're all fired!"

The workers got confused. "Who are you to fire us?"

Sleek Rat ordered, "I'm your boss' henchman, and he has given the order to fire all of you."

The worker was not ready to give up. "Our boss is Ms. Nancy Hinton. Who are you? We've never seen you before."

Sleek Rat yelled, "Nancy has transferred the project to her cousin Michael! The new boss Michael wants to fire you. Enough! Now get the hell out of here!"

He then raised his leg and kicked a worker to the ground.

The workers were doubtful. "How is that possible? We've almost completed the project.

How could Ms. Hinton transfer the ownership to you?”

Sleek Rat got impatient and turned to his men. “Beat them up, and get them out of here!”

Some hundred men in black approached the workers and started bashing them. They were all trained fighters who had had a lot of experience.

The brutes attacked the workers so violently that the workers were forced to run away from the project site.

In just a short time, there was no one in the project department anymore.

Sleek Rat burst out laughing. “Destroy everything here. All these buildings do not comply with construction standards. Let’s destroy everything and build from scratch!”

The men started smashing everything in the building.

It was utter chaos in the project department!

Upon receiving updates about this, Sofia, the person in charge of the project, immediately came over.

She broke down after seeing the mess at the

site!

Tomorrow was supposed to be the day for them to hand over the project.

Now that everything was destroyed, how were they going to hand over the project to the district council?

They would have no choice but to compensate the council a large amount of money.

She was aware of Linton Group's financial situation. How were they going to find the money?

If they could not settle the payment, Riverdale District Council had the power to make Linton Group declare bankruptcy and pay up every single cent.

She screamed, "Stop it! Who gave you permission to come here and make a mess?"

Sleek Rat turned around and took a glance at Sofia. His eyes gleamed all of a sudden when he saw her.

What a refined and fairy-like woman!

He did not expect to see such beauty in this deep mountainous area.

Sleek Rat could not resist his sexual urge, so he walked towards Sofia.

“Come here, babe. I’ll let you know what ‘making a mess’ really means.”

Sofia knew what was on his mind, and her face turned pale. She quickly retreated to her office and locked herself in it.

Sleek Rat refused to give up. He grabbed a steel bar beside the office and tried to break the door. “Good job, boys. I’ll have some fun first. Once I’m done, you can have some fun too!”



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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All the men roared with laughter and continued smashing things in the building.

Sofia was frightened to death. She pushed the desk in her office to block the door and gave Zeke a call.

“Zeke, quick! Please bring your men over to the Whiteridge project department. A group of men is destroying the site!”

“Damn it!” Zeke slammed the steering wheel with his hand.

He finally understood Mance’s plan. It was clear that he wanted to delay the project, so Linton Group would be forced to compensate Riverdale District Council.

If Linton Group failed to clear the payment, they would have no choice but to file for bankruptcy.

He immediately consoled her, “Take good care of yourself, Sofia. I’ll be there.”

Sofia responded, “Okay, I will.”

After ending the call, Zeke hit the gas pedal and caught up to Michael.

Seeing Zeke following right behind him, Michael decided to head towards the Whiteridge project department.

He quickly gave Mance a call. "I can't hold Zeke any longer. What should I do now? He'll kill me if he catches me!"

Mance replied, "Don't worry. Meet me at the Whiteridge project department. I'm bringing the council leader to Whiteridge now. That jerk will not have the guts to do anything to you when I'm around."

"Okay." Michael sped up, and in less than 10 minutes, he arrived at the Whiteridge project department.

What disappointed him was that Mance and the council leaders were not there yet.

But many men were seen destroying the site. Mance must have sent them there.

He immediately ran towards Sleek Rat. "Take Zeke down! I'm with Mance."

At this point, Sleek Rat was still trying to break the office door.

The door was smashed into pieces, and he could now enter Sofia's office easily.

Seeing her last line of defense crumbling, Sofia started screaming for help.

Zeke drove into the project site and saw Sleek

Rat.

“A\*shole.” Zeke gritted his teeth. “How dare you touch her!”

He stepped on the gas pedal and drove towards Sleek Rat at once.

Before Sleek Rat could react, he was knocked down by Zeke’s car.

“Ah!”

Sleek Rat screamed and hit the wall, causing the wall to collapse. He then fell hard onto the ground, and blood splattered out of his mouth.

The impact was so strong that it broke his bones, and the bones pierced through his skin. It was a terrifying sight to behold.

Everyone was utterly shocked.

Zeke continued to ram his car into Sleek Rat’s legs, showing no mercy at all.

*What a f\*cking outlaw!*

*Damn!*

“My leg, my leg!” Sleek Rat shrieked in pain. “B\*stard, how dare you hurt me? Boys, attack him!”

The men in black heard Sleek Rat's instruction. They immediately took their weapon and walked towards Zeke.

As they marched towards the office, they roared loudly, causing the color to drain out of Sofia's face.

She immediately stepped out of the office and stood in front of Zeke. "Kiddo, run! They won't dare to do anything to me since I'm a woman. Run and lodge a police report!"

Zeke responded with a grin and tapped on her shoulder, "Sofia, don't worry. I'll take care of them."

Sofia got even more panicked. "But there are so many of them..."

He laughed. "The more the merrier."

In the meantime, Nancy took out her phone. "Zeke, get into the car. We'll knock them down and drive out of here. I'll call grandpa to send help."

Zeke gave her a sullen glare. "Idiot! They're trying to kill you, and you still think they'll send support?"

Nancy's face turned pale right away.

*That's right. Even the Hinton family wants to kill me. It is so naïve for me to think that they would come and rescue us.*

Michael was pleased to see all the men. “Boys, that dude ruined Mance’s plan. Destroy him, and you can go claim your reward from Mance.”

Sleek Rat howled, “He broke all my legs! I want all of you to break his four limbs!”

The project department was in an utter mess, and the atmosphere oozed malice and violence.



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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Zeke pushed Nancy and Sofia into the car.  
“Wait right there. Don’t come out!”

He turned around and charged at the crowd.

In the blink of an eye, Zeke was already surrounded by a large group of men.

His figure disappeared and was nowhere to be found anymore.

Nancy panicked. “What on earth is he doing? Is he still pretending to be a hero at this time?”

Sofia started crying. “Let’s think of something to help him. Look at him, he’s so skinny. They’ll definitely kill him.”

Nancy started the engine. “I’m gonna knock them down!”

Yet, the moment she saw the gears in the manual transmission, she did not know what to do anymore. Nancy only knew how to drive cars with automatic transmission.

She got nervous. “Sofia, do you know how to use manual transmission?”

Sofia looked confused. “What is that?”

Hopelessness was written all over Nancy’s face. It was clear that Sofia did not know how

to drive at all.

The commotion escalated, and Nancy had to do something. "F\*\*k, screw it!"

She shifted to a gear randomly and was ready to drive through the crowd.

But it was the fifth gear. The engine of her car died right away.

"F\*\*k!" She cursed loudly. "I've told you to change to a new car, but you just f\*\*king won't listen! And this is how you're gonna get yourself killed!"

"Nancy, look!" Sofia suddenly looked out of the window and exclaimed.

"What?" Nancy also looked out of the window curiously.

She took a glance and was shocked by what she saw.

*What... What just happened?*

Hundreds of men were all lying on the ground in pain, and they had lost the will to fight.

Zeke, on the other hand, stood still in the middle, looking absolutely valiant and formidable!

There was not a single injury on his body at all!

While they were still figuring out how to drive the car, he managed to take them down single-handedly! Nancy was amazed.

*How could this man be so powerful? Wait a minute. His back looks familiar... That is the back and body shape of my hero! The similarity is almost 90%!*

Nancy started piecing all the puzzles together. Her hero also drove the same old Santana, and Zeke had rescued her several times...

*Oh my God!*

Nancy covered her mouth as a crazy thought flashed across her mind.

Zeke, whom she often called a kept-man, could actually be her hero!

She closed her eyes in desperation.

*How could something as melodramatic as this happen to me?*

All this while, she had imagined her hero would appear in a stately manner and confess his love to her.

Yet, Zeke was her best friend's man!



Just like that, all her hopes and dreams shattered.

*Nope! There is a possibility that Zeke might not be my hero too. I could be wrong. I'll just have to ask him to clarify things.*

Zeke lit a cigarette and puffed at it.

He looked at Michael, who at that point froze like a statue, and smiled at him.

To Michael, that smile was the most terrifying thing he had seen in this world!

He got the shock of life and was ready to run away.

Zeke randomly kicked a stone he found around his feet, and like a bullet, the stone hit the back of Michael's head.

He screamed in pain and collapsed to the ground.

Then, Zeke flicked his finger, and the lit cigarettes dropped straight into Michael's pocket.

Michael, who had yet to fully regain consciousness, was not aware of it.

All of a sudden, an extended Lincoln town car

drove right into the project department.



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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It was Mance who had arrived with the urban planning department director Mr. Garrett Zahner.

Mance stepped into the building and saw Sleek Rat and his men laying on the ground.

A vortex of anger swirled inside him, not because of Zeke but because of how useless Sleek Rat and his men were!

*They could not even defeat a man who lives off his wife? Useless!*

He hopped down from the car and shouted at Zeke. "Hello, we meet again!"

Zeke responded in a cold voice, "Why are you here? Get out."

The more agitated Zeke got, the more delighted Mance became. He smirked. "Why not? Now that my brother Michael is the man in charge of this project, I'm here to monitor the progress."

He sneered and continued, "Oops! Looking at the mess here, you won't be able to hand over the project on time. I guess you'll have to compensate the Riverdale district council then. Also, my boys came to demolish the buildings because they do not comply with the construction standards. Who are you to stop them and beat them up? I'll sue you for assault!"

Zeke exclaimed, "B\*llshit! Nancy is still the owner of this project!"

Mance responded, "So, you're still trying to pretend you don't know what's going on, I see. She has given the project to Michael. I've brought Mr. Garrett Zahner from the urban planning department here to come and inspect the site to make you lose all hope."

Mance then turned around and looked at Garrett.

Garrett said boldly, "That's right, Nancy has given the project to Michael, and I was there to witness the handover. Now the person in charge is Michael. He realized the project violated some construction regulations, so that's why he came to demolish the buildings. How could you stop him and even hurt his men?"

Garrett continued, "Besides, the project department under Linton Group has signed the bet-on agreement with the district council. If you can't complete the project by tonight, you'll have to compensate one billion to the council. Just wait for the penalty!"

Mance burst out laughing. "Mr. Williams, game over. I heard the Linton Group is not doing well financially, so I don't think the company will have enough money to pay the penalty. If that's

the case, then Linton Group might be forced to declare bankruptcy.”

Nancy jumped down from the car and yelled, “Michael forced me to sign the transfer document! It holds no legal effect and must be declared void! Besides, Garrett Zahner was not there. He lied.”

Garrett Zahner said coldly, “Shut up. I can sue you for defamation!”

“You...” Nancy was so mad that she could no longer say a thing.

“Haha!” Michael let out a laugh and walked towards Mance. “Mr. Williams, it’s over. Guess we have the last laugh.”

He turned to the men and said, “Boys, wake up and continue to demolish the buildings! Since all these buildings violate the construction standards, we have to take them down and rebuild them again!”

Zeke responded with a grin, “How confident of you to say you have the last laugh. Show me the ownership transfer agreement. You shall not touch anything here unless you show me the proof.”

Michael rolled his eyes at Zeke. “Will you just give up already? Fine! Be prepared to concede

defeat!”

He then reached for the transfer agreement.

Just when he was about to take out the agreement, he realized something was not right.

*F\*\*k, who dumped a cigarette into my pocket?*

The cigarette had burned a hole through the transfer agreement!

He quickly took out the document and check the pages.

The part that was burned was exactly where Nancy dropped her signature and stamp!

His world suddenly turned topsy-turvy.

*That's it. My effort has been all in vain. All these men were beaten up for nothing!*



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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“What’s wrong?” Mance had not seen the agreement, but he noticed the changes in Michael’s expression.

After realizing there was a hole in the agreement, Mance exploded with rage and slapped him. “Motherf\*\*ker! How could this have happened? You useless piece of shit!”

Michael answered in despair, “I can explain, Mance...”

Mance kicked him aside and said, “To hell with your explanation! You f\*\*king ruined my plan!”

Zeke smirked. “Where are the signature and stamp on the contract?”

Nancy finally broke into a smile.

She thought he was pretending to be cool when he lit a cigarette after defeating Sleek Rat’s men.

*So this is why he did that!*

*This dude is not completely useless, after all.*

Before she knew it, her impression of Zeke had changed for the better.

Zeke stared at Garrett. “Mr. Zahner, I wonder if this transfer agreement still stands?”

Garett's face turned pale. He rolled his eyes at Mance and returned to his car.

Before coming over here, Mance had been informed that everything here was under control.

But all of a sudden, things had ended up this way.

*Did they get me to come here so I can make a fool of myself?*

Mance gritted his teeth and gave Zeke a murderous look. "You think you've won the game, Mr. Williams? Nope. You're wrong. The opening of Raider Group will mark the death of Linton Group! Just you wait and see!"

He hopped into his car and left.

Zeke did not stop him, but a vicious look instantly crept across his face.

He looked at the men in black and exploded with rage, "All of you trespassed and destroyed the project site. You're not just causing a commotion here. You've caused a violent riot!"

*What?*

A violent riot was a crime that threatened national security!



If they were all found guilty of this charge in court, they would probably have to spend at least eight years in jail!

As someone who was worthy of becoming Mance's opponent, Zeke definitely had some tricks up his sleeves. This also meant he was capable of pinning the crime onto them!

What he said pushed all the men into the pit of despair.

But what Zeke said next gave them hope. "Now, I'll give you two options. All of you can either spend eight to ten years in jail, come out as an ex-convict, and be monitored for the rest of your life, or contribute your labor for free and complete this entire project by tonight! I'll give you ten seconds to think things through!"

In less than ten seconds, everyone immediately decided, "We're willing to work! We promise to finish this project by tonight."

They would rather be exhausted for a day than have their future ruined.

Zeke ordered in a stern voice, "Get your ass up and start working then."

The group of men stood up and headed towards the project site.

Nancy then went up to Zeke and asked cautiously, "Zeke, you... You have to tell me the truth."

She hesitated and continued, "Are you my hero?"

Zeke's heart skipped a beat.

*Shit, now she is suspicious of me! I shouldn't have revealed myself before her.*

Just when he was about to deny, another group of men started flocking into the project department.

There were about 200 of them.

The leader of the bunch was Darren Collins.

Ever since he became the leader of Riverdale's underworld, Darren had remained active in this district.

The minute he received intel that Zeke was under the attack of a group of unknown men, he came over immediately.

However, when he saw the mess on-site, he knew he came late.

Feeling remorseful, he went down on one knee and apologized, "I'm sorry, Mr. Williams. We

came late.”

All the 200 men kneeled before Zeke as well.

Nancy’s heart palpitated more erratically.

A large group of men bowing before Zeke was exactly the treatment a hero deserved!

She could almost confirm that Zeke was her hero!

Tears started rolling down her cheeks.

*Oh God, why did you allow this to happen? This is too ridiculous!*



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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Zeke shouted at Darren, "Who told you all to come?"

Darren responded, "Mr. Williams, we just found out you were in danger..."

"What? Do you think I'm so weak that I can't deal with this on my own?" Zeke sneered.

Though Zeke sounded arrogant, Darren knew what he said was true!

"The rest of you, leave. Darren, you stay back!" ordered Zeke.

"Okay!" Darren immediately dismissed his men. "What can I do for you, Mr. Williams?"

Zeke took a glance at Sleek Rat.

While Zeke was busy dealing with other things, Sleek Rat had managed to get one of his men to help him escape.

"Follow that guy and check his background."

"Got it!" Darren hopped into his car and started tailing Sleek Rat.

Nancy was still at a loss. "Why did you hide this from me?" she said tearfully. "Are you trying to make me look stupid?"

Zeke replied, "Hide what from you? Since when did I make you look stupid?"

"You were my hero. Why didn't you tell me? Were you glad to see how I behaved like a lovesick woman?" Nancy lamented.

Zeke quickly denied, "What nonsense are you talking about? What makes you think I'm your hero?"

"Your back is exactly the same as my hero's! You are my hero!" insisted Nancy.

Zeke did not know whether to laugh or cry. "Are you kidding me? The backs of all men from Eurasia look more or less the same. How could you jump to this conclusion just like that?"

"But the aura you exuded when all those men kneeled before you was just extraordinary, and I've seen the same extraordinary aura in my hero! This is not something anyone can fake easily!" said Nancy.

Zeke tried to clarify. "Let me ask you this. Who were those people who kneeled before your hero? Armies or henchmen?"

"Armies," replied Nancy.

He continued, "See? Those men who bowed before me were just a group of henchmen. I

don't have the power to get a group of armies to do that!"

Nancy thought about it and finally put on a smile. "You're right. I should have thought of that. You're capable - well, sort of, but I'm sure you don't have such great power to get armies to bow before you. Damn it. I must have lost my mind in making that association. You're just a kept... Um, businessman. Of course, you're not my hero!"

Zeke was speechless.

*Do you have to be so cheerful after finding out I'm not your hero?*

In the meantime, Nancy noticed Michael was trying to sneak away. She went up and kicked him to the ground.

"How dare you run away, jerk? I'll make sure you'll be charged with attempted murder. Get ready to go to prison!"

Michael pleaded, "Please, we're a family. Please don't be so cruel. The Hintons are still counting on me to produce an heir for the family. It'll be the end of our family if I go to prison."

Nancy roared, "Shut up! Have you thought of me as your family when you tried to kill me? Sofia, do me a favor. Call the police!"

“Stop!” A loud voice emerged from a distance.

It was Aaron Hinton who had arrived with the rest of the Hinton family.

Michael had secretly called Aaron for help while the others were busy dealing with the mess earlier.

No one else but only Aaron could save him now.

Upon seeing how miserable Michael was, Aaron yelled, “Nancy, how dare you work with outsiders to torture your own family member! You’re a traitor!”

Nancy explained, “Listen to me, grandpa. He tried to kill me...”

Michael immediately stepped in. “I’m innocent! Don’t listen to her! How could I kill her? She’s my cousin! Grandpa, it was all because of Zeke. He was not happy that we’re on Mance’s side. Hence, he wanted to take revenge on me!”

He continued, “Zeke worked with Nancy and tried to frame me for murder. They used this to threaten me to support Linton Group! Then, they attacked me because they wanted me to sign an agreement that forces me to attend their listing ceremony instead of Mance’s opening ceremony! Grandpa! Help me!”

“This is atrocious!” Aaron flew into a fit of rage and was about to slap Nancy. “Did we raise you to become a traitor to the family? Kneel down, right now, and apologize to Aaron. I want you to swear that you’ll not keep in touch with Zeke anymore. If you refuse, I’ll kick you out of the family. I’ll even have your parents’ graves removed from the ancestral graveyard!”



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Zeke grabbed Aaron Hinton's hand and gently pushed him away to stop him from hitting Nancy. Aaron stumbled a few steps back and almost fell.

Fortunately, other members of the family were there to hold him.

A flush crept up Aaron's face. "Did you see what he did, Nancy? He attacked me! He's our enemy! If you choose to stand by him, then you're our enemy!"

All of a sudden, Nancy smirked. It was a cold but miserable smirk.

She had given up on the Hinton family completely.

Since young, her grandpa had always shown favoritism towards Michael and ignored her.

She expected this kind of treatment because she was a girl.

What she did not expect was that he would go to this extent to protect his grandson.

It was Michael who had attempted to kill her, but Aaron did not even bother to pursue the matter. He even threatened to kick Nancy out of the family.

It was utterly unbelievable!

The efforts she put in to build up the Hinton family were all in vain!

Surprisingly, Zeke, whom she had been at loggerheads with all this while, was the only person who stood by her side!

*It would be meaningless if I choose to stay in the Hinton family.*

She sighed and turned around. "I'm tired. Zeke, please stop these people from disturbing me."

Aaron went berserk. "Are you mad, Nancy? You're a disgrace to the family! From now on, you are no longer one of the Hintons! I'll give you one more chance. Kneel before us and seek for forgiveness, right now."

Zeke sneered, "I'll give the Hintons another chance too. Join Linton Group, and your family will be safe."

"Get lost!" Aaron Hinton roared, "Someone is going claim your life soon, yet you still have the guts to make this kind of empty promise? What a joke!"

He continued angrily, "Just you wait. Mance will destroy Linton Group. All of you will be begging for food on the streets soon. I might consider

giving you a bun if you stop by my house in the future. Let's go!"

Aaron then left with the rest of the family members.

Zeke couldn't help but smile wryly. "A stubborn man like him is going to squander the family inheritance. Sofia, a duty for you. Monitor these men and make sure they complete the project by midnight."

Sofia nodded. "Sure, I will. By the way, is Linton Group now in deep trouble?"

Zeke explained, "To me, it's just a small issue. Don't worry about it."

Sofia responded with a grin, "Kiddo, can you tell me how powerful you are?"

Zeke laughed. "Let's just say that I sit at the top of the social pyramid."

Sofia was dumbfounded and covered her mouth. "Are you for real?"

Zeke answered mysteriously, "Only if you believe me."

...

Nancy finally returned to Linton Group after

Dawn did.

Together with Lacey and Susan, the four beauties were once again reunited.

They immediately carried out some emergency plans like downsizing the departments and taking cost-cutting measures. This had successfully helped Linton Group recover from being at the verge of bankruptcy.

Of course, this was just temporary. No one knew how long they could enjoy this financial stability.

They dared not even dream of going public at this point.

Lacey was so troubled these few days that she could not eat or sleep well.

The thought of losing everything that they had worked hard for in the past year made Lacey want to cry.

They would have solved some of the so-called minor issues if Zeke were willing to lend them a hand.

However, that did not happen.

These four ladies needed to accumulate experience on their own.

And it was only through their personal experience that they could grow and mature.

On this day, Lacey, once again, called for a meeting with Susan, Nancy, and Dawn.

“It would be impossible for Linton Group to overcome the crisis now. Give up a rook to save the king is the only way out for us. We need to sell some of our properties in order to protect the parent company.”

Lacey would not have proposed this if she had a choice.

Once they sold off some of their properties, their capacity and market capitalization would shrink by half.

The other three women did not say much but agreed with the proposal.



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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Yet, Zeke spoke up, “Don’t give up easily, Lacey. Let’s at least wait till the listing ceremony. Perhaps things might turn around for us.”

The women shook their heads. “How can we go public in this kind of condition? It’s nothing worth celebrating at all.”

“You’ll never know till you try,” answered Zeke.

At this time, Sharon Edward, the person-in-charge of Linton Group’s Nutel Entertainment walked in.

“I have bad news, Ms. Hinton. We’ve just received an announcement that Raider Group has invited Master Healer Lowe to attend their opening ceremony, and they promised that Master Healer Lowe would handpick ten patients and treat them for free.”

Sharon continued, “This announcement has topped the list of the trendiest news in search engines. The buzz that they created has almost the same impact as that of General North.”

*What?*

Lacey and the other women were dumbfounded. They then felt defeated.

Raider Group had successfully invited Master Healer Lowe to their opening ceremony!

So many royal families were willing to spend a fortune on him so he could administer treatment to their sick family members, and many of them were still on the waiting list.

In other words, it would be impossible for ordinary folks to receive Master Healer Lowe's medical treatment.

Yet, Mance gave these people an opportunity to enjoy this special privilege. This would definitely draw a large crowd to Raider Group's opening ceremony!

*That's the end of Linton Group. We are totally crushed.*

Lacey cried in desperation, "Zeke, that's it for Linton Group. It's all over now. We might even have to declare bankruptcy and start from scratch in another city. The fact that Raider Group was able to invite General North and Master Healer Lowe to their ceremony shows that they're truly formidable. What if they view Linton Group as their arch enemy? We can't afford to compete with them."

Zeke patted Lacey's shoulder and turned around to look at Sharon. "Ms. Edward, please release an announcement and tell the public that General North and Master Healer Lowe will attend Linton Group's listing ceremony."

*Huh?*

All the women gave him a confused look.

What was this man trying to do?

Sharon felt awkward doing what Zeke told her to do. “Mr. Williams, I don’t think we should release fake news. This will undermine Nutel Entertainment’s credibility. Besides, it’ll also tarnish Linton Group’s reputation...”

Zeke said firmly, “Just do as I say.”

Sharon had no choice but to obey his instructions. “Alright then.”

Lacey and the rest all sighed repeatedly.

They thought Zeke must be trying to steal Raider Group’s spotlight by mentioning the two names, so the public could also pay attention to Linton Group’s listing ceremony.

But what was the point?

It was pointless to get the public’s attention when they could not solve the internal crisis in Linton Group. A fake announcement like this could even lower their credibility as a corporation.

But since they were about to declare



bankruptcy, they just gave up and let him do what he wanted.

Zeke left the office and gave Master Healer Lowe a call. "I heard you're going to attend Raider Group's opening ceremony."

Master Healer Lowe answered, "So you've heard about it. Yes, Raider Group did invite me. They promised to give me *Rhodiola rosea* if I go. I need it urgently to develop a new type of medicine, so I agreed."

Zeke simply responded, "Raider Group is my arch enemy."

Master Healer Lowe panicked. "I'm sorry, Mr. Williams. I had no idea before this. But I know what to do now."

"Okay," Zeke responded.

He sighed after ending the call.

Zeke never thought that the *Rhodiola rosea* was so precious that even the renowned Master Healer Lowe had to swallow his pride just to get his hands on the plant.

In fact, he knew the plant was grown all over a herb plantation in the Hill village when he visited the place before.

The villagers even used this plant to feed the pigs. Master Healer Lowe would definitely be devastated by this if he found out how the villagers used this plant.



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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It was the middle of summer.

The entire Oakheart City and even some parts of Rivermouth were bustling with activity.

Master Healer Lowe and General North were set to attend the grand opening of the Raider Group.

They looked forward to witnessing the glory of General North, as well as a chance to be healed by the Master Healer.

By the time the sun rose, the roads outside the Raider Group were already swarming with people, with some of them spilling onto other roads of Oakheart City.

A few of the nearby roads were even forced to close down due to excess traffic.

Reporters from various news stations had been eagerly camping outside Raider Group to get a picture of General North.

Raider Group had invited several performance troupes to entertain the crowds.

The ruckus outside the company was like a display of its power.

Meanwhile, Linton Group was just across the plaza from Raider Group, but the situation there

was completely different.

Other than a few cats taking their mid-morning naps on the ground outside the doors, there was no one in sight.

Lacey took it upon herself to attract customers, but nothing seemed to work. Their only presentable guest was Evan Schneider.

Every so often, one or two people would walk past the Linton Group, only to head towards the Raider Group.

Lacey began to feel discouraged.

She turned to Zeke and whispered, "Zeke... I think we should give up. We don't have to hold an opening ceremony."

Even Daniel and Hannah looked crestfallen.

"That's right, Zeke. We should give up now. We'll only be embarrassing ourselves if we try to compete with Raider Group. What is fated would come by, and what isn't meant to be shouldn't be chased after. Maybe Linton Group is supposed to be short-lived after all."

"Everyone, we shouldn't be giving up so easily," Zeke said. "Lacey, promise me you won't give up hope until the very last moment."

“Alright.” Lacey sighed.

Hannah was reluctant to let her daughter stand by the door and be shamed for it, so she walked over and whispered, “Lacey, why don’t you go in first? I’ll stand in for you with your dad.”

There was no need for Lacey to be at the door, since there were no guests anyway.

Lacey shook her head. “No need. I’m staying with Zeke.”

What she really meant to say was, “I don’t want him to suffer alone.”

Meanwhile, at Raider Group.

Mance Raider sat by the table, sipping on his tea lazily while Emily Clemons crouched by his side, massaging his legs for him.

Suddenly, John walked into the room.

“Is everything settled with General North?”  
Mance drawled.

John glared at Emily. She backed out of the room obediently.

“He hasn’t replied, so there’s a high chance that he isn’t coming,” John said. “I’ve already gotten

someone else to stand in for him.”

Mance nodded. “What about Master Healer Lowe?”

“Rest assured. The *Rhodiola rosea* will surely convince him to come,” John said.

“Good,” Mance said, satisfied.

“From now onwards, Linton Group will be no more! Raider Group shall rise and rule over Oakheart! Tell the Hintons from Riverdale and Emily to get ready. We’re paying a visit to the Linton Group.”

“I’ve already done that,” John said.

So Mance, the Hintons from Riverdale and Emily set off for the Linton Group after a short while.

Everyone was confused by their sudden departure.

“Why is Mance leaving? Isn’t he supposed to welcome General North in person?”

“What do you mean ‘why’? Do you even know who those people are?”

“Who? Aren’t they just guests Raider Group invited over for the ceremony?”

“There’s more to them than what meets the eye. You see that woman there? She’s Emily Clemons, ex-girlfriend of Zeke Williams.”

“As for the Hintons from Riverdale, Lacey Hinton used to be a part of them, until they kicked her out.”

“Mance Raider is going to declare war on Linton Group!”

“Wow, sounds exciting! Why don’t we go and take a look too?”

“Are they trying to fight with Raider Group? That’s so foolish!”

“Yeah! Their opening ceremony is like a funeral. I would be so embarrassed if I work there!”



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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Mance Raider's party arrived at the entrance of Linton Group soon after.

Lacey Hinton began to panic when she saw them charging towards Linton Group at full speed.

She decided to retreat into the building to avoid getting publicly shamed.

However, Zeke stopped her before she could do so. "Lacey, you're only going to make things worse if you run away now."

"You'll have to face the problem head-on in order to solve it."

Lacey sighed inwardly.

She would have done exactly that if it were possible.

She doubted she would be able to find a solution to the problem even if she faced it head-on.

At that point in time, there was nothing left but humiliation.

Mance closed in on them with his party.

Aaron, Emily and Mance had already discussed the methods they would use to humiliate the



people of Linton Group.

The moment they got to the entrance of Linton Group, Aaron stepped forward and bellowed, "Nancy Hinton! Get over here now!"

"The Hintons from Oakheart no longer have anything to do with the Hintons from Riverdale, so why are you still siding with them?"

Nancy Hinton remained silent and stayed by Lacey's side stubbornly.

"Hey, are you listening? You're being disrespectful to the entire Hinton family!" Michael Hinton yelled.

"Grandpa, she's a traitor just like the rest of them! Just chase them out!"

"You're such a disappointment to me, Nancy Hinton," Aaron growled.

"From now on, you're no longer part of the Hintons!"

He had already kicked Nancy out of the family back at the Whiteridge project department, but he did not mind doing it again to publicly shame her and the Linton Group.

Nancy simply sighed.

She was not too disappointed, since the Hintons have already let her down way too many times.

Zeke patted her on the shoulder. “Why the long face? They’re just being conceited, so just ignore them. I promise I’ll make them beg for your return.”

Aaron scoffed and said, “Return? For what? To waste our food? You think we need her to be around? Ms. Clemons, if you don’t mind, you may take over Nancy’s role from now on.”

Emily smiled. “Thank you, Mr. Hinton. I’ll do my best.”

Nancy was shocked beyond comprehension.

Her role in the Hinton family was pivotal and crucial, but Aaron did not even hesitate to give her role to someone outside of the family once he kicked her out.

Looks like I’m nothing to them...

Emily smiled arrogantly. “I came to thank you, Zeke. I’m grateful that you chose not to marry me back then. If not, I wouldn’t be able to climb the ranks in the Hinton family. Most importantly, I wouldn’t be able to meet the man of my dreams!”

Without warning, Emily pulled out two invitation cards from her pocket and threw them at Zeke and Lacey.

However, instead of catching the cards, they let the cards fall onto the ground with a loud plop.

“We’re getting married next month, and you’re invited to the wedding. Don’t you see, Zeke Williams? Dumping you is the best decision of my life!”

Zeke chuckled and said, “Well, looks like I’ve underestimated just how stupid and childish you are. Are you living in a fairytale? You’re just a toy to him. He won’t take you seriously!”

“Get out of my face!” Emily snarled. “You’re just being jealous of me. I guess there’s nothing you can do besides insulting me, am I right? As for you, Lacey Hinton, you’re nothing compared to me! I’ve always been better than you, and that’s going to be true forever! You’re only fit to be my slave!”



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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Lacey lowered her head and sighed.

Maybe she's right...

She's doing much better than me.

"If everything goes well, Linton Group will close down by today," Emily scoffed. "You'll probably be begging on the streets in a while, but no worries, I'll make sure to drop you a few pieces of bread when I see you."

Mance grinned. "Why so cruel? You've known each other for such a long time after all. How about we give them a choice?"

He proceeded to take out a contract and said, "Sell me Linton Group for twenty million. You'll be able to live comfortably after this. That's all I can promise you."

"Mance, weren't you planning to offer two hundred million?" Emily asked curiously.

"Well, they simply aren't worth that much anymore!" Mance answered.

The two of them started to laugh maniacally.

"Well, Raider, I'll give you a choice too," Zeke said, smiling. "Sell me your company for two million. Take it or leave it."

He proceeded to pull out a contract from his pocket.

Emily took it and scanned through its terms, before bursting into laughter again.

“My, oh my! I would never have seen this coming! Haha, where did you even get the guts to do this? You’re overestimating yourself!”

Lacey and her family turned red with embarrassment.

What the hell is he doing? Their company probably costs a good two billion at the very least!

Why is he asking them to sell the company for two million? Where did the contract even come from?

Why is he so shameless?

Mance snatched over the contract and ripped it into pieces. “Right, Williams, I heard you’ve invited General North and Master Healer Lowe for your opening ceremony? Are you getting them to force me sign this contract?”

“Huh? He invited them?” Emily exclaimed.

“It’s true, at least according to Linton Group’s Nutel Entertainment. Zeke Williams himself

confirmed it!" Mance said.

Emily whipped out her phone to check. "Oh, it's really true! You're so full of yourself! How shameless are you to commit such a pretentious act?"

Everyone around them started to laugh.

"Aren't you overestimating yourselves a little bit too much?"

"Mance Raider was the one who invited them, not you! Stop making things up!"

"He's just blindly following the trends!"

"Nutel Entertainment is a fraud! I say we sue it!"

Lacey and her family wished they could dig themselves a hole and hide in it forever.

They regretted publishing that report greatly.

Stop embarrassing us, Zeke!

Suddenly, someone in the crowd yelled, "Look! There's a bunch of military vehicles coming! Could it be General North?"

Everyone turned their heads towards the roads.

A motorcade of military vehicles slowly made

its way to the front of Raider Group.

Leading the motorcade was a Hongqi L5 limousine.

Only high-ranking people like colonels would be able to own such a car.

It would be near impossible for an ordinary person to purchase one, since it required the approval of the government.

“Let’s go and welcome General North!” Mance said, smiling. “He might just burn down Linton Group upon hearing that his name has been used in some fraudulent publicity stunt!”

The crowd dispersed as they headed towards Raider Group.

Lacey began to panic, while Zeke simply frowned.

What’s going on?

There’s no way Sole Wolf would dare to attend Raider Group’s opening ceremony without my permission.

That would be ridiculous!

Is that ‘General North’ even real?



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Mance Raider wouldn't dare to arrange for someone to stand in for General North, would he?

The motorcade slowed to a stop in front of the Raider Group.

The soldiers alighted from their vehicles and surrounded the limousine as they shouted in unison, "Please alight, General North!"

Everyone looked on with bated breaths and widened eyes.

Mance Raider was giddy with excitement. I'm about to meet General North himself!

A tall man emerged from the limousine as the doors opened slowly.

Clad in the uniform of the military as well as shiny, black boots, he looked like a general who had gone through countless battles.

Despite the mask and sunglasses that he donned, his dominating aura was not discounted by even a single bit.

The people continued to look on with anticipation.

Zeke, on the other hand, was furious.

He's not the real General North!

I can't believe he found someone to impersonate him!

I bet even his boss won't be able to save him this time round!

After all, impersonating a high-ranking military official required the approval of the chief colonel.

Mance Raider rushed forwards and bowed low. "Welcome to Raider Group, General! I am honored to be your host today."

'General North' smiled and said, "Mance, no need for such formalities. We've known each other for so long, after all. Shall we go in? Let's not delay the ceremony any longer."

"Alright," Mance said, leading 'General North' into the building.

The crowd erupted.

"Did I hear that right?"

"They're old friends?"

No one had expected to hear that.

They figured that there would be no reason for

Raider Group to fail if that was the case.

“Haha! Linton Group is just asking for trouble!”

The moment General North disappeared into the building, the crowd outside buzzed about his relationship with Mance Raider.

Nancy watched everything unfold before her eyes in a daze.

She was almost convinced that General North was her coveted hero.

However, she found his aura rather disappointing.

“Did I get the wrong person?” Nancy whispered, her brows furrowed together. “Is my hero not General North?”

Zeke smiled. “You didn’t get the wrong person. The ‘General North’ you’re seeing is fake.”

Everyone whirled around to glare at him.

He’s blabbering again!

No one would dare to impersonate General North unless they have a death wish or something!

The silence around them grew louder as more

and more of Linton Group's employees sneaked out to catch a glimpse of General North.

Lacey took a deep breath and said, "Alright. The ceremony's over. Let's go home."

Everyone sighed and turned around to retreat into the building.

Zeke was about to stop them when someone in the crowd yelled, "Look! It's Master Healer Lowe!"

The crowd roared.

"Quick! Get Mr. Raider! He needs to be here!" someone hollered.

The staff near the entrance of Raider Group ran off to fetch Mance immediately.

Mance rushed out of the building just moments later to welcome the Master Healer.

"Let's go, Lacey," Zeke said.

"Are you crazy? Haven't you had enough of getting shamed?" Lacey growled.

Zeke pondered over it for a moment. "Indeed. It would be pretty insulting for us to welcome him, considering our status."



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Everyone burst into laughter.

Why can't he just think like a normal person?

Why is he so arrogant?

Daniel sighed and said, "The Master Healer is my idol and muse! I've gone into medicine precisely because I've heard of his legacy. Looks like I'll never get a chance to meet him or get his autograph..."

Zeke, however, merely smiled and said, "He's your idol? The Master Healer should be grateful about it then. You want his autograph? No problem. I can recruit him into the company and give him the post of a medical consultant, which makes him your colleague. You will be able to ask for his autographs whenever you want!"

No one knew how to react to his comments.

He's too full of himself!

"Enough! Time to go back!" Lacey hollered, pinching him on the arm.

They returned to Linton Group soon after.

Zeke hung around outside the entrance for just a second before going in.

Fine then, guess the Master Healer has to let himself in since my wife doesn't want to welcome him.

Meanwhile, Mance rushed to the Master Healer's side and bowed his head low politely.

"I apologize for the delayed welcome."

He straightened up and hollered to his staff, "Quick, prepare some tea for the Master Healer!"

Master Healer Lowe simply waved his hand and said, "And you are...?"

"Oh! My bad. I am Mance Raider, the boss of Raider Group. You may call me Mance."

"Raider Group, huh..." Master Healer Lowe muttered before he promptly turned around and left.

"Sir! This way please!" Mance said hurriedly, pointing in the direction of Raider Group.

However, Master Healer Lowe simply ignored him and quickened his footsteps, heading straight for Linton Group instead.

As everyone watched in utter confusion, he disappeared into the doors of Linton Group.

Mance Raider stood in shocked silence, and the crowd did not know what to make of the situation as well.

Why did he go to Linton Group? Isn't he supposed to be Raider Group's guest?

Unless... Linton Group did not lie?

How in the world did Linton Group manage to secure a visit from Master Healer Lowe even before Raider Group?

The crowd was dumbfounded.

Suddenly, someone shouted, "Let's go and take a look!"

"Let's see if the Master Healer is keeping his promise!"

The crowd rushed towards Linton Group like a swarm of bees.

Mance could only stand rooted to the ground with a grim expression.

That was so embarrassing!

That imbecile!

What is John doing? Why couldn't he settle such a trivial matter?



At the same time, however, curiosity got the better of him.

Why did the Master Healer choose a failing company like Linton Group over a company that is brimming with potential like Raider Group?

That brat Zeke Williams!

Meanwhile, the silence at Linton Group was deafening.

Everyone's moods were at rock bottom.

They had no more hope for Linton Group's survival.

Just as Lacey was pondering over how she would announce their bankruptcy to everyone else, Master Healer Lowe burst into the office without warning.

Everyone's heads snapped up as they looked at him curiously.

"Is this... Linton Group?" the Master Healer asked.

"Yes, and you are...?" Lacey asked.

No one recognized him at first glance.

He looked like an ordinary elderly man on the

streets who was a bit rough around the edges. His clothes reeked of a strange scent, which convinced everyone that he was just another businessman.

However, Daniel recognized the scent immediately. It was a medicinal scent.

But, he did not consider the possibility of the old man being the Master Healer himself.

He did not believe that the Master Healer would care to pay a visit to their failure of a company when Raider Group was being the center of attention just across the street.

“Oh, I’m here for the opening ceremony,” Master Healer Lowe said.

Everyone smiled bitterly.

What opening ceremony? We’re going to close down soon!

“My apologies, Sir. The opening ceremony is over,” Lacey said.

“What? So fast?” Master Healer Lowe said, visibly disappointed. “Well, I guess I came too late.”



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Everyone scoffed lightly.

Who do you think you are? It doesn't matter if you're here or not, so there's no need to apologize.

However, Zeke was amused by all this.

The person standing before them was the esteemed guest of the day, Master Healer Lowe himself!

He was amused by how cold everyone was towards the Master Healer.

Dawn, who had been looking out of the window, suddenly spoke up. "Lacey? What's going on outside?"

"Huh?" Lacey frowned and turned around to face the window.

To her surprise, the entrance to Linton Group, which had been completely empty just moments ago, was suddenly filled to the brim with people chattering away loudly.

Her first instinct was to think that they had been sent by Mance Raider to stir up trouble.

She flew into a rage. "What a bully! He's forcing us to do the unthinkable! We should go and talk to them."

Lacey walked out of the building with a group of people behind her.

“What are you doing in front of our office?” she asked the crowd coldly. “You’re being a public nuisance which is punishable by law!”

However, the crowd’s reaction shocked her. “We’re here for your opening ceremony!”

Huh?

Lacey’s mind was filled with questions all of a sudden. “What opening ceremony? What are you talking about?”

The people in the crowd ignored her and started to call out to the Master Healer frantically.

“Mr. Lowe! You promised to give ten checkups for free!”

“Mr. Lowe, we came today just to meet you! Please don’t disappoint us!”

“Please save me, Mr. Lowe! My family needs me!”

The Master Healer nodded. “Don’t worry. I didn’t forget about my promise. I’ll pick ten of you later on for a free checkup.”

The crowd roared in excitement.

W-what's going on?

Lacey and her party stood by in shock and disbelief.

Why are they calling that old geezer 'Master Healer Lowe', and why is he playing along with it?

Could he be the Master Healer himself?

Lacey looked at the Master Healer apprehensively and asked, "A-Are you the Master Healer?"

"I thought you recognize me, so I didn't bother to introduce myself," Master Healer Lowe replied. "Indeed, I am the Master Healer."

Lacey was taken aback by the revelation.

It was a massive honor for the legendary healer to grace their opening ceremony with his presence, but they had given him the cold shoulder!

There's hope for Linton Group!

Lacey regretted her actions deeply, yet she was undeniably excited.

“I apologize for disrespecting you, Mr. Lowe!” she said.

The Master Healer simply waved his hand and said, “No, I should be the one apologizing! I was tardy!”

“No, Mr. Lowe! You’re not tardy, you’re early!” Lacey said hurriedly.

“Hey! Where are our lanterns? Where did the stage go? What about the banner?” she asked, pretending to look around in confusion.

“Ms. Hinton, you told us to dismantle them just now...” the staff reminded her.

“Quick, restore them! We need to start our opening ceremony as soon as possible!” Lacey said quickly.

Meanwhile, Daniel was jittery with excitement.

He would never have dreamed to be in such close proximity with the Master Healer himself.

Daniel tried to go up to Master Healer Lowe and strike up a conversation, but his words got stuck at his throat whenever he glanced at the old man.

He did not have the courage to approach the Master Healer.

Witnessing Daniel's hesitance, Zeke decided to intervene. "Mr. Lowe, our company still needs a medical consultant. Are you interested?"

"Of course! It would be my honor to serve Linton Group," the Master Healer said gratefully.

Zeke nodded and pulled Daniel over. "This is Daniel Hinton, the manager of our services in the medical sector. You will be working under him from now onwards."

Master Healer Lowe held Daniel's hand tightly and said, "I look forward to working alongside you, Mr. Hinton!"

Daniel was on cloud nine.

The Master Healer had been his idol and muse, yet now he had become his subordinate.

Daniel's happiness was overwhelming.

"M-Mr. Lowe, y-you're being too polite!" he stammered.

Nancy walked over to Zeke's side and stared at him in disbelief. "How did you know that the Master Healer is coming? Were you the one who invited him?"

That was the question that everyone was dying to ask.





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Zeke became the center of attention immediately.

He seemed calm, despite the quizzical looks everyone was giving him. "Lacey told me to do it. She wanted to invite him for our opening ceremony. It's my duty to complete my wife's requests."

Everyone struggled to understand what he meant.

Lacey had just been joking, and no one would have expected him to actually send an invite to the Master Healer.

More importantly, everyone had underestimated just how capable Zeke Williams was!

"How did you get him to come?" Lacey asked.

"Simple. He owed me a favor," Zeke said. "He's just repaying me for my kindness."

Lacey looked at Master Healer Lowe curiously. "Is that true, Mr. Lowe?"

The Master Healer nodded. "That is true. Mr. Williams once saved me from certain death."

If Zeke had not given him some timely assistance back then, he would have lost his

hard-earned reputation.

As a doctor, his reputation mattered more than his own life. It was not an exaggeration to say that Zeke had saved him from certain death.

The people at the scene gasped in realization.

Lacey looked at Zeke pleadingly. “Zeke, just how many secrets are you hiding? Just tell us everything!”

Zeke chuckled like a child.

You would be frozen in shock for the rest of the year if I tell you all my secrets!

Meanwhile, Mance Raider was fuming as he watched the crowd rush over to Linton Group.

His grand plan to monopolize the market was going to fail, but he refused to back down just yet.

He took a few steps forward and snarled, “Don’t celebrate just yet, Zeke Williams! General North knows about your unlawful advertisements! He told me that he’ll punish you as soon as possible. Linton Group won’t be spared from this!”

He looked at the crowds and yelled, “All of you will suffer too! You’re supporting a scammer!”

Get ready to face the music!”

The crowd began to back away from Linton Group out of fear.

Getting noticed by General North for the wrong reasons would not end well for them.

The commotion in front of Linton Group died down as quickly as it appeared.

Lacey and her party began to feel depressed all over again.

Lacey looked at Zeke. “What should we do?”

Zeke simply pulled out his phone to check the time. “Yeah, he should be here soon.”

Everyone was confused.

What do you mean by ‘he should be here soon’?

Suddenly, the buzz of the crowd returned.

“Oh my! Look at that! It’s another motorcade!”

“It’s so much grander than the one General North had!”

“Could this person be above General North?”

“Could it be... The Great Marshal himself?”

“Oh dear! Raider Group would be undefeatable if they managed to invite the Great Marshal!”

Everyone rushed to take a closer look at the motorcade.

Mance’s face darkened.

Did the real General North get his invitation after all?

You could have at least sent a reply! Look at the mess I have to deal with because of you!

Things were going south for Mance Raider.

He took off towards General North with his phone against his ear.

“John! Hide the fake General North! The real one’s here!”

The motorcade slowed to a stop in front of Raider Group.

Hundreds of soldiers rushed out of their vehicles. A group of them surrounded Raider Group, while the other group arranged themselves before the car that was leading the motorcade.

“Please alight, General North!”

Even the sky seemed to react to the loud rumble of the soldiers' voices.

Everyone was shocked.

General North?

Isn't he already here?

Why is there another one?



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General North alighted from the car just moments later.

He was expressionless, yet everyone held their breaths as though he had been raging.

His aura seemed ten times as powerful as the 'General North' that entered the building not long ago.

Mance hurried to his side and said, "Welcome to Raider Group, General North..."

Slap!

To everyone's horror, General North raised his hand and slapped Mance squarely on his cheek.

That sent Mance flying across the street, almost passing out on impact.

The people in the crowd were bewildered. Didn't Mance Raider invite General North over for the ceremony? Why did he get slapped?

A buzzing sound took over Mance's mind. Oh no... Did he find out about the fake General North?

Even so, he pretended to stay calm and asked, "Why did you slap me, General?"

“Slap you? I wish I could kill you right now!”  
General North huffed. “Bring him here.”

The door of the car behind him opened, and two soldiers emerged from it, the broken figure of a man propped up between the two of them.

Mance shivered at the sight of the man, and the air began to smell like ammonia.

He had wet himself out of shock.

That man was none other than Scorpio, the mercenary he had sent to assassinate Zeke a few days ago.

He was paralyzed from head down since Zeke had snapped his spine into half.

When Scorpio disappeared, Mance thought that Scorpio had betrayed him.

The last thing he expected to see was Scorpio becoming General North’s prisoner.

Why did you let yourself get caught, for goodness’ sake?

Illegally recruiting mercenaries was a crime punishable by death.

“Eurasia forbids the recruitment and dispatching of mercenaries by law, no matter



what the mission is!” General North bellowed. “Not only did you break the law, but you also sent a mercenary to stir up trouble. You deserve to die!”

Mance almost fainted from the terror that gnawed at his heart.

Suddenly, another soldier jogged over to General North and saluted at him. “Sir! There is someone posing as you in the building! We’ve received numerous reports from civilians, and we can confirm that it is true.”

That made General North even more irritated. “That’s it! You can’t escape from the death penalty anymore! I’m filing an ‘SSS’ level case against you. Send him to the military court!”

Mance began to panic. “No, General! I didn’t know that he is a fake...”

Before he could finish his sentence, a soldier behind him slammed the butt of his rifle against his head, knocking him out cold.

General North glared at Raider Group coldly. “Seal up the building,” he ordered. “Interrogate every staff member of Raider Group. I’ll make sure to get rid of anyone who’s involved in Mance Raider’s unlawful businesses!”

The tycoons who attended the opening

ceremony of Raider Group began to panic.

Even if they had been innocent, attracting the unwanted attention of General North would definitely affect their businesses, one way or another.

Stupid Mance Raider! He got us all into trouble.

Emily, on the other hand, was absolutely horrified.

As the fiancée of Mance Raider, she would be a prime suspect of the military.

After all, she had been sneaked out of her prison cell by Mance Raider before her time was up.

The Hintons from Riverdale felt hopeless about their situation.

They had seen the warning signs, and yet they decided that it was a good idea to replace Nancy with Emily.

The whole family would face charges for sure!

Aaron turned to Michael and slapped him across the face out of anger.

“You’re the one who got us all into this mess!”

Seeing that his business there was done, General North waved his hand and yelled, "Retreat!"

However, his gaze landed on Linton Group just across the street.

"How many Linton Groups are there in Oakheart City?" he asked. "Are they affiliated with Reinz Pharmaceutical by any chance?"

"There is only one Linton Group in Oakheart City, Sir!" his assistant replied. "They do have business ties with Reinz Pharmaceutical."



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General North nodded. "Get me the manager of the Linton Group medical services division."

The assistant jogged over to Linton Group and asked the staff, "May I ask if the manager of your medical division is around? General North would like to meet him."

The staff began to panic.

Why did General North take a sudden interest in Linton Group?

Are we going to suffer just like Raider Group?

Zeke looked at Daniel and smiled. "Dad, you're the manager. You should go and meet General North. Maybe he wants to reward you."

Daniel took a deep breath and told the assistant, "That would be me."

I'll be glad if I can make it out of there alive...

He rushed over to General North's side on unsteady legs.

"N-nice to meet you, G-General North. I'm Daniel Hinton, th-the manager of Linton Group's medical division!" he stammered.

General North hummed approvingly and said, "The new drug that your company and Reinz

Pharmaceutical jointly produced has saved plenty of lives in my battalions. Well done.”

Wow!

Daniel was overwhelmed with happiness.

He had just been praised by General North!

His ancestors would be proud of him.

General North waved his hand again. “Bring me my calligraphy tools.”

Within seconds, a table was set up with a scroll, ink and brush sitting on it.

General North picked up the brush, dipped it in the ink and swept it across the paper, producing the words ‘Conscientious Business’ in large, dark letters. He handed the scroll over to Daniel and said, “Thank you for saving the lives of my men. Here is a little something I would like to give in return.”

Daniel could almost cry tears of joy from looking at the scroll in his hand.

How is this ‘a little something’?

This is absolutely priceless!

It could become the lucky charm of Linton

Group.

Those words would make them almost invincible against the scheming con artists in the industry.

Daniel did not know what to do besides bowing to General North over and over again while repeating the words, "Thank you! Thank you so much, General North!"

"Retreat!" General North ordered, before getting onto his limousine and leaving the scene.

Sole Wolf had wanted to attend the opening ceremony of Linton Group to raise its reputation, but Zeke was concerned that Lacey and Dawn would recognize him from the construction sites, where he spent months moving bricks.

That was why Zeke told Sole Wolf to write those words for Linton Group instead.

The crowd buzzed as General North disappeared into the distance.

Mance, who had been basking in the limelight just moments ago, had fallen from grace in just seconds. He might even be facing the death penalty for the crimes he had committed.

The opening ceremony had become a funeral,

while Linton Group made an impressive comeback and made themselves the star of the day.

It had been a roller-coaster of a ride.

Daniel made his way back to Linton Group while carefully cradling the scroll in his arms.

The scroll was heavy, not just with General North's appreciation, but also his expectations for Linton Group.

The crowd around him stared at the scroll with envy and reverence.

General North was not a skilled calligrapher, but the words on the scroll were strong and striking nonetheless.

They were written by General North himself, after all.

Zeke, however, was rather disappointed at how the calligraphy turned out.

I spent so long teaching you how to write with a brush, and this is all you can manage?

Even a child can write better than you!

Daniel turned to Hannah and said, "Let's go and frame this up, shall we? This shall be our family

heirloom!”

Hannah took the scroll from his arms as though she was carrying a newborn baby.

The prosperity of the Hinton family would depend on this scroll forever more!



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Daniel and Hannah got into their car and left the company.

Lacey, on the other hand, was sobbing uncontrollably.

She had believed that all hope was lost, and that her very next step would land her in the deepest abyss.

The last thing she had expected would be a blessing from the gods!

Zeke hugged her close and said, "Lacey, why are you crying? It's our lucky day!"

Lacey jumped in realization. "Yeah, you're right! Everyone! Go back to your posts! We're continuing with our opening ceremony!"

Within seconds, Linton Group was bustling with activity again.

The crowd that had been huddled around Raider Group began to gravitate towards Linton Group again.

Now that Linton Group had gotten the blessing of General North, everyone began to consider establishing ties with Linton Group.

They figured that they would get into General North's good books if they were on good terms

with Linton Group.

Maybe they would even be able to escape from General North's scrutiny for supporting Raider Group...

The tycoons led by Ocean's Chamber of Commerce surrounded Lacey once they saw her.

"Linton Group is a blessing to Oakheart City! Good job, Ms. Hinton!"

"Linton Group shall be the leader of Oakheart's economy from now on."

"Ms. Hinton, would you be interested in taking this order from us?"

"Ms. Hinton! We have a better deal for you!"

Lacey knew that being accommodating would bring prosperity to her company, so she accepted every request without hesitation.

Besides, Linton Group needed the support of the tycoons. Getting into arguments with them would not be worth the trouble.

After a long while, the Hintons from Riverdale finally worked up the courage to seek Nancy out.

Not only were the tycoons of Oakheart City siding with Linton Group, even the Ocean's Chamber of Commerce had established ties with them.

If the Hintons from Riverdale did not go with the flow, they would be isolated and crushed by their competitors for sure.

However, they doubted that Linton Group would accept their apologies after all the bullying.

Aaron steeled himself and walked up to Nancy. "Hey, Nancy, it was really stupid of me to make such a decision. Will you come back? The Hintons need you."

Nancy was more than happy to hear such words.

She had been ostracized by the Hintons for the longest time, and that was the first time they apologized to her.

How satisfying!

However, it did not mean that they had changed. The Hintons were used to throwing people they deemed as useless out like trash and pleading for them to come back when they proved themselves worthy.

She was not going to give them what they

wanted.

“No need, Grandpa. I’m doing well at Linton Group, so I don’t want to change jobs anymore,” she said coldly. “Besides, what am I going to do when I go back? Waste your food?”

Aaron turned beet red.

She had thrown his own insults back.

“Please, Nancy, we’re family! Surely you can’t bear to leave us to die?” Aaron pleaded.

“Without you, the Hintons would be dead meat. You grew up with us!”

Nancy glanced at Michael and said, “Grandpa, didn’t you replace me with Emily? I don’t see why I should return.”

Aaron turned around and slapped Michael on the face again the moment he realized what she meant.

“Michael Hinton! Get on your knees now! You’re the one who fed me all the lies about Emily! You’re a criminal!”

Michael kneeled down quietly, too scared to say anything.

Whether he lived or died after that day would solely depend on Nancy’s mood.

“Michael, weren’t you threatening to kill me back then? I’m not forgiving you no matter what!” Nancy snarled.

Aaron’s heart skipped a beat. “What? He tried to kill you? Weren’t you the one who framed him for it?”

Nancy laughed bitterly. “Grandpa, what kind of person am I to you?”



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Afterwards, she turned around and promptly strode off.

Aaron glared at Michael. “Did you actually plot against your cousin?”

“Grandpa, everything I do is for the family...” Michael argued, unknowingly confirming Aaron’s suspicions.

“You heartless beast!” Aaron bellowed as sparks seemed to fly from his stormy eyes. He smacked Michael a third time and yelled, “I shouldn’t have invested so much into a traitor like you! She’s your cousin, for goodness’ sake! How dare you hurt her! Now, kneel here until Nancy forgives you. If she doesn’t forgive you, you’re staying here forever!”

That day, both Raider Group and Linton Group became famous.

However, the difference was that Raider Group’s reputation had gone down the drain, while Linton Group became the legend of Oakheart City.

Not only did Linton Group manage to recruit the Master Healer, but they also even received praise from General North, who called them a ‘Conscientious Business’.

The opening ceremony went on all the way to

10 P.M..

Lacey was in a splendid mood, so she decided to treat all her staff members to a feast at the Grand Millennium Hotel.

She told Dawn to bring the staff to the hotel first while she and Zeke stayed back to lock the doors.

When they finally headed towards their car after locking the doors, they caught sight of a shadow that charged straight towards them.

Zeke shoved Lacey behind him instinctively.

However, the shadow fell to the floor right in front of them.

Lacey took a good look at the shadow and said, "Oh, it's you, Emily Clemons."

"Please, Lacey! I beg you! Let me join Linton Group!" Emily pleaded as tears fell from her eyes. "I can be your slave from now on! You don't even need to pay me!"

She had been hiding nearby for the whole day, waiting for a chance to plead with the two of them for mercy, but there had been too many people around during the day.

After several hours, the crowd had finally

cleared, and Lacey and Zeke were the only two left.

However, Lacey was not going to forgive her so easily.

She shook her head. "Sorry. We don't have room for you. Let's go, Zeke."

She took Zeke's arm and took a step forward towards her car.

Suddenly, Emily wrapped her arms around Lacey's leg, dragging her backwards.

"Please, Lacey! I need your help! General North's after me! My mom has gone mad and my brother lost his arm, so they need me to look after them! They'll die if anything happens to me!" She sobbed.

"You're the only one who can help me... Maybe General North won't be suspicious of me anymore once I join Linton Group! Lacey, please, I can't die..." Emily continued to cry.

Her sob story made Lacey's resolve waver.

There would be three lives she would ruin if she abandoned Emily!

She looked at Zeke tentatively, seeking his opinion.



Zeke's expression was cold and unforgiving. "Listen. We would forgive you if you were just unlucky, but since you're guilty as well, there's nothing we can do to help you. Let's go, Lacey."

Zeke pulled Lacey into their car and drove off without looking back.

Emily clenched her jaw together in anger as she watched them leave.

"You dumb b\*tch! You f\*cking simp! Even if I'm going to die, I'll drag both of you down to hell with me! So you think that getting rid of your competition would mean eternal peace? Hah! How naïve! Mance will take revenge from the underground!"

Emily continued to spit, "It would be a waste for the Rivermouth underworld to collapse just because someone wants revenge against Zeke Williams. Wait... What if someone tells the Rivermouth underworld that they are going to suffer because of Zeke Williams? Surely they'll kick him and Linton Group out of Rivermouth! Haha! That's right! I'm going to spread that information to the underworld right now! Just you wait, Zeke Williams!"



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Meanwhile...

John carefully took out his phone and dialed the phone number of his 'boss'.

He managed to escape certain doom by sneaking out of the building just before Mance was arrested.

"Boss, I have bad news," he said into the phone.

He told his 'boss' about the failure of their attempt to squeeze Linton Group out of the market, as well as Mance's arrest.

The 'boss' flew into a rage the moment he heard his words. "Imbeciles! My plan was perfect, and that b\*stard just had to ruin it! What General North? What mercenary? He's digging his own grave! I invested twenty years of my time into Mance, and this is all he could do? Looks like I've overestimated him!"

John sighed. "Mance is just too eager to prove himself. Killing couldn't satisfy him, so he invited General North and recruited the mercenary for his mind games. What should we do next, Boss?"

"Let's execute our plans for the underworld," the 'boss' said coldly.

"Who can we send for this mission, may I ask?"

John questioned.

The 'boss' went silent all of sudden.

Zeke had disposed of all his contacts in Rivermouth.

First it was Logan and Jacob Hugh, then it was Wilson Wood and Harvey Hoffman.

Even Hades and Eclipse betrayed him in the end.

There was no one left besides John.

The 'boss' began to fear for his life when that thought occurred to him.

In fact, he began to feel threatened.

"Looks like we've been underestimating this Zeke Williams guy. I don't remember the last time I've felt so threatened! John, listen up! You shall be in charge of the underworld attack plan. I forbid you from failing!"

"Yes, Boss!" John hurriedly said.

"Also, get rid of Jeffrey Huckermann for me. Don't let Zeke Williams cure him!"

"Understood," John replied. "Oh, Boss, what about Mance Raider?"

“Hmph! He’s just a stupid mule. Why care about him?” the ‘boss’ huffed. “Besides, I can’t save him from his own stupidity! What made him think it was a good idea to get someone to impersonate General North?”

“Yes, Boss, I understand,” John answered apprehensively.

He struggled to collect his thoughts after hanging up.

Mance was the godson of his boss, and yet he had just abandoned Mance without batting an eye.

What would happen to me if I failed?

Working for that man was like walking on a tightrope.

If he failed, the ‘boss’ would definitely be after his blood.

John told himself that he would not fail. After all, his ‘boss’ had brought in his elite forces from Eastend.

...

Linton Group was the talk of the town.

With the entire Rivermouth supporting them,

shareholders flocked to them the moment they entered the market.

Their stock prices rose to the limit and stayed there for a long time.

The net worth of Linton Group doubled as they managed to squeeze into the ranks of the top ten corporations in Rivermouth, and the whole of Eurasia took notice of them.

However, with the praise came jealousy and hate, and a rumor began to spread amongst the communities as Linton Group continued to prosper.

According to the rumor, the rise of Linton Group had gotten in the way of a certain tycoon, who decided to take revenge against Zeke Williams, one of the leaders of Linton Group.

He had his eyes set on destroying the underworld forces of Rivermouth.

Rivermouth's economy had been stable for decades, hence the collapse of the underworld would be a blow to the delicate balance that Rivermouth had been maintaining. It would be devastating to the community as well.

Soon, the rumor had spread to every corner of Rivermouth, and the people of Rivermouth began to live in fear.

Many small and medium enterprises began to exit the Rivermouth market in a bid to protect themselves.

After some time, the fifty million residents of Rivermouth decided that they had had enough, and they started a movement to call for peace and protection from harm.

At last, the Rivermouth branch of the Martial Arts Association of Eurasia announced that they had contacted Barnaby Claymoore, a martial arts master from North Hampton to station himself at Rivermouth and defend the people from the enemies.



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Barnaby Claymoore's arrival came as a respite to the Rivermouth community.

No one was ignorant of his great deeds.

He had been a legend in Eurasia, clinching the top prize for the annual martial arts competition for five years in a row back in his youth.

Later, he managed to defeat a whole city of people alone, earning him the title of 'Master Claymoore'.

Legend had it that even the military tried to recruit him as their martial arts instructor.

With such a respectable person stationed in Rivermouth, there was no need for its citizens to fear for their lives anymore.

...

Meanwhile, at Linton Group...

Lacey, Nancy, Dawn and Susan sat down at the cafeteria with their food.

The staff at Linton Group had nicknamed them as the 'four golden flowers' of the company.

Their dazzling beauty was blinding whenever they sat together.



The male employees could not help but glance at them every so often.

However, for the 'four golden flowers' themselves, the food in their trays tasted like ash and cardboard.

Dawn scooped the meat in her stew into Lacey's bowl. "Lacey, you can have this. I'm on a diet. I'm so jealous of you! You don't seem to gain weight no matter how much you eat!" she said, puffing her cheeks in exasperation.

Lacey grinned. "Well, I can't help that! It's a blessing from the gods."

Lacey's beautiful smile captivated the male employees around them completely.

Nancy spoke up all of a sudden. "Speaking of going on diets, I know of this diet master..."

The four women began to chatter cheerfully.

However, after a while, they found themselves wandering to the topic of the underworld attack.

Lacey frowned. "Did you hear about the rumors?"

The three others nodded with grim expressions on their faces.

Lacey sighed. "Why are we still being targeted? We're just doing our jobs as a business!"

"Don't worry, Lacey! Zeke is too powerful for them!" Dawn said.

Nancy scoffed. "That good-for-nothing beggar? Even a pig can do a better job than him! Sure, he's a fighter, but I doubt he'll be able to hold off any attacks at this scale!"

Dawn looked at her accusingly. "Nancy, why are you being so rude towards him? Does he owe you something?"

"No worries, Lacey. Isn't Master Claymoore from North Hampton coming to protect Rivermouth?" Susan interjected. "Everything will be fine as long as Master Claymoore is around."

Nancy nodded. "Yeah, you're right. Besides, even if Master Claymoore failed, my hero will come and save the day."

Nancy felt disappointed whenever she thought about her hero.

She had seen her hero, General North, in person back at the opening ceremony, yet he did not have the time to visit her because he was so busy.

Nancy regretted not approaching him directly.

What a waste of an opportunity!

“Yeah, I believe in Master Claymoore too,” Lacey said, nodding.

Suddenly, a group of people that looked like MMA fighters rushed into the building.

“Who are the managers of this place? Tell them to come here!” they yelled the moment they barged in.

Everyone whirled around to look at them.

Each of them was muscular and well-built. Together, they gave off an intimidating aura.

The female employees began to back off in fear.

One of them walked past the group, and the leader, who had a bowl cut, pushed her onto the floor roughly. “Hey! Are you blind? How dare you block my way?”

The employee fell to the ground with a loud thud, the bowl in her hands shattering into pieces.

One of the shards sliced her hand, making it bleed.

She could only sit on the floor in shock as she

stared at the man with the bowl cut.

“What the hell?” Dawn spat, running over to help the employee up.



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Lacey put down her utensils and murmured, "Let's go and take a look."

Morgan became excited when he looked at the four women. A perverted smile grew on his lips.

Beautiful!

These four women are too damn beautiful!

I'll die with no regrets if I can get either one of them to bed!

With a lowered voice, Lacey asked, "Who are you? Why did you hit my employee?"

Morgan replied, "We're from the Martial Arts Association. We're here to collect your protection money."

Lacey frowned. "Protection money? What protection money?"

Morgan smirked. "Are you ignorant, or are you pretending not to know about it? Someone is about to lay siege against the Linton Group and the Rivermouth underworld forces. We, the Martial Arts Association, will be taking over this case. If we're protecting you, shouldn't you pay us protection money? Moreover, we've hired Master Barnaby Claymoore for this. It isn't cheap to hire him."

Lacey took in a deep breath.

Martial Arts Association was a powerful organization, and she could not afford to cross them.

Moreover, it was true that they needed them to protect Rivermouth this time. The protection money was not unwarranted.

She said, "We can pay the protection money, but you'll have to apologize to her."

Lacey pointed to the female employee, who was pushed onto the floor.

Morgan grinned. "Apologize? Sure. I'm sorry, babe, I didn't mean it. I don't have anything to compensate you with. Why don't I compensate with my body?"

"Hahaha!" The men from Martial Arts Association laughed boisterously.

"Son of a b\*tch!" Dawn gritted her teeth and glared at Morgan.

Morgan roared, "Who the f\*ck are you calling a son of a b\*tch? You brat, I'm going to teach you a lesson today. Men, I want her in my bed. I'm going to teach her what respect is today!"

"Haha!"

His subordinates behind him started walking toward Dawn with lustful eyes.

Horrified, Lacey hurriedly stood in front of Dawn.

“Stop right there! Don’t you want protection money? How much is it? I’ll pay for it!”

Lacey knew that naming themselves Martial Arts Association was just a nicer way of calling themselves thugs.

Trying to reason with them was fruitless; it would only make things worse.

All she could do for the staff who was bullied was financial compensation.

She was helpless in the situation.

Morgan muttered, “You should’ve done this obediently long ago. One billion, and the four of you have to sleep with us.”

Lacey’s face turned purple in rage.

She had never seen anyone crossing the line as far as he did.

One billion of protection money was already ridiculous, not to mention the humiliating second condition.

Lacey gritted out, "Dream on."

Morgan asked indifferently, "What's wrong? Do you have a problem with that? We've been protecting you with our lives. Will it kill you to sleep with us for a night? If you say no, then get out of Rivermouth. You have to know that the other party is attacking Rivermouth because of Linton Group. You are the culprit!"

Dawn hissed, "Do you think that you Martial Arts Association can get to do whatever you want? Even the king has to obey the law. Get lost before I call the cops."

At that, Dawn took out her phone, about to call the police.

Morgan rushed forward to snatch the phone and threw it onto the ground.

"I'll kill whoever dares to call the f\*cking cops. So what if the cops come? I'll hit them as well. Lacey, I'm giving you one last chance. Yes, or no? If you say no, we'll do you a favor and move your house for free."

Lacey's tone was determined as she uttered, "No way."

Damn it!

Morgan fumed, "You're a stupid ignorant girl."



Boys, wreck this place. Linton Group has to disappear from Rivermouth by today.”



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With that said, Morgan and the rest started their destruction.

One of his subordinates knocked over the soup pot, and the hot soup spilled onto the four women. They gasped when they felt the pain.

The male employees could not bear watching those thugs bullying the women anymore.

One of them bellowed, "Boys, Ms. Hinton has been good to us. We can't possibly do nothing when she's bullied by others! Charge! Make them scam out of here!"

"Charge!" The employees charged forward and surrounded the women in the middle protectively.

"Haha! Very well!" Morgan did not fear them. In fact, he even burst into laughter. "A group of fools who live under a rock! I'm going to show you what true warriors are like. Men, it's a free for all today. Do anything you like. Hit them until they don't know who they are!"

"Haha! Fantastic!" The men from the Martial Arts Association cheered and charged forward.

Both parties began fighting.

It was a chaotic scene, and roars and shouts filled the air.

Frightened, Lacey hurriedly took out her phone to call Zeke.

“Zeke, quick, come to Linton Group’s cafeteria. Someone’s here to stir up trouble-”

Before she could finish her words, someone from the Martial Arts Association had snatched her phone away and threw it onto the ground.

He raised his hand, about to hit Lacey, but he was stopped by one of the employees.

Zeke had just fetched Sharon home from school when Lacey called him.

After hearing her words, fury surged in his veins. He flew down the stairs and sped his way to Linton Group.

Damn it. I thought the message from Sole Wolf would have been enough to deter anyone from trying to lay their hands on Linton Group.

Turns out idiots are everywhere.

By the time Zeke reached the Linton Group’s cafeteria, the battle was over.

Evidently, the Linton Group’s male employees had lost.

They were all injured and lying on the ground.

At least four had blood flowing down their heads, and they were all unconscious.

The men from the Martial Arts Association were professional fighters, so they were good at their roles.

On the other hand, the employees from Linton Group were just ordinary people. The fighting capability between the two parties was worlds apart; the Linton Group employees hardly stood a chance.

Lacey, Dawn, and a group of female employees were trembling in a corner.

Despite the fear in her, Lacey shouted, "You're all being too much! You're challenging the law!"

Morgan laughed arrogantly. "The law is to restrict you fools. It is nothing to me. My words remain the same. One billion and sleeping with us as the protection money. Otherwise, I'll make sure this place turns to dust."

Zeke was burning with rage. Nothing could calm him down.

He seethed, "Who are the ones who did this? Get on your knees and apologize right now!"

It was only then that Morgan realized Zeke's presence.

“Who the f\*ck are you? You have no right to speak here. Scram, or else you’ll end up like them.”

He pointed at the male employees on the floor.

Zeke answered, “I’m your father. When my son has done something wrong, I, as the father, have the right to teach him a lesson!”

His words infuriated Morgan.

He hissed, “Men, surround this b\*stard! Don’t let him escape.”

In an instant, the men from Martial Arts Association had surrounded Zeke.

The male employees, who were on the floor, panicked.

“Mr. Williams, hurry up and leave. Don’t worry about us.”

“That’s right. Mr. Williams, these are professional fighters. You can’t win against them.”

“There were so many of us, yet we couldn’t win against them, not to mention that you’re alone right now.”

“You have to call the cops quickly. You can’t get

hurt!”

Lacey’s face was red from anxiety.

“Zeke, don’t go up against them. You’re no match for them. Let’s sit down and have a talk. I’m sure we can solve this peacefully.”



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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Zeke sighed in disappointment. “Lacey, I’m angry.”

Lacey was confused.

“Zeke, why are you angry?”

Zeke answered, “Am I that lousy in your eyes? Do I look as if I can’t win against these thugs?”

Lacey was silent.

Morgan fumed. “F\*ck, you’re being absurd! Men, get him!”

The group immediately closed in on Zeke.

Zeke remained calm as he lit his cigarette.

Everyone was speechless.

He’s still pretending to be cool at a time like this. How pretentious.

Morgan was the first to move nearer to Zeke. He raised his leg in preparation for a kick.

At the same time, Zeke made his move.

He raised his leg higher than Morgan’s and swung it downwards.

It landed right on Morgan’s knee.

Crack!

There was the sound of bones snapping.

“Ah!”

That was the sound of Morgan screaming.

Morgan’s leg was snapped cleanly in half by Zeke.

Then, Zeke grabbed Morgan’s arm and swung him in a circle.

Thump! Thump! Thump!

Thumping noises echoed in the room.

Before the men from Martial Arts Association could come close to Zeke, they were smacked away by Morgan’s body.

Zeke’s force was so mighty that he could even send an elephant flying.

It was unfortunate for Morgan, who was in his hands. After a round, his world spun as his head buzzed. In the end, he retched and vomited miserably.

His leg hurt, his head hurt, and his arm hurt because it was dislocated by Zeke.



The sharp pain nearly sent him into shock.

One of the men did not sustain severe injuries. While Zeke was busy with Morgan, he jumped to his feet, preparing to ambush him.

However, Zeke had noticed him.

He swung his weapon—Morgan—at the other man.

Thump!

The other man passed out instantly.

Even Morgan's head was bleeding profusely.

"F\*ck!" Morgan howled. "Don't stand up anymore. I'm dying! If you stand up, he'll use me as his weapon again. I'll die at this rate!"

However, he had overestimated his men's endurance; they were already too spent to stand up and too injured to defend themselves.

The cafeteria was silent, and only sounds of Zeke smoking could be heard.

Everyone was staring at him with wide eyes.

"Damn it. He's too strong!"

Morgan was over 200 pounds, and even two of

them might not be able to lift him.

However, Zeke had lifted him as if he was just a whip.

There were so many of them, but they could not win against one man. Zeke had only spent several seconds in defeating them, and he was not even halfway through his cigarette!

He was impressive!

Zeke smiled gently at Lacey.

“Lacey, you’ve underestimated me. Apologize to me.”

Lacey’s jaw fell, her eyes widening in surprise.

The female employees cried out in their hearts. A madman!

He’s a madman!

Oh, but I love it!

The few women stared at Zeke’s broad chest in excitement.

Zeke looked at the men from Martial Arts Association coldly and said, “You have two choices. One is to get on your knees and apologize. The other is for me to break your

legs and cripple you for the rest of your lives.”

After watching Zeke’s actions, none dared to disobey him. They swiftly got on their knees and apologized.

However, Morgan remained motionless.

Zeke glared at him.

“It seems like you’ve chosen for me to break your legs.”

Morgan answered, “M-My legs are already broken.”

Zeke replied, “Then, I’ll break your third leg.”

Morgan was close to having a mental breakdown.

F\*ck, you have no intentions of sticking to your own rules. Didn’t broken legs mean not needing to get on my knees?

One of my legs is already broken. Why do I still need to get on my knees?



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With no other options, Morgan dragged himself and got on his knees to apologize.

After that, the men from the Martial Arts Association were dizzy from the prolonged kneeling. They could barely stand, but still, they rushed out of the cafeteria.

Morgan's arm and leg were broken. After the prolonged kneeling, he was almost dead; he could not move from his spot at all.

In the end, he was dragged up to his car.

The moment he was in the car, he roared at Zeke, "Williams, the Linton Group and you will be dead meat soon! Master Barnaby Claymoore is my uncle, and I'm going to ask him to kill you! You have to f\*cking die!"

Zeke's reply to him was spoken in an indifferent manner.

"I don't care what damn Master he is. He'll have to submit to me when I'm in front of him."

"F\*ck, you're beyond arrogant!" Morgan thundered, "Just you wait. On this day next year, you'll be six feet under!"

When they noticed Zeke about to charge toward them again, Morgan hurriedly shouted for the driver to drive off.

Zeke returned to the cafeteria. To the male employees on the floor, he said, "Good job, boys. The company will cover your medical fees. Also, everyone will be rewarded with 50 thousand each."

"Thank you, sir!" The male employees were overjoyed as they thanked him.

Their employer was rich and generous; their bonuses were in the thousands.

However, Lacey was worriedly looking at Zeke.

"Zeke, we've crossed the Martial Arts Association and Master Claymoore at the same time. What are we going to do?"

Zeke consoled, "Don't worry, Lacey. It'll be fine as long as I'm here. I've heard that that Master Claymoore is someone who only dares to bully the weak. He's no good man, and he's done many evil deeds. Someone will eventually teach him a lesson."

Lacey smiled bitterly.

"Do you think he's Morgan? He's way more capable, and he's a competent fighter in Eurasia. Who has the capability to teach him a lesson?"

Zeke smiled as he replied, "I can."

Lacey responded, "Stop messing with me."

So, Zeke changed the topic.

"Hm? It's pork stew today? What good timing. I'm hungry. Give me a serving..."

...

At the Martial Arts Association, the atmosphere was tense.

The president of the association, Daxton Wright, was looking at the injured Morgan and his men as he gritted his teeth.

"Damn it! Who were the ones who beat you up like this?"

Morgan swiftly reported, "Williams. Zeke Williams from the Linton Group. Mr. Wright, you have to take revenge for us!"

He then explained to Daxton what happened.

Of course, he had intentionally left out the part where he had forced the four women to sleep with them; he only told him that Zeke had beaten them up unreasonably.

After listening, the other members of the Martial Arts Association, including Daxton, were furious.

“This is preposterous! This is ludicrous! What they’ve done is unforgivable! How dare they hit the members of the Martial Arts Association? Where is their respect for the Martial Arts Association? Hmph! We’ll have to make an example out of them today to show the rest what the Martial Arts Association is made of. The Martial Arts Association has been around for decades, and we’ve never suffered humiliation as great as this.”

Daxton waved his hand, gesturing for the rest to be silent.

He asked, “How many were there to beat you up like this?”

Morgan replied,

“One man, and in the time of smoking half a cigarette.”

What?

The hall fell silent. Everyone looked in disbelief at him.

Morgan and his men were the pillars of the Martial Arts Association; they were capable fighters.

Yet, they could not last more than the time used for smoking half a cigarette under Zeke’s



blows.

Even Daxton was not as capable of a fighter as Morgan was.

That meant that Zeke was a terrifying fighter.

The silence continued as no one dared to make any remarks on the matter.

Zeke had been right. They were bullies who only dared to target the weak.

Knowing that they would not dare to go against Zeke, Morgan said, "Where's my uncle? Why isn't my uncle here yet? I want my uncle to kill Williams."



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Everyone's eyes lit up.

That's right. Claymoore will soon be here. If he finds out that his nephew had been beaten up, he will definitely teach Zeke a lesson.

There will be no need for the Martial Arts Association to do anything when that happens.

Daxton quickly answered, "Master Claymoore is about to arrive. When he's here, all he needs to do is to snap his fingers, and Williams will be nothing but dust!"

Someone voiced out their doubts, "Master Claymoore won't make a move easily. It's not realistic for us to ask him to exact revenge on Zeke."

Daxton said, "We won't need Master Claymoore to go to the Linton Group. I'll make Williams come to Martial Arts Association instead. Tell them to send an invitation to Williams. We're inviting him to participate in our United Front Conference. I'll set up a trap for him. This time, he won't be able to escape."

...

In the evening, Zeke received Hades' call.

"Mr. Williams, it's been a while. I hope you've been well."

“Yes.”

Hades continued, “Mr. Williams, my investigation has told me that my old boss was the one who planned the ambush on you and the Rivermouth underworld forces.”

Zeke hummed, “Yes, I had guessed that. I removed all his power in Rivermouth, and even Eclipse and you had betrayed him. It’ll be odd if he doesn’t come after me.”

Hades sighed, “My old boss has mobilized elite forces from the Eastend for this attack. The underworld forces of Rivermouth will not be a match for his forces.”

Zeke answered, “Yes, but I’ve heard that the Martial Arts Association is planning to intervene in this as well. In fact, they’ve even invited Barnaby Claymoore.”

Hades nodded. “If the Martial Arts Association and Master Claymoore are willing to help us, we’ll have a higher chance of winning. But I’ve just gotten wind that you had a conflict with the Martial Arts Association.”

Zeke replied, “I beat someone up from the Martial Arts Association. Tell me honestly. Why are you looking for me?”

Hades smiled bitterly. “The men from the

Martial Arts Association asked me to inform you to participate in their United Front Conference. They're planning to hold a discussion about facing a common enemy. I'm assuming this is a trap set up for you. Mr. Williams, for the sake of Rivermouth, I hope you'll attend it."

Zeke answered, "I will."

Hades hesitated, but he managed to muster up the courage to say, "Mr. Williams, I hope that when you're at the United Front Conference, you won't act recklessly. Please hold back as much as you can. Eclipse isn't much stronger than Master Claymoore. If we really get into a fight, Eclipse and I can't guarantee your safety. Also, if we end up crossing the Martial Arts Association and they refuse to help us, we'll definitely lose in the attack from my old boss. Remember, lack of forbearance in small matters upsets great plans."

Zeke nodded. "Don't worry. I'll guarantee Eclipse's and your safety."

Click!

Zeke ended the call.

Hades was speechless.

Young man, it's good to be confident, but it's

terrible if you're arrogant.

He just said that he'll guarantee Eclipse's and my safety. How arrogant is he to say words like these?

...

The United Front Conference of the Martial Arts Association started at eight.

Zeke only arrived at half-past eight; he was the last to arrive.

The round conference table was already full. Seated were prominent figures from Martial Arts Association, Hades, and Eclipse.

Even a city gang leader like Darren Collins did not have the right to participate in the conference.

There were no empty seats at the table, so Zeke could only stand aside.

Hades offered the seat to him with a sigh. "I'm old now. Sitting for too long makes my back sore. Let me stand up and move about. Mr. Williams, take my seat instead."

However, Zeke had a smile on his face as he pressed Hades back on his seat, forcing him to stay seated.

“If your back is sore, stay seated for a while longer. You’ll get used to it soon. Moving around won’t be good for you.”

Then, he glared at Morgan beside him and said coldly, “Get up.”



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Morgan was close to exploding in rage.

This was his territory, but the other man was still acting as arrogantly as ever.

He snarled, "Why do I have to offer my seat to you?"

Zeke pinched his broken hand.

"Ah!" Morgan howled in pain.

Zeke replied to him, "Because of this."

F\*ck!

Morgan was starting to feel afraid.

This guy is as strong as an ox. If he's serious about it, he'll break my arm!

With no other choices, he stood up and offered his seat despite the humiliation.

Zeke sat down casually.

"Thank you."

Thump!

Daxton slammed the table in rage.

"Williams, you're too much! Not only did you hit

my men, but you also forced Morgan to offer you his seat. Do you really think the Martial Arts Association is an easy target?"

Zeke nodded.

"That's right. That's what I think."

Everyone was silent for a moment.

F\*ck. He's damn haughty!

He's like an animal waiting to be slaughtered, but he's still spouting such high-and-mighty words and provoking the Martial Arts Association.

He must have a death wish.

Hades and Eclipse shared a helpless look.

Hades sighed in his heart. It was pointless to remind him earlier.

He steeled his heart and explained on behalf of Zeke, "Haha! Don't take his words to heart. This young man loves to joke. His earlier words were just a joke..."

Zeke shook his head. "I'm not joking. I'm serious."

Everyone was speechless, including Hades.



Ugh. You can't blame anyone for what they're gonna do next. Even I can't help you this time.

Daxton's face was grim.

This man has no respect for me!

He gritted out, "Williams, I know you're on good terms with Hades and Eclipse, but Master Claymoore is here today. They won't be able to guarantee your safety."

Zeke lazily replied, "Oh. That Claymoore who allows his nephew to make trouble and bully women? He's not worthy to be called a master. Today, I'm here to strip him of his title!"

What?

This man's saying that he's going to strip Master Claymoore of his title?

He's playing with fire!

Everyone was stunned, and some even slammed their fists on the table in anger.

Daxton laughed. "Well, well. You've got guts. I like people who have guts like you. When Master Claymoore is here, I hope you'll continue to run your mouth like that."

Right then, a voice called out from outside the

room.

“Master Claymoore has arrived!”

Daxton hurriedly said, “Let’s go and greet him.”

With Daxton in the lead, the members of the Martial Arts Association rushed out to greet the man.

Hades and Eclipse exchanged glances as their expressions turned grim.

In a low voice, Hades whispered, “It seems like the United Front Conference will become a witch-hunt instead. Eclipse, if worse comes to worst, how confident are you in defeating Master Claymoore?”

Eclipse sighed, “If I were younger by a few years, Barnaby won’t be a problem. But I’m old and easily tired now. If I’m to go against the younger and stronger Barnaby... I’m not certain I can win.”

Upon hearing that, Hades felt dejected. “Then, it’s not worth the risk. It seems like we can only solve this through monetary means. Young man, leave this to us later. Don’t speak anymore. This is for the sake of Rivermouth’s underworld forces. You have to restrain yourself.”

Zeke answered, "No need. This is a personal matter between Barnaby and me. The two of you don't need to intervene in it."

Hades and Eclipse were angry at his words.

This young man's too selfish.

He's risking 50 million lives in Rivermouth for his personal revenge.

We've overestimated him in the past.



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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Soon, Barnaby entered the hall, surrounded by a group of people.

Barnaby was a man with a wide and muscular body. His arms were thick as if he were an ape, and the aura he exuded was suffocating and pressurizing.

As expected of a master.

The moment he entered, Morgan whined, "Uncle, I've been beaten up. You have to serve me justice!"

Barnaby glared at Morgan and scolded, "You're a man. How can you be on your knees and sobbing? You're an embarrassment to the martial artists! Get up right now!"

Morgan continued, "Uncle, my leg and arm's broken. I can't stand up."

"What?" A vein on Barnaby's forehead popped. "How dare anyone hit my nephew? Whoever they are, they're playing with fire! Did you not tell your opponents that you're Barnaby Claymoore's nephew?"

Morgan muttered, "I did. But instead of stopping, he even said he'll strip you of your title!"

"This is preposterous!" Barnaby slammed his

fist on the table.

The marble table started cracking under his fist, and in an instant, the entire table collapsed in ruins.

Everyone gasped in shock, their eyes widening.

They were stunned by the murderous aura that Barnaby exuded.

“I want to take a look at that daring man who claims he’ll strip me of my title.”

Morgan was about to point out Zeke when Eclipse interrupted, “Barnaby, it’s been a while. How have you been?”

Barnaby turned to look at Eclipse in surprise.

“Eclipse from Rivermouth? What a coincidence.”

“Let’s sit down and talk,” Eclipse said.

Barnaby nodded. Right before he sat down, he suddenly thought of something and asked coldly, “Eclipse, what do you want to talk to me about? Don’t tell me that you know who’s the one trying to strip me of my title, and you’re going to ask me to spare his life. I’ll warn you now. I don’t care who speaks on his behalf. I’ll definitely skin that arrogant man alive!”

Eclipsed sighed, "What if I insist on protecting him?"

Without hesitation, Barnaby uttered, "Then I'll skin you alive as well."

It was obvious that he felt only disdain toward the prominent figure of Rivermouth.

Eclipse was now infuriated with him.

Regardless of everything, he was still Barnaby's senior. No one could tolerate being looked down on by a junior.

In a placid tone, he said, "Barnaby, don't you think you're being a little too conceited? Do you remember losing to me ten years ago? You were the loser, but now you think you can skin the winner alive. This is the greatest joke I've heard all day!"

Barnaby scoffed, "A true hero won't speak of their past achievements. Now, I'm someone you can't cross. An old man like you should go home and prepare your coffin."

In other words, Barnaby was mocking that Eclipse was old and useless now.

Eclipse hummed, "Is that so? I'd like to see with my own eyes why I can't cross you."

“Haha! Good. I look forward to it. Move out of the way!”

The crowd parted enthusiastically and left a large empty space for them.

One was a master in Eurasia, and the other was the top assassin in Rivermouth. It was an honor to see either of them in action.

Hence, it was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to witness the two elites exchanging blows.

A worried look crept past Hades' face.

“Eclipse, you-”

Eclipse shook his head in his direction.

“I've made up my mind, Hades. There's no need to waste your breath on me. No one can give one respect. One has to earn it oneself.”

Hades sighed but said nothing else.

If it weren't for Zeke, Eclipse wouldn't have to risk his life today. If he loses, it'll be the end of his legacy.



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“Surrender!” Barnaby made the first move.

At the same time, Eclipse rushed toward him.

Boom!

At their first blows, the atmosphere in the room seemed to change. The air became tense, and even the temperature had dropped.

In the beginning, both were equally powerful.

The poor hall suffered the most. The furniture was shattered by the attacks, and even the walls had holes like a beehive. It was as if the walls were about to collapse at any time.

However, as time went by, Eclipse’s disadvantage revealed itself. He was old, and he had less stamina. Soon, he was starting to tire, and he kept exposing weak points to his opponent.

Although he had done his best to make up for those exposures, his opponent was too swift. He was nearly taken down by the other man several times.

In the end, Barnaby found the opportunity to punch Eclipse’s chest.

Pfft!

Eclipse coughed out a mouthful of blood as he flew backward and crashed into a wall. He then fell onto a table, which shattered immediately.

The older man lay limp on the floor.

He tried to stand up, but even a slight movement brought blood up to his throat again.

A punch from Barnaby had crippled Eclipse, the top assassin from Rivermouth.

The crowd was stunned. Then, many started sighing.

They were stunned because as a martial arts master, Barnaby's blows were deadly.

They were sighing because the top assassin of Rivermouth, who had ruled over Rivermouth for decades, got an ending like this.

From now on, there would be no Eclipse in Eurasia.

The crowd sighed again.

Even Zeke sighed in disappointment as he looked at Eclipse.

His disappointed look made Eclipse burn in rage.

I'm in this state because of you! Not only are you ungrateful, but you're even shaking your head and sighing!

Where is your conscience?

Zeke stepped forward and said, "You didn't show them your full power, did you?"

Eclipse replied, "I'm old, and my body doesn't keep up with my mind anymore. I can't show my full power."

Zeke shook his head. "Wrong. You're wrong. For martial artists, especially one of your level, age is barely a factor to your power."

He continued, "For you, it's because you've been injured at your energy center. Blood has clotted there, and that's why it's affecting your display of power. Your energy center is around your waist, and it's the place where your energy comes from. In other words, your energy center's blocked, so your power can't be fully released."

Eclipse looked at him in confusion. "Really? Why didn't I know that my energy center's been injured? Where is the energy center?"

Zeke pointed at Eclipse's belly button.

"It's here."

Eclipse pondered. “Hm. Ten years ago, in my previous fight with Barnaby, he did injure me there. But it wasn’t anything serious back then... Since you said that I can’t display my full power because of the injured energy center, is there a way to cure that?”

Zeke answered, “If I’m telling you this, that means there’s a way to cure it. You need months to fully recover from it. But I can temporarily clear the blockage for now. It’ll last for half an hour.”

Eclipse nodded. “Even if it only lasts for five minutes, that’s already more than enough for me to cripple Barnaby.”

Zeke nodded.

“Okay.”

He took out a silver needle and carefully pushed it into Eclipse’s energy center.

“Try now.”

Eclipse closed his eyes and cleared his mind of other thoughts.

When he opened his eyes again, they were bright and watery.

It’s working!

In the past, whenever he had tried to clear his mind and focus entirely on one thing, his entire body would hurt, especially his abdomen area. It was an exploding pain that he could barely withstand.

However, now, he could fully focus without any pain.

This meant that he would be able to show his full power; he was now at the peak combat state!

“Young man, I’ll never forget what you’ve done for me,” Eclipse choked out.

Now, it was as if he had been reborn. It was impossible for him not to feel excited.



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Zeke muttered, "No need for thanks."

Morgan pointed at Zeke and shouted, "Uncle, this is the b\*stard who hit me. He's the one who said he'll strip you of your title!"

Barnaby glanced at Zeke in disappointment.

"A thin body, light footsteps, and shallow breathing. He's at most an average martial artist. It'll be humiliating for me to go up against a man like him. Forget it. Young man, you shall dig out your own eyes and cut your own tongue before leaving. It's embarrassing for me to deal a blow on you."

Zeke had a faint smile on his lips.

"I'm afraid you won't get the chance to."

"Ignorant fool," Barnaby uttered, "Are you challenging my patience?"

Eclipse stood up and announced, "You have to go through me before thinking of going against this young man."

Barnaby shook his head, disappointed. He sighed, "A man must know his own place. Eclipse, you don't even have basic knowledge like this. Your path in martial arts is doomed to be short. Very well. Since you seek death, I shall grant you that. I have shown you mercy the last

time, but I won't this time."

At that, he pounced on Eclipse like a tiger.

Without taking a step back, Eclipse charged toward him. The two began the fight anew.

Barnaby was joyous in his heart. The power Eclipse had right now was not even as strong as he had earlier.

This time, he would kill him for good.

The longer the fight went on, the stronger Barnaby became. His blows forced Eclipse to take steps back, and the latter soon lost his calm.

Finally, Barnaby took another chance to punch Eclipse's chest again.

This time, he had put full force into the punch; he wanted to make sure that this hit had enough force to kill Eclipse.

However, right then, something changed.

Instead of dodging it, Eclipse reached out to grab Barnaby's fist and stopped him.

Barnaby's face turned ashen as his eyes widened.

Did Eclipse just stop my punch? F\*ck, why did his power suddenly increase exponentially?

Barnaby tried to retract his fist, but Eclipse's grip was like a mechanical clamp around his hands.

He could not retract it, nor could he move it.

A foreboding thought flashed in his mind.

Before he could come back to his senses, Eclipse had slammed his fist at Barnaby.

It was swung upwards, right at Barnaby's stomach.

Barnaby's body flew up into the air, and he crashed into the ceiling.

The ceiling cracked before he fell back onto the floor. Blood rushed out from his mouth without any indication of stopping.

The hall was silent.

Everyone was staring at Eclipse in terror.

They had realized that Eclipse's power was twice the amount from his previous fight.

Was Zeke right? Was Eclipse restricted by his injury? Was that why he couldn't fight at his full



power earlier?

Zeke did heal Eclipse's injury.

This was the display of Eclipse's true power.

It was worlds apart from Barnaby's power.

Eclipse is stronger than a master!

No wonder he's the top assassin of Rivermouth.

Eclipse looked at his palms in disbelief. He, too, had not thought that Zeke's silver needle would be able to restore him to his peak state.

This feels great! Haha!

Barnaby stared at Eclipse, bewildered. He spat out, "How can this be? How can this be? I've destroyed your energy center ten years ago. How could he have cured you with just a silver needle?"

His words made anger flood Eclipse's veins.

"You b\*stard! Did you intentionally injure my energy center ten years ago? So it's you who made me unable to utilize my full power. Die! Even your death will not be able to calm my anger."

Eclipse was tempted to kill Barnaby there and

then.

Barnaby roared, "It's not over!"

Eclipse responded, "It's not? Good. Stand up, and let's fight again. This time, one of us has to die."

Barnaby replied, "I'm willing to admit defeat to the top assassin of Rivermouth. What I'm upset about is that Williams has no right to strip me of my title. You're just a coward. You only have the courage to hide behind someone else in seek of protection! You're just a sheep in wolf's clothing! I dare you to fight with me yourself! If I lose to you, I'll strip my title off myself!"



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Zeke nodded.

“Even if you didn’t provoke me, I was planning to cripple you. Your nephew bullied my wife. As his uncle, you should pay the price for not teaching him well.”

Absurd!

Preposterous!

Even if Barnaby had lost to Eclipse, who now had his full power, he was still a master in martial arts.

You’re just a boy. How can you say such arrogant words?

Not unless you’re also a master.

But there are no masters of your age. A genius like that has yet to come to the world.

Hades was embarrassed on behalf of Zeke.

He said, “Young man, why do you have to dirty your hands to take revenge for Ms. Hinton? Just let Eclipse teach him a lesson.”

Zeke smiled.

“Thank you, Mr. Hades, for your kind words. But the revenge for my wife has to be carried out by

me. Otherwise, I will never let this go. I won't involve anyone else in this."

"Haha! Very well," Barnaby laughed. "Young man, I respect your courage. You're a man. Don't worry. I'll make sure you die painlessly later."

Zeke folded his hands behind his back.

"Come. Consider it my loss if I make a second move."

Pfft!

The crowd could barely hold in their laughter.

Consider it his loss if he makes a second move? Does that mean he can deal with Master Claymoore in one move?

Pfft, even Eclipse had to defeat Barnaby in several moves. How dare he spouts nonsense like this?

"Die!" Barnaby charged at Zeke like a ferocious beast.

He swiftly closed in.

Zeke's hands remained behind his back; he did not even move to defend himself.

Thinking that Zeke had yet to come back to his senses, the crowd's mocking became louder.

When Barnaby was half a meter away from him, Zeke finally moved.

In a blink of an eye, he had disappeared from in front of Barnaby.

In the next second, he reappeared behind the older man.

However, Barnaby had no idea.

He only saw a slight sway from Zeke before the young man disappeared.

Panicking, he nervously looked from left to right in search of Zeke.

However, his search was fruitless.

F\*ck. The guy's gone. How do I continue the fight?

Zeke casually lifted his feet and kicked Barnaby's leg.

Crack! Crack!

Both of Barnaby's legs were broken by Zeke.

Before Barnaby could realize what was going

on, he was already screaming in pain on the ground.

“My leg! My leg!”

Exclamations and gasps filled the air as the crowd was shocked by the scene.

Everyone was staring at Zeke as if he was a monster.

He’s a monster! He’s the devil!

All he needed was one move to cripple Barnaby!

He really didn’t use a second move!

How terrifyingly powerful is he?

He’s way stronger than Barnaby and Eclipse!

Another master has come to this world, and he’s standing above all masters!

Most importantly, he’s so young!

This is unfair!

A cold look crossed Zeke’s eyes as he watched Barnaby screaming while hugging his legs.

“From now on, the Linton Group is forbidden

grounds. We welcome those who are interested in collaborating and those who want to visit us. But for those who come with ill intentions, don't cry for mercy when I come and deal with you."

The crowd hung their heads in silence as they shuddered in fear.

"Hades, Eclipse, let's go."

Zeke led the two out.

The other two only came back to their senses after leaving the Martial Arts Association.

Hades carefully queried, "Young man, you're powerful. You must have an interesting past. May I ask who you are and why are you living in a small city like Oakheart?"

Zeke answered, "It won't be good if you learn too much, so forget it."

Hades nodded in a daze.

Although he did not know Zeke's true identity, he knew the latter was evidently someone powerful from how he dared to go against his old boss.

Zeke Williams was someone who was stronger than both him and Eclipse combined.

Eclipse asked, “Young man, about the attack on Rivermouth, how are your preparations coming along?”

Zeke stretched his body and laughed. “It’s been five years since I’ve truly fought. This is a great opportunity. I won’t let it slip by me. Eclipse, are you interested in joining me in the fight?”



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Hades and Eclipse were stupefied.

What does Zeke mean?

He's not planning to fight against thousands with just two of us, right?

This is absurd. There are too many of them. Even if they stand still as statues, it'll be too exhausting for the two of us to deal with so many of them.

Eclipse smiled bitterly.

"Mr. Williams, there are too many of them, and they're too widespread. It'll be difficult for only the two of us to deal with all of them."

Zeke smiled as he answered, "You don't need to defeat everyone to win against your opponent. We can strike the core first. Once the core is down, the enemy will surrender, and it'll be our win. Moreover, it won't be only the two of us. There'll be another elite joining us."

Zeke was a thousand times more experienced in battles than Eclipse.

Once again, Eclipse and Hades were stunned.

For someone to be called an elite by Zeke meant that that person must be truly strong.

It seemed like the small Oakheart City had many powerful men hidden within it.

Suddenly, Eclipse felt as if he was unworthy of his title as the top assassin in Rivermouth.

He laughed. "A good plan! It's an honor for me to be able to fight by Mr. Williams' side."

"Mm."

After that, they went their separate ways.

Zeke took out his phone and called Sole Wolf.

"Sole Wolf, there'll be a group fight soon. Are you interested?"

Sole Wolf answered, "Don't ask me to participate in a group fight unless there are more than two thousand opponents. It's boring otherwise."

Zeke replied, "It's a group fight with ten thousand opponents."

"Where are you? I'll be right there. I haven't been able to have a good fight for centuries. Finally, I get to have some exercise. Hahaha!"

In the Rolls Royce Shadow, Hades solemnly said to Eclipse, "Which level do you think that young man is on?"

Eclipse shook his head.

“I’m not sure. Perhaps it’s a level we’ll never reach.”

Hades muttered, “A hint for you. He hasn’t made a move for five years.”

Eclipse was confused.

“How am I supposed to guess with that hint?”

Hades explained, “Back then, after signing the Nine Nations Treaty of Alliance, the Great Marshal went into hiding for five years. He has returned today. Furthermore, he shares the same last name as the Great Marshal.”

Eclipse shuddered from the shock.

“Hades, do you mean Zeke could be the Great Marshal? H-How can this be? If he’s the Great Marshal, why does he need to make a move himself? All he needs is a command, and an army of a hundred thousand would destroy his opponents.”

Hades had a deep frown on his face.

“That’s right. It doesn’t seem logical. If he’s the Great Marshal, why would he live in Oakheart City for just a woman? Forget it. Who cares who he is? We’ll be on the winning side as long

as we stick to his side.”

“Yes. That’s true.”

Once again, the small Oakheart City was trending on the internet.

The famous Master Barnaby Claymoore had been defeated twice in Oakheart City.

First by the top assassin in Rivermouth, who had gained the title of a master after defeating Barnaby.

Then by the mysterious Master Williams, who had crippled Barnaby with just one move.

Two masters had emerged in a small city overnight, and it was something that had never happened in the past.

Furthermore, Master Williams was partnering up with Eclipse to go against the attackers of Rivermouth.

From that day onwards, Master Williams was a name known to every household. Almost everyone in the city was discussing the identity of this Master Williams.

There were even rumors of Master Williams as a student of Ip Man.

At the Linton Group's office.

After Lacey saw the news, she looked at Zeke, astounded.

“Zeke, you just said that Master Claymoore would be crippled earlier, and he really is crippled now. The one who crippled him was Master Williams, and he shares the same last name as you. Are you...”



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Zeke had a faint smile on his face.

That's right. Your husband is the famous Master Williams. Look at me in admiration now!

Lacey continued, "Are you a relative of Master Williams? Did you know that Master Williams was going to go against Barnaby?"

Zeke was speechless upon hearing her words.

What kind of logic is this?

It's already so obvious, but your guess is still wrong.

It was not that Lacey could not make the right guess; it was that she did not dare to assume.

Master Williams was a top master. He had crippled Barnaby in one move.

Although Zeke was capable, his capability was not enough to be placed on equal ranks with the masters. At most, he could go against lesser martial artists like Morgan. If he went against a master, it was unlikely that he would be able to even defend himself.

Moreover, Master Williams was the top master.

Lacey asked again, "Zeke, are you a relative of Master Williams?"

Zeke shook his head. "No. I'm Master Williams."

Lacey sighed in disappointment, "If only you were Master Williams' relative. The attack this time is targeting the Linton Group. The partnership between Master Williams and Eclipse to deal with the attack is essentially helping the Linton Group. It would only be appropriate if we thank them personally with gifts. What a pity that you're not his relative. We won't be able to contact him and give him our thanks."

Zeke was at a loss for words.

Did you only hear my first sentence? Did you not hear me telling you that I'm Master Williams?

Lacey continued, "It's fine. I've already sent Sharon from Nutel Entertainment to look for Master Williams' contact. I'm sure Ms. Edward won't disappoint me. Let's talk about this another time. I need to meet an important client now."

Zeke tensed up.

"Is that client male or female?"

Lacey giggled mischievously. "A guy. He's tall and handsome. He's even polite. Why do you ask?"

Zeke's mood turned sour.

Lacey giggled louder. "Zeke, are you jealous? This is hilarious. Don't worry. I only have you in my eyes. If you're worried, you can come with me."

Zeke mumbled, "What are you talking about? I'm not jealous. I'm just worried that you're going out by yourself. Since you've invited me so sincerely, it'll be bad for me not to take up on your invitation. Let's go. I'll come with you."

"Hm." Lacey had a look of disdain.

"How pretentious."

Soon, they reached their destination—Grand Millennium Hotel.

The client had not arrived yet, so the two ordered some drinks and leaned back on the sofa.

Before their drinks were finished, someone knocked on the door.

Lacey called out, "Come in!"

The door was pushed open. A bespectacled, polite-looking man in a suit walked in.

"May I ask if you're Ms. Hinton from the Linton



Group?" The man asked.

Lacey stood up immediately and greeted with a smile, "Hello, I'm Lacey Hinton from the Linton Group. Are you Franklin Jackman?"

The man flashed her a smile.

"That's right. Ms. Hinton, we meet again."

Lacey was surprised.

"Are you the salesperson sent by Grand Empire Group?"

Franklin laughed, "Your guess is right, Ms. Hinton. I'm the business manager of Grand Empire Group. Actually, the collaboration between Grand Empire Group and Linton Group this time is my doing."

"Really?" Lacey lifted her brows.

"Thank you, then, Mr. Jackman."

Franklin sat down beside Lacey with a look of adoration.

"Lacey, did you know that I left Oakheart City to go to Eastend after you rejected my confession? I swore back then that I have to become an impressive man. Only then am I a match for you. Now, I'm the executive for Grand

Empire Group. I only have one superior, and I have thousands working under me. In Eastend, I'm quite a distinguished figure. Lacey, I'm not like who I was back then. I hope you can give me another chance. I'm sure my achievements will make you interested in me."



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Lacey tensed up and hurriedly distanced herself from Franklin.

She said to him, "Mr. Jackman, please have some respect. I have a fiancé now."

Jealousy rose in Zeke's heart.

"Lacey, aren't you going to introduce us?"

Lacey subconsciously hugged Zeke's arm as she introduced, "Mr. Jackman, this is my fiancé, Zeke Williams. We're about to get married."

She turned to Zeke.

"Zeke, this is Mr. Franklin Jackman. He used to work in my steel mill. Now, he's the business manager of Grand Empire Group."

Zeke swept a glance at Franklin.

This man is a simp! Lacey had rejected him, but he's still courting her after five years.

What a shameless simp.

At the same time, Franklin glanced at Zeke with a barely concealed look of displeasure.

"I've heard of Zeke Williams. There's no one in Oakheart City who doesn't know that the husband of the Linton Group's president is a

kept man. Hahaha! I'm just kidding. I hope Mr. Williams won't mind."

Zeke answered, "Of course not. I'm capable in my own ways to be able to remain a kept man, unlike some, who can't even get to be a kept man. He can only be a simp."

Lacey nearly snorted.

She quietly kicked Zeke under the table.

He's getting worse with his sarcastic remarks!

Franklin's expression was dark. He knew that Zeke was insulting him.

However, Lacey was around, so he had to present himself as a gentleman.

Taking the initiative to change the tense atmosphere, Lacey said, "Mr. Jackman, have you taken a look at the contract I drafted? If you're unsatisfied with it, I hope we'll get another chance to collaborate in the future."

To avoid Zeke's jealousy from growing, she decided to give up on the business deal.

Franklin smiled.

"The contract is perfect. Grand Empire Group is satisfied with it. Ms. Hinton, let's sign the

contract now.”

With that said, Franklin swiftly signed his name and handed the contract to Lacey.

She glanced at Zeke, waiting for his opinion.

Zeke nodded.

“Sign it, Lacey.”

It was then that Lacey signed her name on the contract.

Steam could have escaped from Franklin’s ears from the rage that was boiling in him.

Are you kidding me?

Zeke is just a kept man. Lacey, did you have to ask for his opinion?

What kind of spell did Williams put on you to make you act this way?

Franklin kept away the contract when she was done. He changed the topic and said, “Lacey, I heard that the Linton Group is getting attacked by a force from Eastend? Is there anything I can help you with?”

Lacey shook her head.

“It’s true that we’re targets, but the recently famous Master Williams has decided to get rid of those forces. We won’t need to trouble you.”

Franklin snorted, “Ms. Hinton, have you ever thought of why Master Williams wants to help the Linton Group? He’s not related to you.”

Lacey questioned, “Is he not doing this for the sake of Rivermouth’s peace?”

“Wrong. You’re terribly wrong.” Franklin shook his head.

“I’ll be honest with you. I was the one who invited Master Williams to protect the Linton Group.”

“Pft-”

Unable to control himself, Zeke burst into laughter.

I didn’t even know your existence before today. How did you ask for my help?

Lacey was equally baffled.

“You know Master Williams?”

Franklin rolled his eyes at Zeke and patiently explained to Lacey, “Of course. To be honest, Master Williams is one of the ultimate weapons

of the Martial Arts Association. He lives in hiding so that he can be an ace up the sleeve in times of difficulty. As everyone knows, Grand Empire Group is a company fully invested by Martial Arts Association. I was honored to join the Martial Arts Association, and I'm on good terms with Master Williams. When I saw Linton Group in danger, I could not help but ask Master Williams for a favor.”



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At this point, spoken words had taken an unannounced holiday from Zeke's brain.

Damn. This man's shameless. He's lying through his teeth.

Zeke refuted, "But from what I know, Martial Arts Association had invited Barnaby to go against Master Williams. They're enemies. How can Master Williams be someone from the Martial Arts Association?"

Franklin sneered, "You don't even have any common sense. Martial Arts Association has branches in each state. The Eastend branch has nothing to do with the Oakheart City branch. The Oakheart City Martial Arts Association was foolish to cross Master Williams. Their actions have nothing to do with the Eastend branch. We've had an internal discussion. We'll be asking the Oakheart City branch to apologize to our Master Williams."

Franklin's words were spoken in a logical manner, and there seemed to be no loopholes. Lacey found herself believing in him.

She said, "Mr. Jackman, if you know Master Williams, could you please introduce us to him? Master Williams has helped us greatly this time. We need to express our gratitude in person."



Franklin replied, “No problem. But Master Williams has been busy preparing for the battle. He’s busy with work, so he can’t meet with you for now. No worries. I have a ticket for you to watch the battle with me. You can use this ticket to witness Master Williams fighting against the attackers at the borders. When the battle is over, I’ll arrange for a meeting between Master Williams and you.”

Zeke froze.

“A battle for watching the fight? What’s that?”

Franklin scoffed again, “You really don’t know anything. When the battle begins, it’ll be chaos at the borders. Innocents will be hurt. We, the Martial Arts Association, will be in charge of maintaining order. We’ll be protecting the civilians’ safety by establishing a safe spot around the battle. Those with this ticket will be allowed to stand within this safe spot to observe the battle. Don’t worry, Lacey. We’ll protect the guests and won’t endanger any of them. Let me tell you this. This is a rare ticket to get, and its market value has skyrocketed. The cheapest ticket is at least 50 million.”

Realization dawned on Zeke.

This Martial Arts Association is smart!

They’re using the attack as a means for

business.

The cheapest ticket is five hundred thousand each.

If the tickets are in hundreds and thousands, that would be hundreds of millions, even billions, earned!

Zeke was upset.

I'm the one risking my life in the battle, but the Martial Arts Association is earning from it.

Martial Arts Association is nothing but a parasite!

Lacey said, "Mr. Jackman. I'll give you one million. Please give me two tickets for the battle."

She wanted to purchase one for Zeke as well.

However, Franklin would never agree to it.

He wanted only her to go so that he could have a chance to be alone with her.

If another person were there, he would have no chance.

He pasted on a frown and apologized, "I'm sorry, Lacey. I only have two tickets. It's tough

to even buy the tickets now.”

Lacey was disappointed.

“Oh.”

Zeke muttered, “Lacey, give him back the ticket. I can get you as many tickets as you like.”

“Pfft!” Franklin snorted in disdain.

“Mr. Williams, you’re good with jokes. Even I, a member of the Martial Arts Association, could only get these two tickets after much difficulty. How could you, a kept man, get as many tickets as you want? This is a great joke!”

Lacey whispered, “Zeke, this is our only chance to thank Master Williams in person. We can’t let this opportunity slip past us. I have to give my thanks to Master Williams.”

Gleefully, Franklin said, “Lacey, I’ll pick you up on the day of the battle. I’ll be taking my leave now. Glad to cooperate with you. Goodbye.”



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Franklin then left.

Lacey consoled, “Zeke, don’t worry. Although you can’t come. I’ll take photos of Master Williams’ battle to show you.”

Zeke was not sure whether he should be happy or upset.

You’re taking my photos to show me. Doesn’t it sound nonsensical?

Lacey then wondered, “Zeke, how do you think we should thank Master Williams? Will it seem too insincere if we only say thanks? Should we give him money? I’m sure someone like Master Williams won’t care about money.”

Zeke thought to himself. Why don’t you give your thanks by giving yourself to Master Williams?

However, fearing Lacey’s fury, he did not verbalize his thoughts.

When he returned to the Linton Group’s office, Zeke found out that many staff members had used Master Williams silhouette as their desktop wallpapers.

In the photo, Master Williams had sent Master Claymoore flying with a hit. His back was straight, and he looked majestic.

Zeke did not know who took a photo of him while he was fighting Barnaby.

He curiously asked one of the women, “Why did you change your wallpapers to Master Williams? Do you admire him?”

The woman shyly answered, “Sir, you might not know this, but there’s a saying going around here – Trust in Williams for a lifetime of good luck.”

Zeke queried, “Williams?”

“Master Williams. We call him just Williams.”

Zeke was speechless.

Right then, his phone beeped..

His mother-in-law, Hannah, had sent him an article.

The title of the article read— Forward this Master Williams so that everything will go smoothly during July!

Silence ensued.

At this rate, Master Williams is going to be a meme!

Zeke called Eclipse and told him about Martial

Arts Association coming up with tickets.

Eclipse did not sound surprised as he replied, "Well, it's normal for Martial Arts Association to come up with something like that. There's nothing to feel surprised about. If you're not happy about it, I can ask for them to split the money they've collected."

Zeke huffed out a laugh, "Splitting... Martial Arts Association really sees this as an opportunity for business, don't they? Forget it. I don't want to bother with them. It won't be a problem for you to get me two tickets, right?"

Eclipse answered, "Of course not. I'll get you two VIP tickets."

Zeke continued, "Right. There's someone called Franklin Jackman in the Martial Arts Association. Get him out of the association. Also, render his two tickets useless."

Eclipse responded, "Sure. No problem."

Time went by in a blink of an eye. Soon, it was the day of the battle.

Early in the morning, Franklin had come to pick Lacey up to watch the battle.

Lacey had an embarrassed frown on her face as she murmured, "Sorry, Mr. Jackman. I'll be

going with Zeke.”

Franklin was instantly upset.

“He doesn’t have a ticket. Why is he going?”

Lacey replied, “He’ll be cheering from the outside-”

Zeke interrupted, “Who said I don’t have tickets to watch the battle?”

As he spoke, he took out the two tickets that Eclipse had given him.

The other two stared at the tickets, astonished.

Franklin took the tickets and glanced at them before bursting into laughter.

“Dude, where did you get this? Were you fooled? Take a look. Mine are the actual tickets. The Martial Arts Association didn’t come up with fancy tickets like yours.”

Zeke explained, “Mine are VIP tickets. Naturally, you haven’t seen them.”

“Pfft!” Franklin laughed even louder, “That’s enough, dude. How could I not recognize tickets that Martial Arts Association printed? Look at yours. You don’t even have the anti-theft code. Lacey, let’s go. Let’s not be late for



it.”

At that, Franklin moved to hold Lacey’s hand.

Zeke stepped forward to pull her toward his side.

“Lacey, his tickets are fake. He won’t be able to enter. Let’s go. I will take you there to watch the battle.”

With Lacey’s hand in his, they walked off.

Franklin gritted out, “Williams, how dare you? I’m going to stop you from entering, and I’m going to teach you a lesson!”

He took out his phone to make a call.

“Donovan, Troy, teach someone a lesson for me.”



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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Once again, more than ten thousand people gathered within a space in Rivermouth.

Almost everyone had come to watch the battle.

Although they had to watch from afar, getting a glimpse of Master Williams in flesh was more than enough for them.

Martial Arts Association had also set up barriers by the borders, stopping the crowd from entering.

Only those from noble families who had tickets were allowed into the protected space to watch the battle close-up.

By the time Zeke and Lacey reached, the location was already crowded with people. They could barely walk through the crowd.

Not even a celebrity's concert was as packed as this.

After squeezing through the crowd with difficulty, Lacey said to Zeke, "Zeke, wait for me here. I'll come back after I've given my thanks to Master Williams.

Without giving him a chance to reply, she went straight to the ticket validation entrance.

Zeke was at a loss for words.

Damn it. Why can't you believe that my tickets are real?

Right then, Franklin arrived. He pointed double middle fingers at Zeke before rushing after Lacey.

"Lacey, these two tickets were bought with my ID. I have to be there for the tickets to be valid."

Lacey nodded helplessly.

"Okay then."

She handed her ticket to Franklin.

Casually, Franklin gave the two tickets to the inspector before moving to enter the area with Lacey.

However, the inspector stopped them suddenly.

"Wait. These tickets are fake. You're not allowed into the area."

"How could this be?" Franklin shrieked, "I'm a member of the Martial Arts Association. These tickets are for the members. How could they be fake? You must have gotten it wrong. Check them again."

The inspector impatiently shoved the tickets under the scanner. On the screen, a single word

was displayed— INVALID.

The inspector fumed, “Are you satisfied now? Get lost!”

Lacey glared at Franklin.

“You lied to me!”

Franklin was dumbfounded.

“No, I didn’t. Lacey, I didn’t lie to you! These tickets were given to me by the vice-president of the Eastend Martial Arts Association. How could these be fake? I’m sure your system is faulty.”

Just then, Zeke came over and handed the inspector his tickets.

“These are for my wife and me.”

Franklin fumed, “Williams, aren’t you persistent? Do you think the inspector is a fool? I can’t believe you’re trying to get into the area with two fake tickets. Apparently my real tickets aren’t valid, let alone yours...”

When the inspector saw the two VIP tickets, he was bewildered.

There were only five of these tickets, and all of them were in the hands of powerful, prominent

figures.

One noble family could only get one VIP ticket at most.

However, this young man in front of him had two. That meant that he had a status higher than those of noble families.

When Lacey noticed the inspector's silence, she thought that Zeke's tickets were fake as well.

Feeling embarrassed, she tugged at Zeke's hand, signaling him to leave.

"Zeke, let's go..."

It was only then the inspector came back to his senses. His palms were now sweating.

He quickly lowered his head respectfully and uttered, "Sir, Ma'am, this way please. I'll bring you to your seats."

As he spoke, he opened the gates for them and gestured for them to enter.

Huh?

Lacey was stupefied.

Zeke's tickets are real?

A similar look of shock was on Franklin's face.

He refused to believe that his tickets were fake while Zeke's were real.

What the hell is going on?

How did Williams, a kept man, get those tickets? From the inspector's attitude, his tickets are of a higher grade than the normal ones!



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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Zeke held Lacey's hand with a smile.

"Lacey, let's go in."

"Huh? Okay." His words pulled Lacey back to reality.

When Zeke was at the entrance, he turned to smirk at Franklin.

"Franklin, I told you not to make and sell fake tickets at a high price. You refused to listen to me. You reap what you sow."

Upon listening to his words, the two staff members aside fumed.

"What? You're making and selling fake tickets?"

"No wonder! I was wondering why so many people were trying to enter with fake tickets today. You're the one behind this!"

"Men, get him!"

The few members of the Martial Arts Association rushed forward and restrained Franklin.

Franklin was at his wits' end. I'm innocent!

My tickets were given to me by the vice-president. How could they be fake?

I'm not making fake tickets either!

Williams, you f\*cking set me up!

Even after entering the VIP section, Lacey was still in a daze.

She felt as if she was dreaming.

Franklin was a member of the Martial Arts Association, but he got two fake tickets.

On the other hand, Zeke, who was unrelated to the Martial Arts Association, had two real tickets.

Moreover, she had realized that their tickets were more elegant-looking than the others.

She had also noticed the respectful attitude the staff had for them earlier.

So, she was sure that these two tickets were at least a grade higher than the normal tickets.

Most likely, Zeke knew someone from Martial Arts Association and that someone held a relatively high position in the organization.

At the very least, it was higher than Franklin's.

She carefully asked, "Zeke, tell me the truth. Where did you get these two tickets?"



Zeke smiled slyly.

“You’ll see in a moment.”

“Hmph! You’re pretending to be mysterious.” Lacey huffed in a high-pitch voice, but it was melodious to Zeke’s ears.

It took a while for them to find their seats, which were far toward the front. On the way, Lacey realized something.

The closer the seats were to the battle, the more important the guests were.

They were about to reach the end of the aisle, but the inspector leading them seemed to have no intentions of stopping.

A bold idea slipped into her mind.

Our seats can’t possibly be in the first row, right?

That can’t be right. Even the top billionaire of Oakheart City, Evan, is in the fourth row.

In the end, as Lacey stared with disbelieving eyes, the inspector brought them to the first row.

“Sir, Ma’am, please sit. Feel free to look for us any time if you need anything.”

The other guests were looking at them with admiration on their faces.

They have to be influential and powerful to be able to sit in the first row!

Money alone can't buy those seats; you have to be powerful as well!

The prominent figure of Rivermouth's underworld forces, Hades, was also seated in the first row.

When he saw Zeke and Lacey, he stood up and greeted, "Ms. Hinton, it's my pleasure to meet you. You look much prettier than the rumors say."

"Huh? Thank you, Mr. Hades. Y-You're too kind," Lacey mumbled, feeling excited.

Hades!

The legend of Rivermouth.

When Lacey was a young child, she had already known about Hades.

In the past, she could not even be Hades' subordinate; now, she was in equal standing as him.

I'm dreaming! I must be dreaming!

Hades politely murmured, “Ms. Hinton, Mr. Williams, please take a seat.”

“Oh, Mr. Hades, please take a seat first.” Lacey was stunned.



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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The two continued to ask the other party to sit, and neither relented.

Finally, both sat down at the same time.

Lacey's heart was pounding loudly, and her cheeks were heating up. She did not know where to put her hands.

In the end, Zeke held onto Lacey's hand to cheer her on instead.

He then smiled at Hades and asked, "Mr. Hades, is Eclipse not here yet?"

Hades looked into the distance and hummed, "He should be here soon."

At the same time, there was an army of ten thousand people at the borders of Eastend.

The sight of the large army was majestic. The thousands of heads within a small space exuded a gloomy aura that the gray clouds above could not compare to.

Even if the army were to stay unmoving and do nothing, one glance at them would horrify any.

This was the attack troop that the boss had organized.

The person-in-charge of the attack, John, was

looking at the group of people who were here to watch the battle with a telescope. He was furious.

He had never thought that the night before the attack, Emily had revealed the news of the attack.

Now, his enemy had sufficient time to prepare, their civilians were watching the battle, and the Martial Arts Association had gotten involved.

This would affect the plan of the attack.

“That idiot snitch, Emily Clemons, has to die! But so what if you guys have time to prepare? You can’t win against my ten-thousand-man army. You’re nothing but a joke!”

John leaped onto the roof of a car and looked downward at the army.

He pointed in the direction of Rivermouth and shouted, “Tell me. What do you see?”

Everyone turned toward the direction he pointed.

They could see nothing but wilderness.

“Sir, we see the wilderness.”

John shook his head.

“You’re wrong. That is the place for you to soar to the prime of your life with glory and wealth. Charge! Kill everyone in our path today! I don’t want anyone to be standing in our way to wealth and glory!”

“Charge!” Thousands of soldiers roared, their voices thunderous.

The thousands of men swarmed toward Rivermouth.

Even the ground was quaking under their footsteps.

At the borders of Rivermouth, the crowd was in a heated discussion about Master Williams’ identity and capability.

Abruptly, the ground started shaking.

The crowd’s first reaction was to think that it was an earthquake.

However, the tectonic plate Rivermouth was on was stable, and they had never had an earthquake in centuries.

How could there be an earthquake?

The crowd only realized what was going on when they saw a dark mass swarming toward them.

This isn't an earthquake; this is the enemy coming!

The crowd started panicking.

There are so many of them! The sheer number of them covers more land than the clouds can cover the sky!

Despite that there was still a distance between the enemy and them, the crowd was starting to feel their knees go weak. If the enemies were in their faces, they might just die from a heart attack.

Where's Master Williams? Why isn't he here yet?

Can he really stop this terrifying attack?

Now, the crowd was ready to escape at any time.

A jeep slowly stopped in front of Hades and the rest.

The door swung open, and Eclipse came down from the car.

The crowd turned their gazes at him.

As expected of Eclipse, all he needed to do was to stand there, and the people would feel safe.

Eclipse smiled at Zeke.

“Young man, I’ll be going ahead first.”

Zeke nodded.

“Please do.”

Eclipse shook his arm, and his steel weapon slid down from his sleeves into his firm grasp.

He turned and charged toward the enemy.

The moment Eclipse took out his weapon, the deaths of his enemies were guaranteed.



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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Lacey looked at Zeke, confused.

Why did Eclipse greet Zeke before he charged?

He must know Eclipse, and Eclipse must be the one who gave him these two tickets.

Lacey asked, "Zeke, did Eclipse give us our tickets?"

Zeke gave her a faint smile, a silent indication of admission.

He still could not expose his identity as Master Williams yet.

If the boss found out about it, he would not dare to continue the attack.

If that happened, he would not be able to uproot the boss and his men.

The only ones who knew his identity now were Eclipse and the members of the Rivermouth Martial Arts Association.

Eclipse was not one to spill secrets to outsiders, and the Martial Arts Association had warned their members not to as well.

Soon, Eclipse met with the enemies.

He wove through the enemies like an eel in

water.

A gentle tap or swing from Eclipse's weapon took the enemy down, and he never missed.

In a blink of an eye, his opponents around him were all on the ground.

The murderous aura he exuded was suffocating the surrounding standing men.

It was as expected of the top assassin of Rivermouth; his moves were vivid and precise.

The crowd was fully focused on the battle until loud music caught their attention.

"Billie Jean is not my lover. She's just a girl who claims that I am the one-"

The crowd frowned as they thought, Who is it? Why are they still in the mood to play music?

They turned toward the direction of music.

It was a man on a motorbike, who had come out of nowhere, and was now speeding toward the enemies.

He had a cape around his shoulders, and it flapped noisily as the wind blew it.

With the music he was playing, his presence

was eye-catching!

It was a pity that he was wearing a helmet, so no one could see how he looked like.

The corner of Zeke's mouth twitched.

F\*ck. You're all stealing my limelight.

How should I make my grand entrance later? I can't possibly lose to them.

When the man was close to the enemies, he hopped off his bike.

The engine of the bike was still running, and it drove straight into the enemies and collided with more than several of the soldiers.

The man took off his helmet and revealed his identity. It was General North, Sole Wolf!

However, the crowd was too far from him to see his face clearly.

Using his helmet as a weapon, Sole Wolf rushed toward his opponents and knocked his helmet on them.

Thump! Thump!

Each noise signaled the defeat of one soldier. Soon, a large group of people went down

around him.

In less than three minutes, the helmet broke, and Sole Wolf continued fighting with his fists.

Every move of his was the definition of ferocity!

The crowd was in awe from what they were witnessing.

“Sh\*t! He’s strong!”

“He’s definitely not much weaker than Eclipse. Another top fighter in Rivermouth has emerged!”

“There have been rumors of Master Williams inviting a mysterious helper. He must be the one.”

“Master Williams is like a beast, and so is that man!”

Soon, Sole Wolf and Eclipse met on the battlefield.

Once they teamed up, their enemies were knocked down at a much faster rate.

In just half an hour, four hundred enemies were lying on the surrounding ground.

They were stepping on their enemies’ bodies as

they fought.

However, as they were outnumbered, they started feeling exhausted after a while.

A bald man smashed his steel rod on Sole Wolf's back when he was not paying attention.

Anger welled up in the latter's chest when he was attacked.

Ignoring the rest of his opponents, he tackled the bald man to the ground and rained punches on his face.

"F\*ck you! How dare you hit me! I'm going to kill you!"



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Sole Wolf did not know how many punches he had landed. The man's head was already crushed, but his anger remained.

Upon witnessing the scene, the surrounding enemies became reluctant to attack him.

All he did was land a hit on you, and you crushed his head. Do you really have to be so petty?

Eclipse and Sole Wolf's energies were half spent, and they were now tired.

The two shouted, "Master Williams, it's your turn!"

The crowd echoed, "Master Williams, it's your turn!"

Lacey looked around her, trying to search for traces of Master Williams.

Zeke smiled at her.

"Lacey, I need to use the restroom."

Without any suspicion, Lacey nodded.

Zeke turned into a corner, away from everyone's line of sight. He then turned one round before he entered the battlefield.

Remaining collected, he lit a cigarette despite standing in front of his dangerous enemies.

When the crowd noticed Zeke's silhouette, they started cheering.

"Is that Master Williams? He has such an astounding presence!"

"Kill them, Master Williams! Kill them all!"

Lacey stared at Master Williams's figure as she furrowed her brows.

Why does his figure look so familiar?

Soon, two of the enemies noticed Zeke and rushed toward him.

All Zeke did was flick his fingers twice.

Two silver needles shot out instantly!

They pierced the enemies' hearts. Instantly, the sharp pain made them collapse onto the ground. They began howling as they grabbed their chests.

More and more enemies were noticing Zeke's presence.

They swarmed toward him, planning to surround him.

Zeke waved his hand, and a series of silver needles flew out.

Once again, the enemies collapsed on the ground as they shrieked.

The crowd were bewildered by what they saw.

Holy sh\*t! Are we hallucinating?

All Master Williams did was wave his hands, and before the enemies could come close to him, they're all screaming on the ground.

Did he use magic?

He must be some sort of god!

The silver needles were too small for the crowd to spot from their distance.

Boom!

A bolt of lightning cracked from the sky. What followed next were droplets of rain that were the size of peas.

Sole Wolf grinned at Zeke.

“Zeke, I arranged my men to shower artificial rain. Did I pick a good timing?”

Zeke said nothing, feeling helpless.



He really loves creating fancy scenes, doesn't he? First, it was the music, now it's the rain.

But the effect's quite good. It's a good addition to the atmosphere of the battle.

Zeke instructed, "Eclipse, cover my left. Sole Wolf, cover my right."

"Got it!" They answered in unison.

The two swiftly removed themselves from their battles to cover Zeke's sides.

"Charge!"

Zeke rushed toward the enemy crowd.

Like three arrows, the three men weaved through the crowd to the core of the army.

On their way to their destination, they left no enemies standing.

They were as quick as the lightning that struck earlier.

The trio left a bloody wake behind them.

Yet, Zeke still felt that they were not quick enough.

If that damned Sole Wolf didn't cause this

artificial rain, we could've been quicker than we are.

If the teaming up of Eclipse and Sole Wolf equated to a ten-man team, then the addition of Zeke made it as if they were a thousand-man team!

One Master Williams was equivalent to ten teams of Sole Wolf and Eclipse!

It turned out that even masters had ranks.

Perhaps Master Williams was one of the top masters.

The crowd was going wild.

The combination of loud music, heavy rain, and the battle scene made it as if they were watching a Hollywood action movie!

Many had taken out their phones to record the spectacular moment.

When John saw what was going on, his heart skipped a beat.

He's strong! He's too strong!

Master Williams was stronger than any he had ever seen!

No, he thought, He's stronger than what I can ever imagine!



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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Abruptly, he realized that the trio was charging in his direction.

John tensed up.

They're coming for the king first!

He bellowed, "Left, right, gather in the middle! We have to kill them even if it means squeezing them to death!"

The two sides immediately squeezed toward the middle.

However, their efforts were to no avail.

All it did was to slightly slow down the trio's speed. John's men could not lay a finger on them.

When John saw the scene, despair grew in his heart, and it was as if he had aged a dozen years.

It's over.

The attack this time is going to be a failure again.

Where did this Master Williams come from? He's too strong!

The appearance of Master Williams had turned

the tables around.

John stared at the trio, who were getting stronger as they fought, and he knew that he was doomed.

Staying there was pointless.

He got into his car and sped off.

The soldiers in the army sank into despair.

They had been frightened by the way the trio was killing.

Now, even their general had left them to fend for themselves. They were in a state of complete mental breakdown.

What is the point of staying?

We'll just die.

Striking the core!

Zeke had successfully struck their core.

Sole Wolf howled, "Zeke, how many have you killed?"

Zeke answered, "I didn't keep count."

Sole Wolf then turned his head to the other

side.

“Eclipse, how many have you killed?”

Eclipse replied, “Five hundred.”

Sole Wolf groaned, “Sh\*t. Why do you have fifty more than me? Kill! Kill! Kill!”

The horrifying conversation was the last straw that broke the camel’s back.

Finally, one of their enemies escaped from the battlefield.

Soon, more followed suit.

The army no longer resisted as they dumped their gears and fled the scene.

Sole Wolf huffed angrily, “Damn it. Fifty of you should stay behind for me to kill. I can’t possibly lose to Eclipse...”

The enemies ran even faster upon hearing his words.

In less than ten minutes, the ten-thousand-man army had disbanded.

Boom!

The thunder struck again as the rain became

heavier.

The rain washed the blood away, and a bloody river soon formed.

The trio stood under the rain as they enjoyed the coolness it brought.

Eclipse panted. Then he laughed, "This feels great! I haven't felt as great as this for a long time."

Sole Wolf took out his phone and handed it to Zeke.

"Zeke, let's take a photo to keep it as a memory."

"Get lost," Zeke snorted, "Who the f\*ck asked you to arrange for artificial rain? Lacey doesn't have the best health. If she falls ill, I won't forgive you."

Sole Wolf hurriedly explained, "Zeke, listen to me. This is for your sake. I heard that staying in the rain will make your future son stronger..."

"Get lost!"

Zeke made a big detour before he returned to the VIP area.

Even though strong gusts of wind were

blowing, the thunder was loud, and the rain was heavy, no audience had left the scene.

They were all watching the battle with looks of shock and excitement. Tears had even streamed down some cheeks.

Real men should get their hands dirty.

Real men should be invincible.

Master Williams is a real man!

The emotions in the air were contagious. Some were tempted to rush forward to vent out their feelings.

However, they were quickly stopped by members of the Martial Arts Association.

Zeke casually took an umbrella from a staff member and ran toward Lacey.

“Lacey, why didn’t you borrow an umbrella from someone? It’s raining heavily. What if you catch a cold?”

Lacey’s eyes were brimming with tears. She choked, “Zeke, why were you gone for so long?”

Zeke answered, “I had an upset stomach. Wait. Are you crying? Who hurt you?”



Lacey mumbled, “No one hurt me. I was just lamenting for you! Did you know? You missed out on the most captivating scene ever. I’m afraid you’ll be feeling remorseful for the rest of your life.”



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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Zeke sighed in relief, "Oh, it's fine. I've seen scenes like this. Missing these once or twice will be fine."

Zeke thought to himself, Can this even be called a battle?

The real battle was at Northern Xinjiang, where we had to fight for our lives. It was way more intense than this one.

Zeke urged, "Lacey, let's go."

Lacey shook her head.

"Not yet. We haven't thanked Master Williams yet."

Zeke fell silent.

I'm afraid you won't be able to find him.

Without any other options, Zeke messaged Eclipse: [Eclipse, come and tell everyone that Master Williams has left.]

Soon, Eclipse reached his location.

When the crowd saw Eclipse, they went wild. The sounds of their applause were louder than the thunder.

This was the master, the hero, and the

peacekeeper of Rivermouth!

He was the pride of Rivermouth.

Naturally, everyone was supportive of him.

Not a fan of glory like this, Eclipse waved his hand and said, "Alright. The enemies have retreated, and Rivermouth is safe. You can all go back home. Master Williams and the nameless hero he has brought with him have left the place."

His words dampened the crowd's spirits.

They were in disbelief that they could not get a glimpse of Master Williams himself; none had a photo of his face.

Eclipse continued, "Master Williams told me to tell you something. As long as you do your job, you can leave the peacekeeping to us. From now on, we welcome investors and contributors to Rivermouth with open arms. However, those who are here to stir up trouble will be our enemies. We won't forgive each and every one of them."

The crowd erupted.

"Long live Master Williams!"

"Long live Eclipse!"

“Long live the nameless hero!”

The corner of Zeke’s lips twitched.

When the hell did I say this?

Eclipse is using my name to pretend to be cool.

What a sly fox.

Lacey sighed, “What a pity we couldn’t thank Master Williams in person. But I’m sure someone like him wouldn’t care if we thank him or not. Zeke, let’s go.”

“Okay.”

With Lacey’s arm around Zeke’s, they left.

Outside the seating area, Franklin was beaten up by members of the Martial Arts Association as they assumed he had created fake tickets.

Just as he had a moment of respite, he saw Zeke and Lacey walking past him arm-in-arm.

“You b\*stard! Williams, you just f\*cking wait. I’ll never forgive you. Are you still thinking of working with Grand Empire Group? Ha! Don’t even think of entering the Eastend market!”

Grand Empire Group was one of the top companies in Eastend. For Zeke to work with

them, he would have to enter the Eastend market.

If he could not, the partnering would not happen.

...

If Barnaby's incident had revealed the presence of Master Williams, then this battle had made Master Williams' reputation grow exponentially.

The Martial Arts Association had made a new ranking of masters in Eurasia.

Master Williams had leaped from an unknown figure to the top three.

He was only a rank below Mr. Quin from Eastend and Drake from the Northwest Region.

That did not mean that Master Williams was weaker than them.

It was because Mr. Quin and Drake rarely showed themselves, so no one knew their true capabilities. Naturally, it would be impossible to compare them.

The rankings were a representation of their reputation.

As a newly instilled master, Master Williams

was not as reputable as the other two.

John led his defeated men and escaped to Eastend. Only then they stopped.



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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Seeing his men fall like dominoes, John's heart plummeted.

Taking out his phone with trembling hands, he was deliberating on whether or not to call the boss.

He had failed his mission, and he had no idea if the boss would kill him for it.

In the end, the boss had called him before he could do the honors.

John answered in a guilty voice, "Boss, the mission this time..."

Unexpectedly, the boss did not reprimand him. Instead, he pardoned his actions, "I know everything about what'd happened. You're not the one to blame. No one had expected that Rivermouth state would have such a powerful general like Master Williams. It's warranted that our plan would've failed when there was such a powerful figure defending Rivermouth. It's a major setback since it'll be challenging for us to make a move on Rivermouth from now on."

John was over the moon when he heard this. "Boss, you're not going to kill me?"

"No. I'm not." The boss answered.

In truth, he had wanted to kill John very badly,

because a mission failure was inexcusable.

However, he was severely short of manpower now, as a fraction of his subordinates were either killed off or had rebelled against him.

John was also considered a capable subordinate, so he had to keep him alive at all costs!

John sputtered with gratitude, "Thank you, boss. Thank you for sparing me."

Then, he paused briefly before saying, "By the way, boss, since Master Williams is guarding Rivermouth now, it

'll be a challenge to eliminate Zeke Williams from now on. What are my next orders?"

The boss announced, "I have ordered someone to conduct a background check on Master Williams. Once I've managed to make contact with him, I'll definitely be able to persuade him to join my side."

John was thrilled.

Once the boss tackles Master Williams, we wouldn't have to worry about a measly Zeke Williams any longer.

Upon hanging up, the boss scrolled through his



contact list and found the name 'Dylan Norris'.

This person was the president of the Eastend Martial Arts Association, also being the boss' apprentice.

The call went through swiftly, and the boss relayed, "Dylan, your family is the sole proprietor of the Grand Empire Group. Offer it to Master Williams as his dividend. It'll be our ticket to win him over. As long as he accepts it, I'll be able to uncover his identity."

"Yes, boss. I'll see to it immediately." Dylan answered.

Hades had secretly invited Zeke over to Grand Imperial Tea House for some tea.

Zeke seemed a tad bit impatient as he asked, "Why did the two of you call me here? Come on, spit it out. I have to pick my kid up soon."

Hades and Eclipse remained unoffended by his attitude.

He had the right to act as such anyway.

Besides, the more casual Zeke was to them, the more it meant that he was treating them as his friends.

It was an honor to be friends with Master

Williams.

Eclipse stated, "The president of the Eastend Martial Arts Association, Dylan Norris, has heard that you have some business dealings with the Grand Empire Group, so he wants to offer this to you. This is the contract. If you are interested in the offer, you'll have to sign your name and Eastend's Grand Empire Group will be yours."

Zeke nodded. "Hmm. Since they're giving me such a good offer, it'll be rude of me not to accept."

"Wait." Hades quickly stopped Zeke. "Master Williams, I have a feeling that this contract isn't as simple as it looks."

"Go on." Zeke pressed forth.

Hades continued, "In the battle this time, the total profit of the Martial Arts Association was approximately one billion. Based on my understanding of Mr. Norris, he will give you at most a quarter of the dividends, which is two hundred million. However, Grand Empire Ground is worth one billion! Seeing that he's giving you all of the profits, it might be a setup."

Zeke had a pensive look on his face as he uttered, "Oh, care to elaborate?"

Hades took a breath before explaining, “Now that everyone knows that Master Williams is watching over Rivermouth, no one would dare to make trouble. In other words, as long as you remain in Rivermouth, everyone will be safe. But the moment you leave, it’ll be a whole different story. What I’m trying to say is, they could be using the Grand Empire Group as bait to lure you out of Rivermouth...”

Zeke smiled and answered, “Even if he doesn’t lure me out, I’ll pay Eastend a visit nonetheless. It’s simply a matter of when.”



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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Eclipse and Hades were shocked.

It turned out that Master Williams was very ambitious. He had been eyeing Eastend for quite some time already!

“Mr. Williams, please heed my advice. Eastend isn’t an easy land to conquer.” Hades cautiously surmised.

“Mr. Quin is the one ruling over Eastend, and his family has never fallen, even for over hundreds of years, which goes to show how strong their foundation is. Besides, Mr. Quin himself is the second most powerful master in Eurasia, meaning that he’s a few rankings higher than you. He’s immensely powerful, and not someone who should be trifled with.”

Zeke was slightly infuriated when he heard this. “Oh? His ranking is higher than mine? All the more reason for me to go there and meet him.”

Eclipse and Hades were both speechless.

They would just be wasting their breaths, trying to warn him.

At a construction site in Eastend, front-line workers were working overtime beneath the scorching sun.

This was a project collaboration between

Linton Group and Grand Empire Group, and these workers were sent by Linton Group.

In an air-conditioned office at the construction site, Franklin Jackman and a bald man were seated leisurely as they enjoyed the cool air, sipping on their ice lemon tea.

Franklin and the bald man were supervisors sent by the Grand Empire Group.

Although Franklin had been kicked out of the Martial Arts Association, he was still allowed to keep his position in the Grand Empire Group.

He watched the workers on the construction site with a scornful expression. "A bunch of rabbles. You all deserve to die, working for Linton Group. If I could succeed in forming a collaboration between Linton Group and the Grand Empire Group, then I sure as hell can break it up."

Then, he looked at the bald man. "Kev, my legs have gone numb from sitting for so long. Shall we get up and move around for a bit?"

Even now, Franklin was oblivious of the fact that the Grand Empire Group was Zeke's property.

The bald man sitting opposite him, Kevin Stewart, smiled and questioned, "Frank, this is

the seventh time you're stopping construction. Just how much do you hate Linton Group? "

Franklin gritted his teeth and muttered, "Imagine someone stealing your wife; that's how much I hate them. Do you still think I'm going overboard by stopping construction?"

"Well, if that's the case, even an execution wouldn't be too much," Kevin replied. "Let's go and stretch our legs for a bit then!"

Both of them headed to the construction site, and Franklin kicked over a wall that the workers had just started building. "The f\*\*\*? What kind of shitty construction work is this? It crumbled with a mere kick. Tear the bricks apart and rebuild it!"

The workers' faces paled with anger.

This was the seventh time that the supervisors from the Grand Empire Group had asked them to demolish and rebuild.

Even though they had been working overtime over the span of the past three days, doing so from day to night, the project construction had barely made any progress!

The team leader was p\*\*\*\*\* and argued, "Mr. Jackman, this wall was just built, and the cement hasn't even dried yet. So, of course, it

would fall over with one kick.”

Slap!

Unexpectedly, Franklin slapped the team leader without hesitation. “F\*\*\*! Do you dare to talk back to me? If I say that the quality isn’t up to standard, then it isn’t up to standard! If you disagree, get out of the construction site! Now, demolish and rebuild! When I return after half an hour, I hope that I won’t have to see this kind of half-assed construction again!”

Thereafter, Franklin and Kevin walked away laughing.

The workers quickly helped their leader up. “Sir, are you alright?”

The leader spat out a tooth and some blood.

Franklin was a martial artist. The force of his backhanded slap was so large that he had broken one of the leader’s teeth.

The leader was purple with rage and gritted out, “I think that the two of them are deliberately making things difficult for us. We can’t go on like this. We won’t be able to make any progress. The moment we’ve built it, those two will only return to bring it down once again. It’s a vicious cycle.”

He frowned and murmured, “We don’t have a choice. We have to call Madam Hinton.”

“Yes, sir!” One of the workers immediately took out his phone and contacted Lacey.

When Lacey received a call from her workers, her temples began to throb, with the onset of a headache.

Their collaboration with the Grand Empire Group was their first step in expanding beyond Rivermouth, so she took this project very seriously. Hence, she had sent her most elite team to be in charge of the construction.

However, Franklin had rejected their construction work seven times in total, even going as far as to hit one of her workers.

Franklin himself had also called her earlier, using his position as supervisor from the Grand Empire Group to threaten her. He argued, announcing that if the quality of their work had continued to be substandard, he would terminate the contract with Linton Group, on behalf of the Grand Empire Group, and she would need to pay for the liquidated damages.





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Lacey knew that Franklin was intentionally finding fault with her because she had rejected his previous advances.

She sighed. What should I do now?

Almost as unaware as Franklin, Lacey did not know that Grand Empire Group belonged to Zeke.

Lacey had a lot on her plate right now, which had caused her to frequently skip meals. Thus, Zeke could not bear to tell her about it lest it add on to her workload.

Just then, Zeke entered the room with a tray of food. "Lacey, I've brought back some food from a Michelin star restaurant. You should eat something before you work."

The feast he had prepared did not seem to stimulate Lacey's appetite and she sighed softly. "Zeke, I don't have an appetite. You eat it."

Zeke frowned and asked, "Lacey, what's going on? Why are you upset?"

Lacey told Zeke about the matter with Franklin.

When she finished, Zeke sneered in disgust. "I'd spared him previously, but he doesn't seem to know when to quit."

Suddenly, Lacey's phone rang.

It was Franklin.

He was wearing a lecherous smile on his face, on the other end of the line, when he queried, "Lacey, have you eaten? If you haven't, come over to the Grand Empire Group. I'll treat you to a huge meal. I've already checked in... Uh, I mean, I've already ordered the food. Don't get me wrong, I don't have any other intentions. I just want to discuss the substandard quality of the construction work. I guarantee that it'll pass after you come over."

Zeke's face darkened and he took her phone from her hand, curling his lips as he warned, "Franklin, I'm giving you one last chance. Apologize, and I'll forgive you."

"F\*\*\* off!" Franklin cursed and hung up.

Zeke drew in a deep breath. He had completely lost his appetite too.

He got up and announced, "Lacey, I'm heading over to the Grand Empire Group for a while. Be a good girl and eat, okay? Don't worry, I'll fix this problem."

Lacey nodded. "Okay. Don't cause any fights."

Zeke drove his Santana and sped all the way to

the Grand Empire Group.

Along the way, he called the vice president of the Grand Empire Group. "I'm going to take office today. Prepare whatever is necessary."

The vice president, who happened to be a beauty, rushed out of the office after the call. Unbothered about her image, she shouted like a madwoman, "Everyone, put all of your work on hold. Our new boss is going to take office in just a bit, so we need to stand at the entrance and welcome him. This is the first time he's coming to the company, so let's do it right and make a good first impression."

In less than ten minutes, nearly one hundred employees were gathered by the entrance. They stood in rows of two on each side as they welcomed their new boss.

Franklin and Kevin had also rushed back from the construction site to welcome their new boss.

They had heard the news about the Martial Arts Association giving the Grand Empire Group to the renowned Master Williams.

This was the first time that Master Williams was coming over to the Grand Empire Group. They would be asking for a death wish if they neglected his arrival.

Franklin and Kevin were highly anticipating his arrival, whispering in low voices as they discussed it.

“Do you think that our new boss, Master Williams, likes local or foreign women?”

“Should we take Master Williams to the newly opened bar and hire some foreign women to make him happy? Do you think we’ll be rewarded for being so thoughtful?”

“If we can get into the good books of Master Williams, we’ll definitely be able to strike it big in no time!”

The two were in a heated discussion when a run-down Santana stopped before the entrance.

The door opened, and Zeke emerged from the driver’s seat.

Zeke was rather satisfied and nodded lightly upon seeing the formation of the group of employees by the entrance.

However, everyone in the welcoming team was having the jitters as they awaited their new boss’ arrival.

They were unaware that Zeke was their new boss.

Seeing that he was dressed in ordinary clothes and driving an old Santana, they all assumed that he was just a common contractor, here to talk business.

The crowd immediately started to protest.



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